



Retaining Walls

#14

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SKAGITCOUNTYWA.GOV

Skagit County
Planning and
Development Services



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This information only applies to property within unincorporated Skagit County and does not apply to property within incorporated city limits.

A **retaining wall** is built to retain soil and prevent erosion by stabilizing a slope.

When is a building permit required?

- No permit required for retaining walls under 4 feet in height with no surcharge. See Figure 1.
- Yes, a permit is required for retaining walls under 4 feet in height that have a surcharge within 4 feet of the wall or holding back flammable or combustible liquids. See Figure 1.
- Yes, a permit is required for any retaining wall over **4 feet** in height, as measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, engineering required for hydrostatic pressure, overturning and slide force. Drainage plan should be included.

Where can a retaining wall be placed?

Retaining walls 4 feet or less in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall are exempt from setbacks in all zones and may be placed at the property line. All other walls must comply with setbacks.

What are the requirements for corner lots?

A corner lot retaining wall must also meet County Road Standards. On a corner lot in **any zone**, nothing shall be erected, placed, planted or allowed to grow greater than 2.5 feet in height in the vision clearance triangle. See Figure 2.

Use the link for additional information regarding Skagit County Road Standard:
[Road Standards](#)

Figure 1.

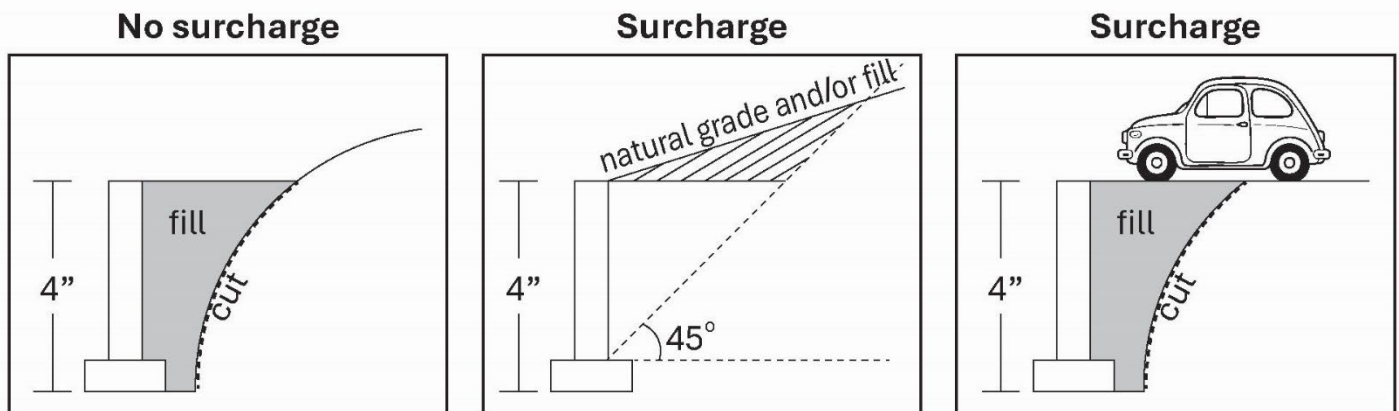
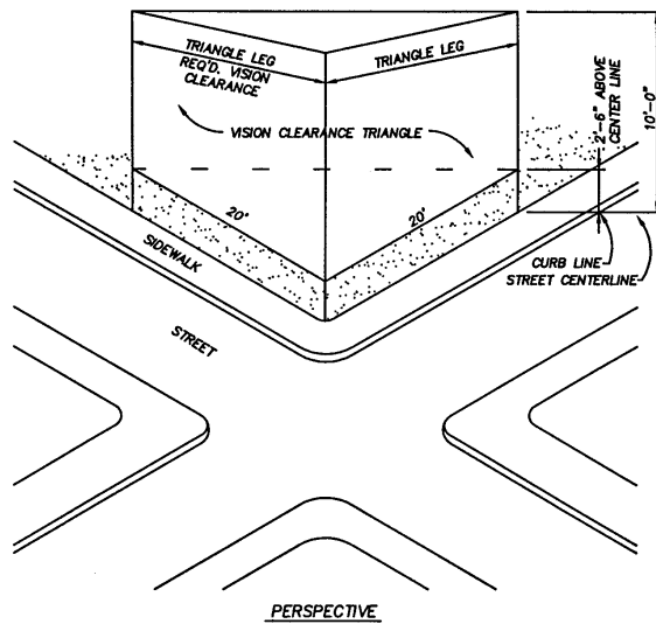


Figure 2.



How do I apply for a permit?

Apply for an Residential or Commercial Accessory Structure using the online portal: [Civic Access Portal](#)

Who should I contact if I have questions?

You may contact us if you have any questions via:

Online: [Ask a Permit Tech](#)

Remember, asking questions first can save lots of headaches, heartaches, and money!