

Fence Permit Guidelines



City of Sterling Heights

Before You Apply

- The City of Sterling Heights Building Department strongly recommends that applicants review any applicable Homeowners Association (HOA) bylaws or deed restrictions pertaining to fences, pools, decks, patios, additions, new construction, generators, windows, siding, and other exterior alterations that may require approval.
- Site grading must be approved by the Engineering Department before submitting a fence permit application. This applies only to projects involving grade alterations or new construction.
- The applicant and/or property owner is responsible for complying with the City of Sterling Heights Fence Code, Chapter 19, and the current Michigan Building Code, where applicable.
- Tax parcel maps are available through the Macomb County Parcel Explorer:
<https://gis.macombgov.org/portal1/apps/experiencebuilder/experience/?id=f6530bd6b8ff48c18b96d76a6c65a1a0&page=Macomb-County-Parcel-Explorer>

Permit Application Requirements

- A fully completed fence permit application, including the proposed fence material and height.
- Submit sufficient information, pursuant to Section 107.2 of the Michigan Building Code, to determine compliance. This may include a plot plan, mortgage survey, boundary survey, or aerial image, such as a Google Maps screenshot, with the proposed fence location accurately drawn or sketched. A sample template is included in this packet.
- The submitted plan or image shall label all proposed fence lengths and distances to lot lines.

NOTE: No fence shall be installed in a front yard.

Essential Information

- Residential fences shall not exceed 6 feet in height without formal approval from the Board of Ordinance Appeals.
- Pool fences shall be at least 48 inches high on the side facing away from the pool, with no more than 2 inches of clearance between the ground and the bottom of the fence. Openings must not allow a 4-inch ball to pass through.
- Pool gate and latch shall meet all fence requirements, open outward away from the pool, and be self-closing and self-latching. If the latch release is less than 54 inches above the walking surface, it must be located on the pool side of the gate at least 3 inches below the top. **See Pool Packet for additional pool fence/barrier information.**
- A fence less than 7 feet in height is exempt from permit requirements under Section 105.2 of the Michigan Building Code and Michigan Residential Code. However, the permit issued by the City is a land use permit from the Planning Department, currently administered by the Building Department.
- The finish side of the fence must face outward.
- No spikes or points on posts.

- Commercial fence and/or gate proposals of all heights require approval from the Fire Department for emergency access and approval from the Planning Department. These applications are administered by the Building Department.
- Commercial fences 7 feet in height or greater require a building permit and shall comply with Section 312 of the current Michigan Building Code. Plan review will be performed by the Building and Planning Departments.

Applicant / Installer Responsibilities

- The applicant and/or property owner is responsible for contacting MISS DIG to have underground utilities marked prior to installation.
- Hand exposing underground utilities within a caution zone shall be performed prior to the use of power equipment within the zone. The caution zone means the area within 48 inches of either side of the utility markings.
- When excavating near a pressurized underground gas line, the applicant, property owner, and/or installer is responsible for complying with all excavation requirements and standards established by the gas utility company that owns the pipeline. Any required approval or permit from the utility company shall be obtained before City approval is granted.
- If unsure whether a pressurized underground gas line is present, contact the appropriate utility provider and/or verify available information prior to excavation.
- When working near overhead power lines, all applicable safety protocols shall be followed to prevent accidents and protect personnel.
- It is highly recommended that the applicant and/or property owner hire a licensed professional surveyor to ensure proper placement of the fence in relation to property lines. If professional surveyor services are not obtained, applicant, property owner, and/or installer is proceeding at his own risk.
- The applicant, property owner, and/or installer is responsible for laying out and installing the fence within the property boundaries and/or required setbacks in accordance with the City of Sterling Heights zoning ordinance and applicable city codes.
- All disputes among property owners regarding fence placement are civil matters.
- The City of Sterling Heights will not inspect for property line determination or precise fence placement. Plan review by City staff is limited to approving or disapproving the proposed fence based on the information submitted by the applicant and applicable ordinances and codes.
- The Building Inspector will verify that the installed fence matches the approved plan and complies with applicable code and zoning requirements based on the information submitted for review. The inspection does not verify precise fence location or property boundaries.

Applicant Acknowledgment

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understand the City of Sterling Heights Fence Permit Guidelines.

Applicant Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Property Address: _____

Date: _____

FENCE PERMIT
APPLICATION NO:
PF



40555 Utica Road, P.O. Box 8009
Sterling Heights, Michigan 48311-8009
Phone: 586-446-2360

Submit permits and schedule inspections here:
[Online Portal](#)

Job Location Street Address		Date Of Application	
* EMAIL ADDRESS REQUIRED*		**All correspondences will be emailed**	
Owner's Name		Driver's License Number	
Owner's Address	City	State	Zip Code
Contact Person		Telephone Number	
Contractor's Name		Driver's License Number	
Contractor's Address	City	State	Zip Code
Telephone Number	Date of Birth	Federal Employer ID Number / Insurance Information	
BY SIGNING THIS APPLICATION I CERTIFY THAT THE PROPOSED WORK IS AUTHORIZED BY THE OWNER OF RECORD & THAT I HAVE BEEN AUTHORIZED BY OWNER TO MAKE THIS APPLICATION AS HIS AUTHORIZED AGENT. WE AGREE TO CONFORM TO ALL APPLICABLE LAWS OF THE CITY. ALL INFORMATION SUBMITTED ON THIS APPLICATION IS ACCURATE TO BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE. NOTE: APPROVAL OF THIS PERMIT BY THE CITY OF STERLING HEIGHTS SHALL NOT BE CONSTRUED AS VERIFICATION THAT THE LOCATION OF PROPERTY BOUNDARY LINES HAS BEEN REVIEWED OR CONFIRMED. DETERMINING PROPERTY BOUNDARIES AND THE PROPER PLACEMENT OF THE FENCE IS SOLELY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PERMIT APPLICANT, PROPERTY OWNER, AND/OR FENCE INSTALLER.			
<i>Section 23a, state construction code Act of 1972 PA 230, being Section 125.1523a of the MI Compiled Laws, prohibits a person from conspiring to circumvent licensing requirements of MI relating to persons who are to perform work on a residential building/structure. Violators are subject to civil fines.</i>			
SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT (Homeowner must also sign Homeowner Affidavit below)			
HOMEOWNER AFFIDAVIT			
I hereby certify the work described below shall be installed by myself at my own home in which I am living or about to occupy. All work shall be installed in accordance with the fence ordinance & will be inspected and approved by the Building Inspector. I will cooperate with the Inspector and arrange for necessary inspections.			
Signature of Homeowner			
DESCRIPTION OF WORK			
TYPE OF FENCE	OR	Sight Obscuring Fence (Privacy)	
		Non-Sight Obscuring	
TYPE OF LOT	OR	Interior Lot	
		Corner Lot	
TYPE OF MATERIAL		WOOD \$46	METAL \$46
		WIRE \$46	PVC \$46
		MASONRY \$134	SEPARATION \$134
IS THIS FENCE BEING INSTALLED AROUND A POOL?			
*ALL SIGHT OBSCURING PRIVACY FENCES MUST BE INSTALLED WITH THE FINISH SIDE OUT **			
*** SUBMIT PAYMENT AND A PLOT PLAN AT THE TIME OF APPLICATION ***			

PROPERTY LINE

dimension
(fence)

dimension
(fence)

dimension
(fence)

dimension
(fence)

HOUSE/STRUCTURE
INDICATE GARAGE SIDE

dimension
(fence)

dimension
(fence)

FRONT YARD

NOTE: NO FENCES SHALL BE INSTALLED IN A FRONT YARD

THE BUILDING DEPARTMENT IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR DETERMINING THE PLACEMENT OF THE FENCE OR THE LOCATION OF PROPERTY LINE BOUNDARIES. THIS IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE APPLICANT, OWNER, AND/OR INSTALLER.

IT IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED THAT A BOUNDARY SURVEY BE OBTAINED AND/OR THAT THE PROPERTY BOUNDARIES BE STAKED BY A LICENSED PROFESSIONAL SURVEYOR PRIOR TO INSTALLATION.

THE BUILDING INSPECTOR WILL ONLY INSPECT THE FENCE FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE APPROVED PLAN, APPLICABLE CODE REQUIREMENTS, AND ZONING REQUIREMENTS, BASED ON THE INFORMATION SUBMITTED FOR REVIEW. THE BUILDING, PLANNING, AND ORDINANCE DEPARTMENTS ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PRECISE PLACEMENT OF THE FENCE.

ACCURATE FENCE PLACEMENT REMAINS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE APPLICANT, OWNER, AND/OR INSTALLER.