

Date Rec'd \_\_\_\_\_

Permit No. \_\_\_\_\_

## Fence Permit Application

A permit MUST be issued prior to commencement of work.

Please return to the City of Decorah Building Department or via email to [gswanson@decorah.iowa.gov](mailto:gswanson@decorah.iowa.gov)

**Please see the following attachment for fence ordinance and requirements table.**

Project address: \_\_\_\_\_ Addition \_\_\_\_\_ Block \_\_\_\_\_ Lot \_\_\_\_\_ Zone \_\_\_\_\_

Permit Applicant.  Owner  Designer  Contractor

**Owner** \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Contractor** \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

State License/ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Valuation of Work \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (include Labor and Material) (see building valuation data for additional info)

Fence Request: \_\_\_\_\_ Height (Indicate below if multiple heights)

\_\_\_\_\_ Length

Provide Description of Materials Used (Chain Link, Wood, Vinyl, Etc.) along with a site plan on separate paper showing location of proposed fence.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Class of Work.  Residential  Commercial  Other

**\*It is the responsibility of the property owner to verify property line locations and markers prior to install of fence.**

**\*\*Call 811-IOWA ONE CALL before digging\*\***

**Any request for a fence with minor exception or otherwise forbidden by zoning ordinance and requirements table, will be subject to a variance by the City of Decorah Board of Adjustments.**

Notice: I hereby certify that I have read and examined this application and know the same to be true and correct. All provisions of laws and ordinances governing this type of work will be complied with whether specified herein or not. The granting of this permit does not presume to give authority to violate or cancel the provision of any other state or local law regulating construction or the performance of construction. Any unapproved construction made herein shall make the application invalid.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
For office use only

\_\_\_\_\_  
Building/ Zoning Approval Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Approval Date

**Fencing Requirement Table-** (Permanent partition, structure, or gate erected as a dividing marker, barrier, or enclosure encircling either wholly or any portion of any area.) Permit Required

Classification	Ordinance	Allowable Height	Allowable Height in front yard	Allowable Height within Side and Rear Yards	Allowable Height Corner Lot	# Note Below
Single Family Residential R-1 (Similar requirements for R-2, R-3)	17.68.030 I.	8 feet maximum	4 feet maximum	8 feet maximum From front line of dwelling to rear property line	4 feet maximum Along entire frontage/ property line	
Mobile home park R-4	17.80.030 D.	8 feet maximum	4 feet maximum	8 feet maximum From front line of dwelling to rear property line	4 feet maximum Along entire frontage/ property line	
Junk Dealers	5.04.220	8 feet minimum				#2
Industrial M-1	17.108.030 E	8 feet maximum				#5
Industrial M-2	17.108.030 E	8 feet maximum				
Industrial M-3	17.116.020 C.6c, e	6 feet minimum 8 feet maximum				#2, 3
Highway Commercial C-1	17.88.030 E	8 feet maximum				#5
General Retail & Service C-2	17.92.030 E	4 feet maximum				#5
Central Business District C-3 (Historic)	17.92.030 E	4 feet maximum				
Shopping Center Commercial C-4	17.100.030	4 feet maximum				#4, 5
Office Park Commercial C-5	17.104.030 D	8 feet maximum				
Hospital Medical District H-M	17.106.030 F	8 feet maximum				#5

**Notes:**

1. All other classifications not listed above shall apply to a similar structure, use, or premise.
2. Fence must be solid to hide contents of the yard. Contents shall not stack higher than the surrounding fence. Same applies to the gates.
3. Only 1 opening per each 200 linear feet on a public street.
4. Shopping Center side or rear abuts R Zone- 6 foot fence shall be constructed along Property Line.
5. A screening fence may be authorized or required.

## 17.16.135 - Fences.

It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to construct or cause to have constructed any fence upon any property within the corporate limits of the City of Decorah, except in accordance with the requirements and restrictions herein provided.

A. **Permit Required.** A fence permit, approved by the zoning administrator, shall be required before the erection, construction, alteration, placing, or locating of all fences conforming to this title. Application for such permit shall contain any and all information, including drawings, required and necessary for the determination of whether the erection of such fence would be contrary to the provisions of this title. Any permit issued under the provisions of this title in which construction has not been completed within six months from the date of issuance shall expire.

B. [Definitions.] For the purpose of this section, certain terms are herewith defined as follows:

"Adjacent Grade" means the average grade measured at a point three feet on each side of the fence. In the case of a fence on a retaining wall, adjacent grade shall be the grade of the top of the wall.

"Decorative Fence" means any fence of non-permanent nature, 24" maximum height, easily removed.

"Decorative Structure" means any structure or placed item of non-permanent nature, 24" maximum height, easily removed.

"Fence" means any permanent partition, structure, or gate erected as a dividing marker, barrier, or enclosure, encircling either wholly or any portion of any area.

"Height" means the average distance between the top element in the fence and the adjacent grade over a straight section of fence with no corners.

"Living Fence" means fences consisting of living hedges, bushes or shrubs.

"Protective measures fence" means a fence erected for the express purpose of protecting an enclosed area and the property therein, or a fence intended to deny access to a dangerous property or location.

C. Requirements Applicable to All Fences.

1. All fences must be located on the private property of the person, firm, or corporation constructing the fence and shall not extend toward the street beyond the front property line.
2. Fences shall be constructed with boards, chain link construction, stone or other suitable material firmly connected to posts sunk in the soil at a depth necessary to properly support the fence.
3. Decorative or finished side of fence must face neighboring properties with posts to applicant side, except where a written agreement between two property owners has been established.
4. No fence shall be constructed, maintained, or placed on any property of metal construction or otherwise, which is charged or connected with an electrical current in such manner as to transmit said current to persons, animals, or things which intentionally or unintentionally might come in contact with it.
5. Barbed wire is prohibited except as permitted by the zoning administrator on approved protective measures fences.
6. Where a fence is made up of individual strands of wire, rope, or similar material smaller than one inch in width, thickness, or diameter, the strands must be strung between posts parallel with the grade of the land, must be evenly spaced between the top and bottom of the posts, and must be no more than six inches apart.
7. No fence located at a street intersection may exceed four feet in height for the entire length of each property line from the corner of the right -of-way. Alleys shall be treated as street intersections for purposes of clear vision requirements. Exception: fences paralleling alley property line shall maintain a four feet maximum height for a minimum of 10 feet.
8. All Fences paralleling alley property lines shall maintain a 5 foot setback.
9. Concertina wire, and similar types of fences with sharp edges designed to injure, are prohibited.

D. Special Purpose Fences.

1. Protective Measures Fence. A protective measures fence may only be erected upon a finding by the board of zoning appeals of the need for such fence. The applicant does not need to demonstrate hardship, only the need for the fence. In approving such a fence, the administrator shall determine that the definition of a protective measures fence is met and that there is no reasonable alternative to the erection of the fence. A protective measures fence shall not exceed ten feet in height in the M Industrial districts, ten feet in height in the C Commercial districts, and eight feet in height in all other districts. The owner of a protective measures fence may be granted permission to erect necessary and reasonable barriers along the uppermost edge of such fence including barbed wire.

2. Living Fences. Hedges, bushes or shrubs shall be allowed to be used as living fences and shall comply with all the ordinance requirements of Chapter 17 Fences and Chapter 12 Boulevards. Exception: permitting is not required.

E. Maintenance Required. Fences must be maintained so as not to endanger life or property. Any fence which, through lack of repair, type of construction, or otherwise, imperils life or property, shall be deemed a nuisance and [Chapter 8.04](#) shall apply.

F. Unsafe Fences. Fences containing barbed wire, concertina or similar wire, individual strand fences not meeting the spacing requirements or specifications of a special purpose fence, and electric fences are hereby declared hazardous to public safety. The zoning administrator may order the removal of such fences.

(Ord. No. 1175, § 1, 8-17-2015)

**17.68.030 - Permitted accessory uses.**

I. Fences located in side yards and rear yards shall not exceed eight feet in height. Fences shall not exceed eight feet in height between the front line of that dwelling and its rear property line as defined in the zoning ordinance. A fence in a front yard shall not exceed four feet in height. On the street sides of corner lots, a fence shall not exceed four feet in height. A screening fence may be authorized or required by city ordinance or administrative board or official, or by state law.

**17.80.030 - Permitted accessory uses.**

I. Fences located in side yards and rear yards shall not exceed eight feet in height. Fences shall not exceed eight feet in height between the front line of that dwelling and its rear property line as defined in the zoning ordinance. A fence in a front yard shall not exceed four feet in height. On the street sides of corner lots, a fence shall not exceed four feet in height. A screening fence may be authorized or required by city ordinance or administrative board or official, or by state law.