

Construction Codes and Building Permits

2020 Minnesota Residential Code

Minneapolis has adopted the 2020 Minnesota Residential Code (MRC) which provides minimum requirements for the design and construction of residential dwellings and their accessory structures. The MRC and this handout apply to **single-family dwellings**, **two-family dwellings** (duplexes), and **townhouses** with no more than three stories and with separate entrances and their **accessory structures**.

Requirements for the design and construction of all other buildings are found in the 2020 Minnesota Building Code.

Minneapolis Code of Ordinances

In addition to the Minnesota State Building Codes, construction in the city of Minneapolis is also regulated by Title 5 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances. [Minneapolis Code of Ordinances Title 5 - Building Code](#)

Permits

A building permit is required for fences over 7 feet in height. Building permits are not required to install a patio, private sidewalk, driveway, or fences 7 feet or less in height.

Zoning regulates fences, driveways, parking pads, private sidewalks, and patios. See [Forms and guides to understand and comply with zoning rules](#)

Plans

Plans typically don't need to be drawn by a professional, but they should be clear, easy to read, drawn to scale, and include all the details needed to show what will be done and how it meets all applicable requirements. The plans should be detailed enough that someone else could complete the project based on the plans.

If you are not familiar with building code requirements or if you are having trouble creating accurate, proper construction plans, you should consider hiring a drafting service, licensed contractor, or architect.

Inspections

Construction inspections are required for all building permits.

Zoning inspections are required in accordance with their requirements. See [Forms and guides to understand and comply with zoning rules](#)

Fences, driveways, parking pads, sidewalks, patios and similar site features at private residential lots

Building or installing fences, driveways, parking pads, sidewalks, and patios on your property are generally regulated by Zoning and do not require building permits but do require review and approval by zoning.

- See [Forms and guides to understand and comply with zoning rules](#)

Fences

All fences require review and approval by zoning.

- See [Zoning requirements for building a fence](#)

Fences up to 7 feet high do not require a building permit but must comply with zoning requirements.

Fences over 7 feet high do require a building permit and plan submittal including a site plan with found property boundary monuments or a survey.

Poor barrier fences

Pool barrier fences of any height require building permits and plan submittal including a site plan with found property boundary monuments or a survey to demonstrate compliance with building code and zoning requirements.

Outdoor private residential swimming pools shall be protected by a fence, wall, building or other enclosure or any combination thereof. All fence openings or points of entry into the pool area enclosure shall be equipped with gates. The fence and gates shall be at least four feet in height. All gates shall be equipped with self-closing and self-latching devices placed at the top of the gate or otherwise inaccessible to small children and provided with hardware for permanent locking devices. The openings between the bottom of the fence and the ground or other surface shall not be more than four inches.

Construction plans for fences

Fences greater than 7 feet require you to submit a construction plan and a site plan so that we can perform a plan review to evaluate compliance and approve the building permit.

The plans must include straight lines, precise measurements, and be drawn to scale.

- Site built fences – provide construction plans showing the design, materials, and height.
- Prefabricated fences – provide a construction plan and/or specifications from the fence manufacturer detailing the design, materials, and height.

Site plan for fences

- Site plan – must clearly identify the location of the fence in relation to property lines, structures, site features, and adjacent streets, public sidewalks and easements. Site plans show the general layout of the entire lot including the
 - **Property monuments:** You must find the property boundary monuments on the property to create the site plan so that we can properly evaluate building code requirements. If you are unable to locate the property boundary monuments, you can hire a licensed land surveyor to locate and/or set them.
 - **Lot dimensions:** You can find information about the dimensions of the lot on your deed or on the Hennepin County website. For more information see [Property line information](#). Note: You can use the information from these sources to help inform your site plan, but online images (from Hennepin County, Google maps, etc.) are NOT sufficient as site plans and cannot be submitted in place of a proper site plan or survey.
 - See [How to create a site plan for review](#)

Driveways and parking pads

Private driveways and parking pads are regulated by zoning. See [Forms and guides to understand and comply with zoning rules](#)

Patios

Grade level patios are regulated by zoning. See [Forms and guides to understand and comply with zoning rules](#)

Private sidewalks

Private sidewalks are regulated by zoning. See [Forms and guides to understand and comply with zoning rules](#)