



FENCES

PERMITS

Any fence exceeding a height of six feet and any retaining wall exceeding a height of 48 inches or retaining a surcharge requires a building permit. However, zoning and transportation may need to review the project, depending on where the fence will be located on your lot.

LOCATION

- Generally, your fence may be located anywhere on your property, but its location will determine the allowable height (see back). However, if your property contains a critical area – such as a wetland, stream, or steep slope – or is within the Shoreline Jurisdiction, limitations on fence location will apply. In such cases, contact the Development Services Division for assistance.
- No fence shall be located in any public right-of-way, unless a right-of-way permit is obtained from the City.
- It is the property owner's responsibility to determine property lines prior to installing a fence.

HEIGHT

- A wall, fence, or hedge not more than 42 inches in height may be permitted on any part of a lot that is not otherwise restricted.
- The height is measured from the ground where the posts or supports enter the ground to the top of the fence, including any lattice, posts or any other material added to the top.
- Where a retaining wall protecting a cut below the natural grade is located on the line separating lots or parcels, such retaining wall

may be topped by a fence, wall, or hedge of the same height that would otherwise be permitted at the location if no retaining wall existed, and the top of the retaining wall shall be considered the bottom of the fence;

- Where a retaining wall contains a fill, the height of the retaining wall built to retain the fill shall be considered as contributing to the permissible height of a wall, fence, or hedge, and shall be measured from the ground on the low side; provided, that in any event a protective fence not more than 42 inches in height may be erected at the top of the retaining wall and any portion of such fence above the six-foot maximum height shall be no greater than 50 percent view obscuring.

RESTRICTIONS

- Electric fences shall not be permitted in any residential zones.
- Fences containing razor wire, coiled barbed wire, or material(s) of similar design are prohibited in all residential zones.

APPLICATION CODES/REGULATIONS

Fences and walls must be constructed of materials suitable to the purpose for which it is constructed and in accordance with applicable building codes. They must be maintained in accordance with applicable building code provisions. All work performed must be in accordance with the Des Moines Zoning Code, Des Moines Building Code, and all other applications laws and ordinances.

HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS

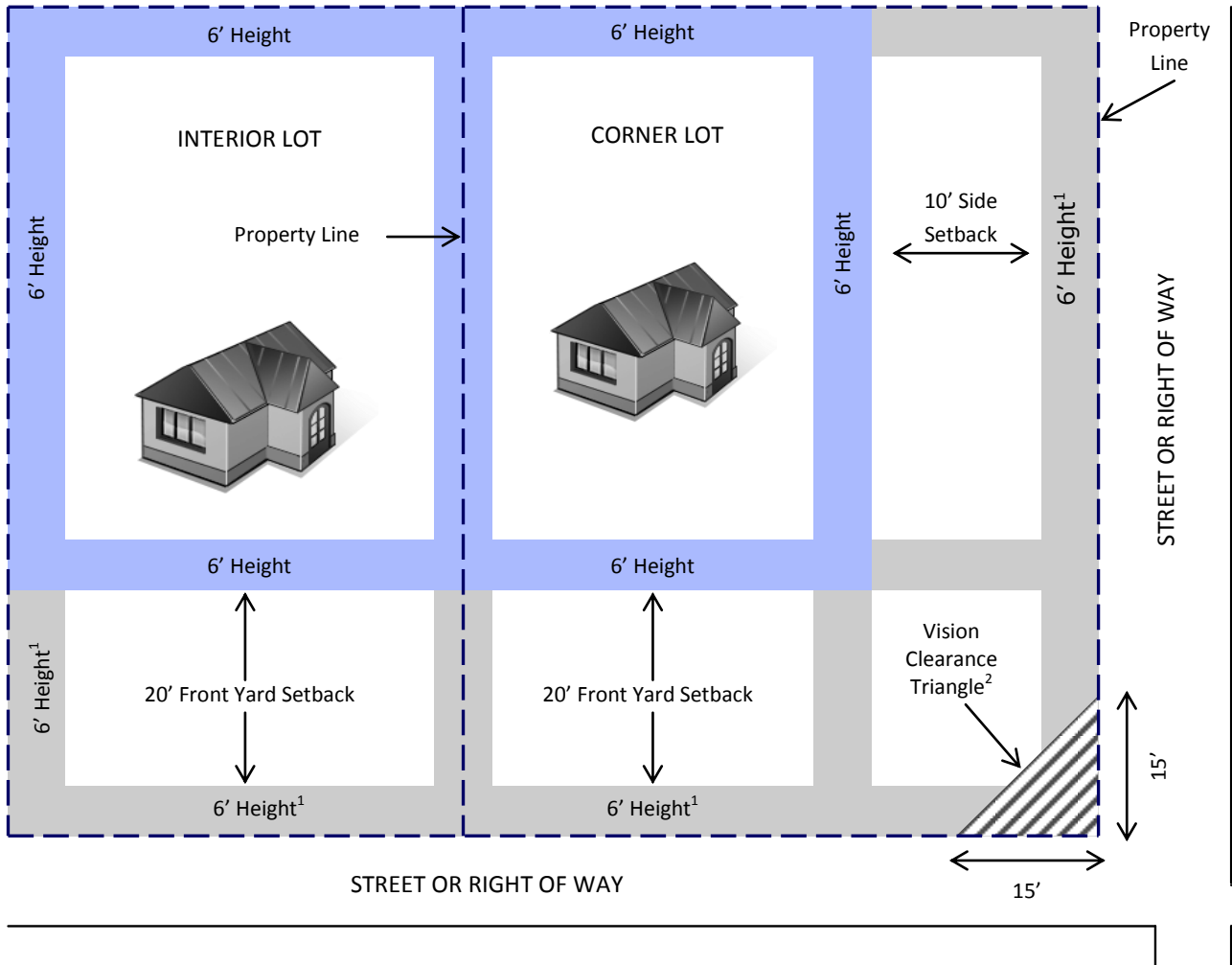
Homeowners should check their association documents prior to installing fencing. Association rules may be more restrictive than the City Code regulations described in this handout



Disclaimer: This PAM should not be used as a substitute for codes and regulations. The applicant is responsible for compliance with all code and rule requirements, whether or not described in this PAM. Please see the City of Des Moines Municipal Code for complete text and requirements:

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LOCATION AND HEIGHT



¹ Any wall, fence, or hedge greater than 42 inches in height and located within the required front yard and side yard adjacent to a street shall be constructed of wrought iron, chain link, or similar materials that, as a whole, shall not be greater than 20% view obscuring or, if other materials are used that are greater than 20 percent view obscuring, the property owner shall first obtain approval from the city traffic engineer to ensure that safe sight distance is maintained and a traffic hazard shall not be created.

² The triangle is formed by the lot front line and the side line separating the lot from the street, and the sides of the triangle forming the corner angle shall each be 15 feet in length measured from the aforementioned angle. The third side of the triangle shall be a straight line connecting the last two mentioned points which are distant 15 feet from the intersection of the lot front and side lines. Within the area comprising the triangle no tree, fence, shrub, or other physical obstruction higher than 42 inches above the established grade shall be permitted.