



GWINNETT COUNTY
Department of Planning & Development
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Retaining Wall (Residential) Building Permit Requirements

(Revised April 2004)

This document's purpose is to provide general guidance in obtaining a Building Permit from Planning & Development (P&D) for a retaining wall on a residential lot. A Building Permit must be obtained prior to any land disturbance or building construction.

Exception: A Building Permit is **not required** for retaining walls that are 4 feet or less in height (Construction Code Section 103.1.1 Exception No.2 (1)) provided that the slope of backfill materials does not exceed a 1 foot rise in 3 feet length.

Step 1: Obtain Approval from the Building Plan Review Section of P&D. For retaining walls that exceed 4 feet but are 6 feet or less in vertical height, a design drawing by a Georgia registered professional engineer is not required. If greater than 6 feet in height, a design drawing must be submitted for review & approval sealed by a Georgia registered professional engineer. Office hours of the Building Plan Review Section are Monday through Thursday, 8 AM to 4 PM, except holidays.

Step 2: Obtain the Following Forms from P&D: 1) Building Permit Application. The Building Permit Application form may be obtained as follows: a) by visiting www.gwinnettcounty.com & then selecting the "A-Z Index" & then selecting "B" & then selecting the "Building Permit Application Form; b) by visiting in-person the Building Permits Counter of P&D; or, c) by calling 678.518.6020.

Step 3: Obtain Building Permit at the Building Permits Counter of P&D. Submit the Building Permit Application, proof of approval by the Building Plan Review Section, and permit fee. The permit fee is calculated as follows: \$6 per \$1,000 of estimated construction cost (minimum fee is \$30). There is no fee for the required Certificate of Completion. Fees must be paid at time of permit issuance. Office hours for Building Permits are 8 PM to 4 PM, Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Inspection Requirements. Inspections are requested by calling P&D's 24 / 7 automated inspection line at 678.518.6277 under the "Residential Retaining Wall" category. The Building Permit Yard Card must be posted at the site & be visible from the street.

- For "poured in place" retaining walls, a "footing inspection" must be scheduled and successfully passed prior to pouring. Once the footing has been poured, and one side of the forms & structural steel is in place, a "wall inspection" must be scheduled, performed and successfully passed.
- For "cross-tie" retaining walls, a "wall inspection" must be scheduled and successfully passed for verification of adequate "dead-men" and proper drainage design for the wall prior to backfill material being installed.
- After the wall is completely finished, final inspection must be scheduled, performed and successfully passed in order to receive the required Certificate of Completion.