

**FENCES**  
**RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL, RETAINING WALLS**

Applicant will need to submit the following information:

- 1) Building Permit Application, available at [www.elpasotexas.gov](http://www.elpasotexas.gov)
- 2) Property address
- 3) If a wall is proposed to be constructed on a common property line, the written approval of the adjoining property owner must be submitted with the application for a building permit. If the city is the adjoining property owner, written approval of the zoning administrator must be requested and submitted with the application for a building permit.

**Permitted Walls**

**In residential or apartment districts or for residential or apartment uses in other districts**

A screening wall or fence not in excess of eight feet high may be erected around that part of the lot behind the front wall of the main building or behind the front yard line whenever the main building is located further back. A screening wall or fence not in excess of forty-two inches high may be erected in that part of a lot in front of the front line of the main building, except that no screening wall or fence may be more than thirty-six inches high within twenty feet of a street intersection or where visibility of vehicle or pedestrian traffic might be impeded.

For the purposes of this regulation, a wall or fence may exceed the heights set forth in this subsection up to a total height of ten feet, except within twenty feet of a street intersection or where vehicle or pedestrian traffic might be impeded. This provision applies when the vertical surface of the wall or fence above the eight feet or forty-two inches, whichever applies, is not less than seventy-five percent open, and which does not otherwise impede the vision clearance for motor vehicle or pedestrian traffic at intersections or driveway exits. The wall or fence may include wrought-iron fences with or without masonry columns, chain link, picket, split rail and other similar type fences not otherwise prohibited.

**In commercial, manufacturing and industrial districts**

- 1) Where storage is a permitted accessory use with screening, and where not otherwise prohibited, a screening wall or fence not in excess of eight feet high may be erected along or behind any lot line; provided, that the following conditions are met:
  - a) Where any access driveway is located, the height of such wall or fence shall not exceed forty-two inches in height within ten feet of the street lot line;
  - b) The wall or fence shall not exceed forty-two inches in height for visual clearance at other locations as determined by the traffic engineer; and,
  - c) No screening wall or fence shall be more than thirty-six inches high within twenty feet of a street intersection as specified in Section 20.16.060 of this chapter.
- 2) Upon written application from the property owner, the zoning administrator may approve an additional four feet of fencing to the above eight foot screening wall or fence provided that the following conditions are met:

- a) The fence does not exceed twelve feet in height;
- b) The property is located in a manufacturing or industrial zoning district;
- c) The fence is only utilized as screening for outside storage where fifty percent or more of the property is used for outside storage;
- d) Any screening wall or fence greater than forty-two inches in height along any street frontage shall be located ten feet behind the street lot line;
- e) Where a wall is located ten feet behind the street lot line, the property owner shall provide landscaping within the ten feet, between the wall and the street lot line, based on the requirements of Title 18; and,
- f) The request is reviewed and approved by the traffic engineer for visual clearance at driveways and intersections.
- g) Upon site plan review, the zoning administrator may require additional landscaping as part of the approval. If the zoning administrator denies the request, the property owner may appeal the decision to the city council

### **Fences in Historical Districts**

Any fences erected in the Historical Districts must be approved by the Historical Preservation Officer or their designee. The use of chain-link fencing is prohibited in a Historical District.

### **Electrified Fences**

- 1) The use of electrical fences is restricted to use for control of domestic farm animals in areas zoned and actually utilized for farming or, ranching activities; or for other areas where large domestic animals such as horses or cattle are legally maintained, upon application to the building official in each case.
- 2) Only battery-powered units are acceptable. Units must be UL approved for proposed use and final installation acceptable to the building official.
- 3) Fences must be clearly marked and identified with easily recognizable signs at intervals not exceeding twenty-five (25) feet.

### **Barbed Wire, Farm/Ranch**

- 1) Barbed wire fences installed in conventional multi-strand configuration may be used for the same purpose, the same area, and under the same conditions outlined in Section 424.3.
- 2) Wire must be securely fastened to durable wooden or metal posts, spaced not to exceed fifteen (15) feet center-to-center, and designed to withstand all loads reasonably expected to be imposed upon them.
- 3) Gates in such fences shall have solid frames, be conventionally hinged, and shall not swing over public property.

## **Barbed Wire Other Than Farm/Ranch**

- 1) Barbed wire may be used as a topping on walls and fences in areas zoned for commercial and manufacturing uses provided such wire is properly attached and secured to risers or outriggers especially designed for this purpose. Such barbed wire installation shall be placed not less than seven (7) feet above finished grade at any point along the fence, and shall not at any point extend beyond the property line, over the public way, or adjoining property.
- 2) The use of barbed wire for dwellings or apartments in residential and apartment zones is prohibited.
- 3) The use, design and minimum height of barbed wire fence topping for occupancies other than dwellings or apartments located in residential or apartment zones, shall be determined by the building official for each such installation. Such determination shall be based on the need for barbed wire protection, considering the probable risk or theft or trespass, the character of the neighborhood, and other pertinent factors; the possible hazards to persons; and reasonable consideration of appearance.

## **Use of Broken Glass**

The use of broken glass and similar materials designed to do bodily harm, as a topping for fences and walls is prohibited.

## **Retaining Walls**

- 1) Site Plan with location of wall to be constructed or repaired.
- 2) Spot elevations showing difference in elevation.
- 3) Retaining wall details with footing chart.
- 4) If retaining wall is over 4'-0", retaining wall design requires a Professional Engineer's seal.

For help in obtaining information or to contact the Building Permit Division, please call (915) 212-0085 or visit our website at:

<http://www.elpasotexas.gov/planning-and-inspections>