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**Community Development Department  
City of Cambridge**

**FENCE REGULATIONS HANDOUT  
Chapter 156.083**

**§156.083 FENCES.**

**(A) No fence or wall shall be erected, enlarged, expanded, altered, relocated, maintained or repaired in any yard, unless it shall first meet the requirements of this section.**

**(B) Construction.**

*(1) Prohibited material.*

(a) No residential fence or wall shall be constructed of any electrically charged element, unless located underground (for example, invisible or underground pet fencing), or barbed wire. Areas utilized for agricultural purposes, for example, pasture and cropland shall be exempt from this section.

(b) No commercial or industrial fence or wall shall be constructed of any electrically charged element. Except that barbed wire or similar security fencing may be used **above a height of six and one-half feet** when incorporated with a permitted fence or wall with the written approval of the Zoning Administrator.

*(2) Approved material.*

(a) All fences shall be constructed of either stone, brick, finished wood, durable vinyl or other durable plastic materials, ornamental non-corrosive aluminum or iron, or chain link.

(b) The finished side of the fence, or that side of the fence without exposed supports or posts, shall face the neighboring properties or streets.

**(C) Maintenance.** Every fence or wall shall be maintained in a good and safe condition at all times. Every damaged or missing element, including slats in slatted chain link fences, of any fence or wall shall be repaired or replaced immediately.

**(D) Height.**

- (1) *Side and Rear Yards.* No fence or wall located in a side or rear yard shall be of a height exceeding eight feet, measured from its top edge to the ground at any point, except as required by any landscaping or screening requirements of this chapter.
- (2) *Front Yards.* No fence or wall located in a front yard shall be of a height exceeding four feet, measured from its top edge to the ground at any point, except as required by any landscaping or screening requirements of this chapter.
- (3) Fences over eight feet in height may be allowed through issuance of a conditional use permit in a commercial or industrial district.
- (4) Any fence over 7 feet in height shall require a building permit.
- (5) Fences used as backstops for municipal/institutional athletic fields shall be exempt from the height requirements in this chapter provided a building permit is issued.

**(E) Setbacks.**

- (1) A fence may be located adjacent to, but not on, a property line.
  - a. The owner must be able to maintain the fence without having to leave the property or cross over the property line.
  - b. Properties that are adjacent to an alley: the fence must be 6 feet from the property line or 14 feet from the center line of the alley, whichever is greater.
- (2) The property owner is responsible for locating property lines and easements and placing the fence in accordance with all applicable setbacks.
- (3) No fence, wall, hedge or other screening device shall be permitted to encroach on any public right-of-way.
- (4) Fences may be constructed within a drainage and utility easement, though future work within the easement may require the removal of the fence at the owner's expense.
- (5) No fence shall be located within an improved drainage and utility easement (pond, utility pipe, and the like).
- (6) No fence shall obstruct the flow of water nor divert water onto a neighboring property.

**(F) Sight triangle.** No fence shall interfere with a sight triangle as described in §156.068.