

# Retaining Walls

## What is a retaining wall?

A structure that holds back soil or rock from a building, structure or area. Retaining walls prevent downslope movement or erosion and provide support for vertical or near-vertical grade changes.



### Inspection Services Department

171 North Ross Street  
Auburn, AL 36830  
(334) 501-3170

### Hours of Operation

Monday—Friday  
7:30 am - 4:30 pm

## What is required to construct a retaining wall?

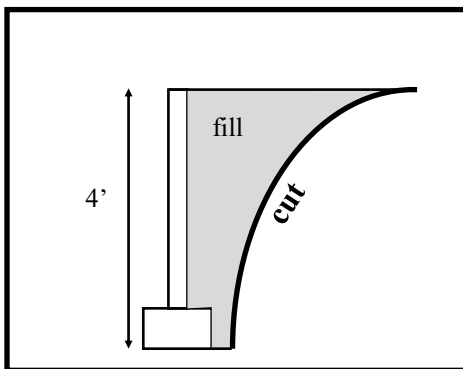
Building permits are required for any retaining wall that exceeds four (4) feet in height (as measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall).

An engineered design in accordance with accepted engineering practices to ensure stability against overturning will be required when:

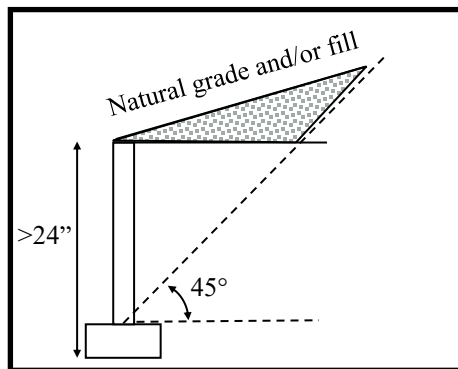
1. The retaining wall is over four (4) feet in height
2. The retaining wall is greater than twenty-four (24) inches in height that supports a surcharge (any additional load bearing on or against the wall, such as fill material) behind or above the wall.

## What is Surcharge

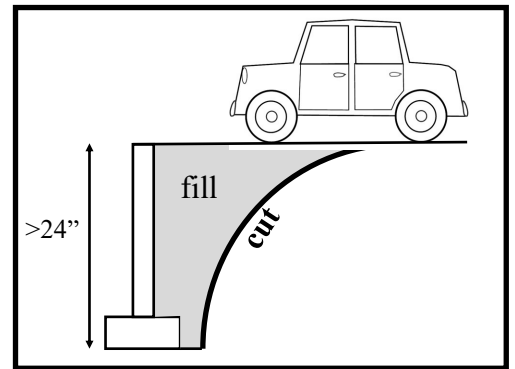
No surcharge



Surcharge



Surcharge



The information contained within this bulletin is the most common needed to obtain a permit and is not representative of all the conditions that may be encountered during the construction of your project.

It is the responsibility of the permit holder or the permit holder's representative to notify the city when the stages of construction are reached that require an inspection. All inspections need to be requested 24 hours prior by calling Inspection Services at 334-501-3170, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday