



COUNTY OF LAKE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Code Enforcement Division Courthouse - 255 N. Forbes Street

Lakeport, California 95453 Telephone 707/263-2309 FAX 707/263-2225

FENCES, HEDGES AND WALLS

“CODE ENFORCEMENT CORNER”

The dictionary defines a fence as “a structure serving as an enclosure, barrier, or boundary, usually made of posts, boards, wire, stakes or rails.”

In many areas of Lake County, property owners are making improvements to their homes and in the process are erecting new substantial fences for privacy. However, there are requirements in the Lake County Zoning Ordinance that must be followed.

In a front yard setback within a residential zone a property is allowed a fence, hedge or wall four (4) feet in height but if on a corner it can only be three (3) feet tall with twelve inches of see through material on the top. Any height over four (4) feet requires a minor use permit secured from the Planning Division. Along the side and back property lines a maximum six (6) foot fence is allowed. Fences exceeding 4 feet in height within the front yard setback, or exceeding six feet in height along side or rear property lines require approval of a minor use permit in order to be constructed. The

primary reasons for this requirement are to inform neighbors of the proposed fence height increases, and to allow review of the fence plans by agencies such as the Roads Division of the County’s Public Works Department, and the local fire department to determine if public safety impacts would result. There are exceptions to every rule and the information presented is a partial list for residential zoning. There are variations for agricultural, commercial or manufacturing areas.

The days when you could move onto a piece of property, build whatever you want, whenever you want are long gone. Lake County Code Enforcement will be contacting property owners who have not obtained permits for fences,

hedges, and walls over the prescribed height. If you are considering a fence or any building project, call the Planning Division at 263-2221 or check the County Zoning Ordinance on line at www.co.lake.ca.us and confirm if permits or clearances are necessary before you build. The time you take before constructing a fence, wall and/ or hedge in your front, side or back of your property can save time and money. If there are fences, walls or hedges in your neighborhood that do not meet these guidelines and may be a hazard because of poor driving visibility, share this article with your neighbor or phone Code Enforcement at 263-2309.

The fences pictured above all require a Minor Use Permit.

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The ordinance states: Fences, walls and hedges not exceeding four (4) feet in height may be placed in the required front yard (setback) of an interior lot. Fences and walls in excess of three (3) feet in height but not higher than four (4) feet may occupy any required front yard of a corner lot, provided that the portion exceeding three (3) feet that is located within: 1) fifty (50) feet of the corner property line(s) or extended corner property line(s), or 2) from the edge of a prescriptive right of way, whichever provides the most unobstructed vision, is constructed of wire mesh, chain link or other material allowing unobstructed visibility. Fences, walls and hedges exceeding four (4) feet but six (6) feet or less may be approved in the required front yard area upon first securing a minor use permit in each case if the Review Authority makes the following additional findings:

1. Approval will not result in obstruction of sight distance so as to create or increase any traffic safety hazard.
2. The design of the project provides for off-street, on-site parking for one (1) vehicle in tandem to any gated vehicle entrance.

