



Building Department Town of Atherton

FENCES, WALLS, GATES, GATE POSTS, AND COLUMNS

Fences, walls, gates, gate posts and columns are regulated by section 17.36.150 and 17.36.160 of the Atherton Municipal Code. All fences, wall, gate and column heights are measured from the natural grade upon which they are located. Maximum heights, locations and fees are stated according to category.

Fences (wood or chain link) fall into four separate categories:

Right of Way Fences:

Fences that are within 10' of any right of way. Prior to construction of any such fence, the builder must first obtain a building permit from the Town of Atherton. Fence height is limited to 6' maximum except those areas listed in 17.36.150.A. Fences greater than 6' (up to 8' maximum) shall be shielded from public view by plants installed at the time of construction, which will reach maturity within three years of planting. A permit shall also be required for the installation of an adequate irrigation system or proof of availability of sufficient water from natural springs.

Interior Fences:

Fences that are not within 10' of the right-of-way and do not fall into any of the following categories do not need a permit. Interior fences may not be over six (6) feet in height.

Corner Fences:

Fences (including gates & gate posts/columns) at the corner of two right-of-ways must be located at least 30' back from the corner intersection. Any fence, wall, or vegetation within the 30' triangular area bounded by the two right-of-ways, cannot exceed three (3) feet in height.

Pool Fences:

Every pool having a depth in excess of 24 inches of water shall comply with the following requirements:

- A. The pool shall be completely surrounded by a fence or wall 6 feet high.
- B. No openings, holes or gaps shall be larger than 4 inches in diameter.
- C. A building or structure at least 6 feet in height may be considered part of the pool enclosure.
- D. A hedge shall not be considered a fence.

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- E. All gates or doors opening through the fence enclosure shall be equipped with a self-closing and self-latching device.
- F. *Locking* pool and spa covers are acceptable in lieu of fence enclosures.

Walls (Brick or Stucco):

A building permit must be obtained prior to the construction of any wall. Wall height is limited to 6' maximum; except for those areas listed in 17.36.150.A. Walls must maintain the same setbacks that are required for a wood or chain link fence. Walls that have footings and foundations are required to have structural inspections. *The wall permit fee is based upon the estimated value of the project and will be determined upon plan submittal.*

Gates, Posts & Columns:

Gates, gate posts, & columns are considered to be structures and are required to have a building permit prior to construction. They may be set at or inside the property line. *They cannot encroach into the right-of-way.* The maximum height for all entry gates, posts and columns is 10 feet. (Light fixtures are limited to 18 inches and are included in the 10' maximum.) There must be a 16-foot *minimum* net clearance between all entry gates.

****A key box is required for all automatic entry gates. Please contact the Menlo Park Fire Department at (650) 688-8400 for approved box and location.***

Plan submittals for walls, gates, gate posts and columns should consist of 3 sets of the following:

- Site Plan
- Architectural Details (elevations, dimensions and height)
- Structural Details