


CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER		POLICY	DENVER FIRE DEPARTMENT
Subject:	SECURITY FENCES AND WALLS AND PERMIT APPLICATION		
Reference:	2019 Denver Fire Code, 2018 IFC, 2018 IBC		
Approved:			Manuel Almaguer Division Chief, Fire Prevention Division
Number:	2018 IFC, 2019 DFC, 2018 IBC	Effective Date: May 12, 2020	Page 1 of 7

This policy is meant to provide basic information in any given occupancy. All other Fire Code requirements will be addressed and enforced by the Fire Inspector during inspections. Questions can be addressed to the Fire Prevention Division office between 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday thru Friday, at (720) 913-3474 or at [DENFPB@DENVERGOV.ORG](mailto:DENFPB@DENVERGOV.ORG). For inspection requests from the Flammables group, please call (720) 913-3440. Permits may be obtained via E-Permits – Accela Citizen Access available at [Denver Fire Department - Fire Safety Operational Permits](#).

## I. SCOPE

This policy covers permitting requirements as they pertain to the installation of barbwire, security fences, walls and electrical fences in the City and County of Denver.

## II. GENERAL INFORMATION

Barbed and razor wire and other sharp, pointed material (e.g., glass shards, metal spikes, etc.) mounted on top of walls and roofs, and electrically charged fences, give our commercial areas a blighted appearance and lower property values. They also expose unsuspecting, innocent parties, including Denver Firefighters and Police officers responding to a call for assistance, to serious injury, yet rarely deter (and may actually encourage) crime. The restrictions on the above-referenced security fences apply to all properties in all areas of the City and County of Denver.

Denver Fire Code contains specific restrictions to property security devices, including the following:

The following prohibitions shall apply to all fences, walls or retaining walls, regardless of height:

- A. The use of barbed wire or any other sharp-pointed material as a fencing material or on top of fences or retaining walls is prohibited except when specifically approved by the Department.
- B. The use of electrically charged fences or portion of fence on top of fences or walls is prohibited.
- C. The use of broken glass or metal spikes on top of security fences or walls is prohibited in all applications.
- D. The use of razor wire is prohibited in all applications.

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**Fences, walls, retaining walls, and similar barriers.** The use of barbed wire or any other sharp-pointed material, devices or features that deliver a physical or health hazard on, as, or on top of, fences, walls, retaining walls, or similar barriers, regardless of height, is prohibited except as provided.

**Exception:** Barbed wire may be installed where *approved* by the *fire code official* and a permit is obtained.

It shall be unlawful for any person within the city to place, build or erect a fence, railing or guard of any kind constructed of barbed wire, iron spikes, or other sharp-pointed material. However, this section shall not prohibit the use of such material under the following conditions:

- A. Police and correctional facilities;
- B. Located in commercial or industrial zoning districts, or for government use; and
- C. Approved by the Fire Official, after a review of the documentation indicating the need for security and bona-fide operation of a business.
- D. The Fire Official may approve as a special exception the placement of barbed wire for security reasons around commercial or industrial uses, transformer stations, microwave stations, or other similar public necessity or dangerous sites, provided that the applicant has shown that the fence is reasonably necessary for security and/or safety, that it protects people from dangerous sites and conditions. The barbed wire strands shall not slant outward from the fence more than sixty (60) degrees from a vertical line.
- E. In all cases where security fencing or walls as described in this policy is/are requested, an application shall be made to the Denver Fire Department and an annual, renewable permit shall be issued and maintained, provided any barbed wire is securely affixed to the top of a soundly constructed fence or structural barrier which is at least six (6) feet in height. Further, regardless of the zoning district, barbed wire meeting the aforementioned height standards may be used for security around hazardous equipment or installations, such as but not limited to, high-voltage equipment, electrical transformer, volatile fuel installation, etc., provided that the requested fence is not on the property line of a lot that is occupied as a place of residence. No strand of barbed wire shall be permitted to be placed lower than six (6) feet high, and no more than three (3) strands of barbed wire are permitted.

Any person, firm, or corporation that owns or leases property upon which a fence screen is located shall be responsible for the repair, upkeep, maintenance, and reconstruction of any such fence or privacy screen and any area adjacent thereto... If ownership of a fence located upon a property line is joint or cannot be determined, then each party owning or leasing property adjacent to the fence shall be responsible for its care, and maintenance.

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### III. **ELECTRIC FENCES**

**Electrified fences.** Electrified fences may be permitted by specific approval of the *fire code official*. Only fences powered by a 12- volt direct current (DC) power source shall be considered. The following shall be required for approval of an electrified fence.

- A. Provision for approved shutdown of fence power for emergency access. Property owner and fence manufacturer 24-hour contact information shall me provided in an approved location for emergency access.
- B. Procedures for facility inspection shall be developed and maintained on-site.
- C. Specific approval by a Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL) for the use of the equipment under the relevant codes and standards and for the application of use at a specified location.
- D. Provisions for fire drills and evacuation plan procedure, as applicable.
- E. Installer certification issued by fence manufacturer.
- F. Lease agreement with equipment manufacturer to include equipment maintenance plan and associated services
- G. Electric fence shall be located within the perimeter of a non-electrified fence not less than six feet tall.
- H. Electric fence and all associated operational components shall remain the property of the manufacturer and be maintained by same or manufacturer approved contractor.
- I. Property and fence manufacturer shall maintain liability insurance of at least one million dollars (\$1,000,000) for accident or personal injury as a result of the fence
- J. Upon transfer of property, new ownership shall agree to conditions for use of the electric fence and obtain a permit from the Fire Department.
- K. Upon cancellation/termination of the equipment lease, all electric fence components shall be removed, and the Fire Department notified.
- L. All equipment shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer’s installation instructions and appropriate equipment listings. There shall be **NO EXCEPTIONS** to this requirement.
- M. Warning signage shall be posted in accordance with manufacturer’s recommendations, with not more than 150-feet of distance between signs.
- N. Height of the electric fence shall not exceed 10 feet.
- O. Annual inspection of security fence system shall be conducted by Fire Prevention personnel.

#### **Shop drawing submittal**

Two copies of installation shop drawings shall be provided to the department for review and approval prior to any electric fence installation. Information shall include:

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- A. Property owner name, address and signed authorization for installation and stated compliance with this policy.
- B. Manufacturer name of the fence, contractor information installing the fence and contractor installation certification
- C. Property address and business function
- D. Equipment cut sheets, and project specifications
- E. Installation drawings of fence location on property, property lines and streets and/or public alleys.
- F. Site access points

#### IV. **PERMITS**

Upon approval of a Barb-Wire or Electric Fence Permit, a Denver Fire Department Fire Prevention Inspector will conduct a field inspection of the site. Compliance with **all** Fire Code requirements shall be maintained at all times. Permits shall be kept on site and posted. A permit is valid for the business/property owner, time frame, and site address indicated on the permit.

- A. **Revocation** - A permit may be revoked if:
  - 1. Any of the conditions or limitations set forth in the permit have been violated.
  - 2. Compliance with written orders has not been achieved.
  - 3. False statements or misrepresentations of information provided in the permit application are discovered.
  - 4. The permit is issued in error or in violation of a City ordinance, or a Fire Code violation exists.
- B. **Annual Permits**
  - 1. Annual permits shall be issued upon approval, issuance, and final inspections of required construction fire permits.
  - 2. An annual permit shall be obtained from the Denver Fire Department's Fire Prevention Division for Barbwire Electrical Fences as defined in the scope.

#### C. **PERMIT COST**

- 1. See Permit Fee Table at [www.denvergov.org/Fire](http://www.denvergov.org/Fire) for current fees.