

Do I need a permit to build a fence and are there height restrictions?

Yes and no. Depending on location, the City of Wauwatosa limits the maximum height of residential fences (see **Figure A**). For those fences requiring a permit (see **Table** below), an Application for Building Permit, two copies of a survey, two copies of a sketch or photograph of the style of fencing proposed, and a \$50.00 permit fee are required at the time of submittal.

Note: Building a fence in a floodplain requires a floodplain permit even if a fence/building permit is not required.

Front yard fences require approval by the Design Review Board. Design Review Boards meet the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. to review aesthetics and ensure architectural compatibility of proposed fences. Deadline is the Friday prior to the meeting in order to allow time for notifications. Attendance at the meeting is required.

What type of materials can I use to construct my fence?

Materials such as wood, masonry and metal are permitted. However, barbed, agricultural or poultry wire, snow and electric fences are not permitted in residential areas. Chain link fences are prohibited in front yards.

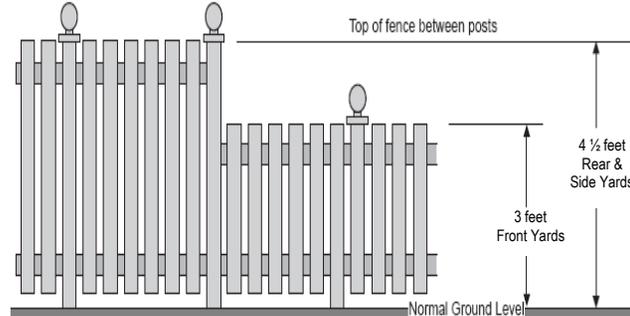
How do I determine my front, side, and rear yards?

As illustrated in **Figure B** the front yard is the area from the front wall of the dwelling to the front property line. Side and rear yards are the areas behind the front wall of the dwelling to the rear property line.

How do I determine my property lines?

To accurately locate property lines requires a survey or locating the iron pipes at the lot line corners.

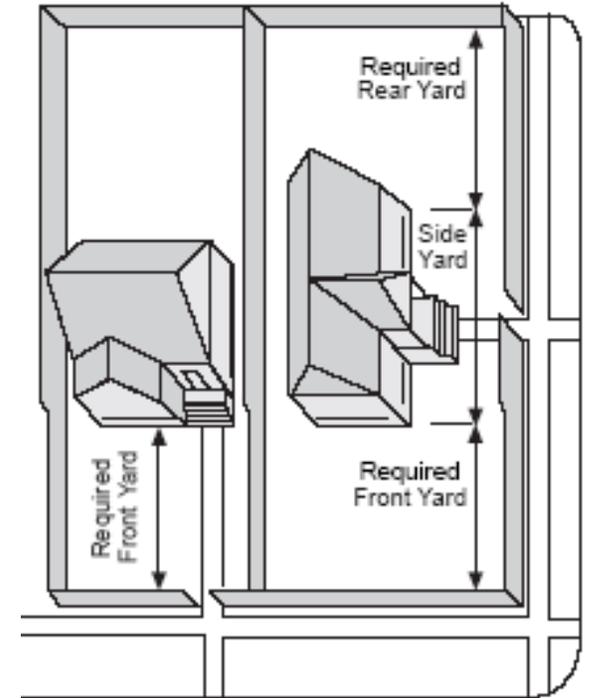
FIGURE A



How can I obtain a survey?

Check your records. Some homeowners may have previously acquired this document in conjunction with their closing. Otherwise, the services of a qualified Land Surveyor should be obtained. A number of firms are listed in the Yellow Pages. Using the services of a Land Surveyor is the best way to avoid property boundary disputes with neighbors.

FIGURE B



Note: On a corner lot, the narrowest width of the property facing a street is defined as the front yard, regardless of which way the house faces. Therefore, in the example above, the "Front Yard" of the corner lot is actually the area beside the house because that is the narrowest lot width facing a street. The fence regulations that apply in this case are the same as those for the house next door.

Location	Height	Permit?	Additional Requirements
Side yards	4.5 feet	No	None
Abutting an Alley			Setback 18 inches
Abutting a Street on side	4.5 feet	Yes	3 foot setback Landscape setback area
Front Yards	3.0 feet	Yes	Setback 18 inches Allowed for decorative use Length limited to 20% of width of the lot Design must be 40% open Chain link fences prohibited Approval by Design Review Board
Buildable Area of Lot *	6.0 feet	No	None
Abutting Non-residential	6.0 feet	Yes	None
Rear yard not abutting a street	6.0 feet	No	None

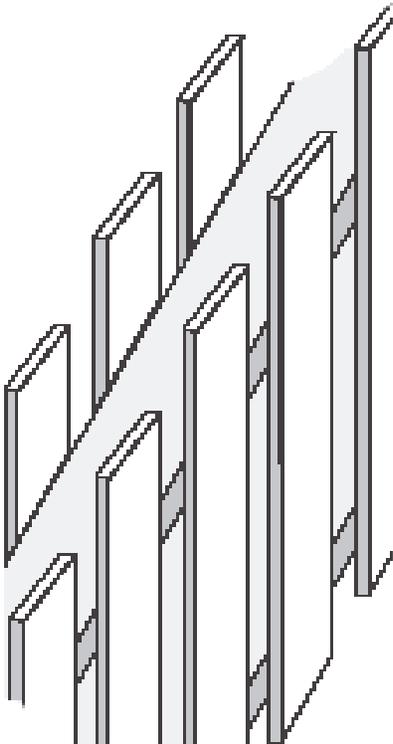
My neighbor is building a fence. Do they need my permission and shouldn't I have been notified?

No. Disputes arising out of fence construction or location can only be resolved through civil litigation.

Should the good side of the fence face outward?

Yes. Certain styles of fences (see **Figure C**) face both directions.

FIGURE C



This is one example of many possible "Good Neighbor" style fences.

SAFETY TIP:

Why not give Diggers Hotline (800)242-8511 a call prior to excavation?

Questions?

Contact Building and Safety staff 479-8907. To view the City of Wauwatosa Fence Code, visit at www.wauwatosa.net.

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This brochure is for informational purposes only.
Reference Wauwatosa Fence Code 15.28 for more information.

03/14

RESIDENTIAL FENCES

REGULATIONS FOR THE
PLACEMENT OF FENCES IN
RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS.

