

FENCING DURING CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION

Site fencing for the protection of the public is a requirement of all permits where activities involving demolition and construction will take place, however the actual fencing requirements and what activities and situations require this protection are not specifically listed in these permits. The information provided below seeks to clarify to property owners and contractors what the requirements of the Alberta Building Code, the Safety Codes Act, and the Permit Conditions are, and how the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Safety Codes Officers will be enforcing these requirements.

All municipal documentation regarding fencing typically uses the language a “strongly constructed fence”, the reason this language is used is that it comes directly from the National Building Code 2023 - Alberta Edition.⁽¹⁾ The requirement from the NBC 2023 - AE is that a “strongly constructed fence” not less than 1.8 m high be provided as barrier to protect the public when a Safety Codes Officer deems that demolition or construction activities constitute a hazard to the public.

8.2.1.3. Fencing, Boarding or Barricades / National Building Code 2023 - Alberta Edition

1) When a construction or demolition activity may constitute a hazard to the public and is located 2 m or more from a public way, a strongly constructed fence, boarding or barricade not less than 1.8 m high shall be erected between the site and the public way or open sides of a construction site.

Owners, Care and Control/ Safety Codes Act, RSA 2000, c S-1 Part 1

5) The owner of any thing, process or activity to which this Act applies shall ensure that it meets the requirements of this Act, that the thing is maintained as required by the regulations and that when the process or activity is undertaken it is done in a safe manner.

Owners and contractors undertaking demolition or construction are responsible to secure the area of work with their own fencing anytime a thing, process, or activity exists or is taking place on a property, which could constitute a hazard, and persons could otherwise enter in or on the site unhindered. Examples of hazards include but are not limited to:

- Any excavation or depression deep enough to hold water or cause an injury in the case of a fall, including trenches and excavations for the installation or removal of foundations or site services.
- Where physical contact with products on the site, either physical or airborne are considered hazardous.
- Where a process or activity could generate flying debris.
- Where the use of equipment or machinery for demolition or construction could present a hazard to a person.
- Any activity is occurring for which the wearing of PPE is required by an OHS standard.
- Structures or debris piles poses a risk of collapse, settlement or movement, or contain hazardous materials.
- Where overhead, craning, hoisting or lifting is taking place additional supervisory personnel will be required.

Fence Requirements

Building Safety Codes Officers will accept a fence constructed of standard 1.8m high (6') steel fence panels provided they are wired together and adequately braced to ensure they are stable and are not

easily bypassed. Other options are available but will need to be reviewed by a Safety Codes Officer on a case-by-case basis. Owner/Contractor fencing must be completely in place around the entire work site area prior to commencing demolition or construction. (2) Fencing during demolition must remain in place until all debris and demolition materials are removed and the site is filled and graded such that the site cannot accumulate water. Examples of acceptable and unacceptable fencing are shown below.



Acceptable Site Fencing



Not Acceptable



Site Inspection

Officers will be regularly checking and reviewing work site fencing at demolition and construction sites and work will not be authorized to proceed if fencing is not in place. Note that individual work site fencing is still required in all areas including where the municipality has provided multiple site perimeter fencing, as this fencing will be removed. Work site fencing is to remain in place until the demolition or construction has concluded and an officer issues an authorization to remove the fencing through a site inspection report. (2) If during the Post-Demolition Inspection the officer determines that conditions on the site still constitute a hazard, the site is not properly graded to facilitate drainage or otherwise does not comply with the permit conditions, authorization to remove the fencing will not be issued. In the case of excavations, fencing must remain in place until the site is leveled and graded or if a foundation is to be placed, until the foundation is backfilled and the floor is on. Officers will also be regularly monitoring construction sites and may issue an Order to install fencing that has been removed if there are hazards present or work does not meet the permit conditions for safety.

- (1) Additional information is provided in the Demolition Permit Information Package, Checklists & Application Form available at Planning and Development and on the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo website.
- (2) Pre- and Post-Demolition Inspections are a condition of a Demolition Permit.

Questions regarding any of the information above may be directed to Planning and Development via Pulse at 780-743-7000 or email permit.inquiries@rmwb.ca.