

Bulletin: Retaining Walls

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This information is summarized for convenience. Please refer to the applicable bylaw for the complete regulation.

Properties must satisfy all applicable Bylaws/Regulations of the City of Kelowna and conform to the B.C. Building Code.

Purpose:

To inform building contractors, designers, landscape contractors/architects and homeowners of the City of Kelowna Soil Removal and Deposit Regulation Bylaw No. 9612 and Zoning Bylaw No. 12375 requirements pertaining to the construction of retaining walls.

Background:

The City of Kelowna Zoning Bylaw (Section 7) restricts retaining wall heights on all lots to 1.2 m or a maximum of two tiers of 1.2 m high walls (spaced a minimum of 1.2 m horizontally for a maximum total height of 2.4 m). A development Variance Permit, approved by City Council, is required for retaining walls that exceed the Zoning Bylaw standards with exceptions to walls approved via subdivision or walls measured from grade, where the natural grade of the subject property is lower than the abutting property.

Where a fence is installed on a retaining wall, the combined height of the fence on the retaining wall shall not exceed 2.0 m at lot line or within 1.2 m of the lot line, measured from natural grade at the abutting higher property.

A Development Variance Permit for over height retaining walls (more than 1.2 m in height), is required and must be applied for and approved by City Council. Prior to construction a corresponding Over Height Retaining Wall Permit application, complete with sealed engineered drawings and EGBC – Engineer of Record – Retaining Wall Assurance statement is required.

Conclusion

This is to emphasize the above restrictions and changes to the City of Kelowna Soil Removal and Deposit Regulation Bylaw No. 9612. Failure to comply with requirements of the Zoning and Soil Removal and Deposit Regulation Bylaws will result in an immediate Stop Work Order and may require the removal of the retaining wall(s). City Council may not approve a DVP application for over height retaining walls which have been constructed in non-compliance to the City bylaws.

Development Planning

1435 Water Street
Kelowna, BC V1Y 1J4
TEL 250-469-8626
planninginfo@kelowna.ca