



General Floodplain Development Permit

County of Henrico, Virginia

Department of Public Works, Design Engineering Division

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Section 1: General Information

- As outlined in the [Henrico County Code, Chapter 10, Article 1: Floodplain Management](#), a Floodplain Development Permit is required for any development in or adjacent to a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA).
- A General Permit may be used to allow development in the SFHA that will inherently not increase the base flood elevation (BFE) or would result in no technically measurable increase to the BFE.
- Development that is considered compliant under a General Permit requires county review if located in a floodway or when improvements, taken together, may exceed 40% of the assessed value of the improved structure, not including the land.

Section 2: Approved Development Activities Under this General Permit

Below is a list of development activities that are considered compliant with the Floodplain Ordinance requirements and are allowed under a General Permit. An Individual Permit form is not required to be submitted for the activities listed below. **Unless specified below, the development activities listed under the General Permit may occur without contacting the Floodplain Administrator. All other development activities, including activities listed below that are located in a Floodway, must apply for an [Individual Permit](#).**

- Interior or exterior renovations, with a value less than \$10,000, to a structure if the renovations do not constitute an enlargement or structurally alter the building. This includes:
 - Finishes (flooring, paint, wallpaper, etc.).
 - Cabinetry/trim.
 - Replacement windows, doors, plumbing fixtures, electrical fixtures, roofing, siding, or mechanical appliances not fueled by gas or oil.
- Mailboxes.
- Swing sets/Play equipment.
- General farming that does not involve earthwork that permanently alters the topography.
- Gardening that does not involve earthwork that results in permanently altered topography.
- Lawns and lawn maintenance activities.
- Routine maintenance of easement and utility corridors.
- Landscaping that involves “soft scaping” such as plantings, landscaping beds, or mulching. This does not include “hardscaping” that permanently alters the topography such as retaining walls, terraces, or pools.
- New or replacement, non-solid fences that meet the requirements in Section 4.4.E of the Floodplain Technical Guidance Manual (also included in Section 3 below).
- Road maintenance involving pavement marking, repaving, patching, or similar work to an existing road, driveway, parking area, sidewalk, bike path, etc. This may also include repairs to existing guardrails/barriers or traffic control devices such as signs. This may not involve replacement with larger or new above ground infrastructure.

- Path or trail maintenance involving painting, repaving, patching, or similar work to an existing path or trail. This may also include repairs to existing guardrails/barriers. This may not involve replacement with larger or new above ground infrastructure.
- General maintenance work to existing culverts, bridges, dams, or stormwater management facilities such as repairs to concrete or other materials, cleaning out debris or sediment, or something similar. This may not involve replacement with larger or new above ground infrastructure.
- Drainage ditch maintenance involving mowing, cleaning out debris or sediment from existing drainage ditches.
- Poles for signs, overhead utilities, billboards, and alike that are no larger than 2 feet in diameter and are not located within the stream channel.
- Underground utilities or repairs to existing underground utilities that do not permanently alter the topography.

Section 3: Additional Fence Types and Requirements

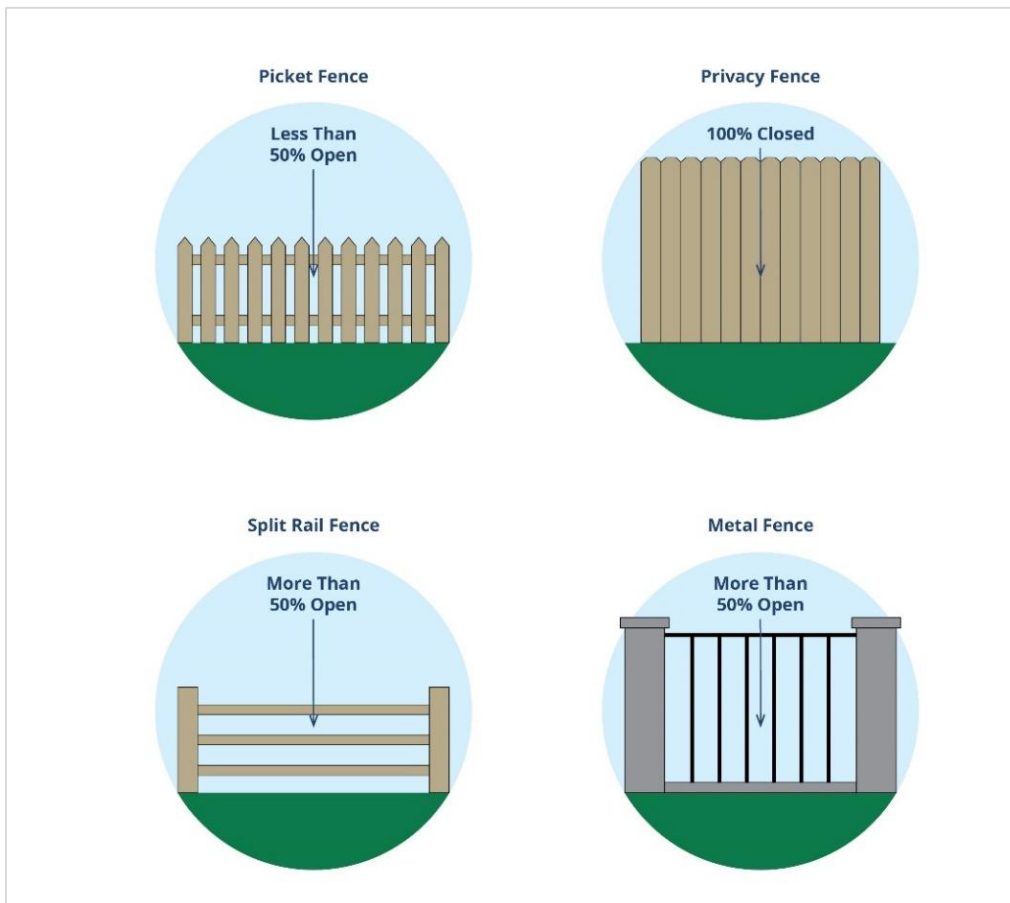
Fences may be permitted in the SFHA depending on the type and location of the fence. The type of fence will determine whether the fence will qualify as a minor project or a floodplain obstruction. Fences considered minor do not require a hydraulic study and can be permitted under a General Permit. **Fences considered a floodplain obstruction will require a hydraulic study and can only be permitted under an Individual Permit.**

The table below outlines the fence types that may be permitted in the SFHA. Case by case reviews may be conducted by the Floodplain Administrator for fence types not listed below, including collapsible or breakaway fencing and fences requiring post spacing shorter than the typical 6-8 foot. **Fences installed around swimming pools must be approved under an Individual Permit, and a building permit may also be required.**

Fence Types and Requirements in the SFHA

	Hydraulic Study Required?	Hydraulic Analysis Modeling Requirements	Permit Type Required
Fence Type	Open wire, welded wire, chain link, pipe, or wood rail fencing (field fence, post and rail)		
	No	N/A	General Permit
	Wood, metal, or vinyl picket fencing with equivalent board width and spacing (roughly 50% obstruction) AND fence line is parallel to direction of flow and in a location that should have minimal impact to the flow.		
	No	N/A	General Permit
	Wood, metal, or vinyl picket fencing with equivalent board width and spacing (roughly 50% obstruction) AND fence line is designed in a way that has potential to block the direction of flow.		
	Yes	Model fencing using increased Manning's friction.	Individual Permit

Fence Type	Hydraulic Study Required?	Hydraulic Analysis Modeling Requirements	Permit Type Required
	Wood, metal, or vinyl fencing with narrow spacing (greater than 50% obstruction).		
	Yes	Model fence as an obstruction.	Individual Permit
	Wood, metal, or vinyl solid board fencing (privacy fencing).		
	Yes	Model fence as an obstruction.	Individual Permit
	Any fence type installed around a swimming pool.		
	Determined by applicable fence type above.		Individual Permit



Example fences with and without proper openings.