



**Franklin County**  
*A Natural Setting for Opportunity*

***Development Services***  
***Department of Building Inspections***

**Retaining Wall Guidelines**

2012 Virginia USBC- Exemptions from Permits

Retaining Walls supporting less than three (3) feet of unbalanced fill. This exemption shall not apply to any wall impounding Class I, II or III-A liquids or supporting a surcharge other than ordinary unbalanced fill.

Permits are required for walls not meeting the above exemption per the following table.

<u>Height of Unbalanced Fill</u>	<u>Permit Required</u>	<u>Design Required</u>
<3 Feet	No	No
3 – 4 Feet	Yes	No
4 – 6 Feet	Yes	Yes*
6 – 10 Feet	Yes	Yes*
> 10 Feet	Yes	Yes **

\* Standard manufacturer designs are acceptable for walls up to 6 feet in height or fill. Walls exceeding six feet in height are required to bear the stamp of a Virginia Registered Design Professional.

\*\* Walls exceeding 10 feet in height or unbalanced fill are required to meet the requirements of the Special Inspections Program.

Minimum Design Plan Information;

- Minimum scale ¼ inch=1foot; all dimensions must be shown.
- Specifications for construction materials.
- Specifications for the backfill material and compaction requirements.
- Wall elevations and multiple cross sections of each retaining wall, to include structural details. The actual ground slope at the top and the toe of the retaining wall.
- Bearing capacity of the foundation soil.
- Method for drainage.
- Plans indicating walls which extend across multiple properties must include a description of provisions to be made to provide access and maintenance of the wall.

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