



POOL FENCING TIPS

Pool fencing requirements are regulated by the pool enclosure by-law. The by-law permits wooden panel, vertical metal picket, and chain link fences to be used with specific considerations for each style of fence. If you want to use a type of fence not included in the by-law, call our office at 519-688-3009 to discuss your options.

This guide focuses on constructing pool fencing in accordance with the enclosure by-law with examples of both compliant and non-compliant fencing. For information on the permit application process please see our Applying for a Pool Permit Doing it Right. The is Below are several typical examples of compliant and non-compliant fences.

WOOD PANEL FENCING

This is an example of the exterior side of a compliant vertical panel wooden fence. The fence meets the minimum height requirement of 5' and there are no footholds between the bottom rail and the top of the fence.

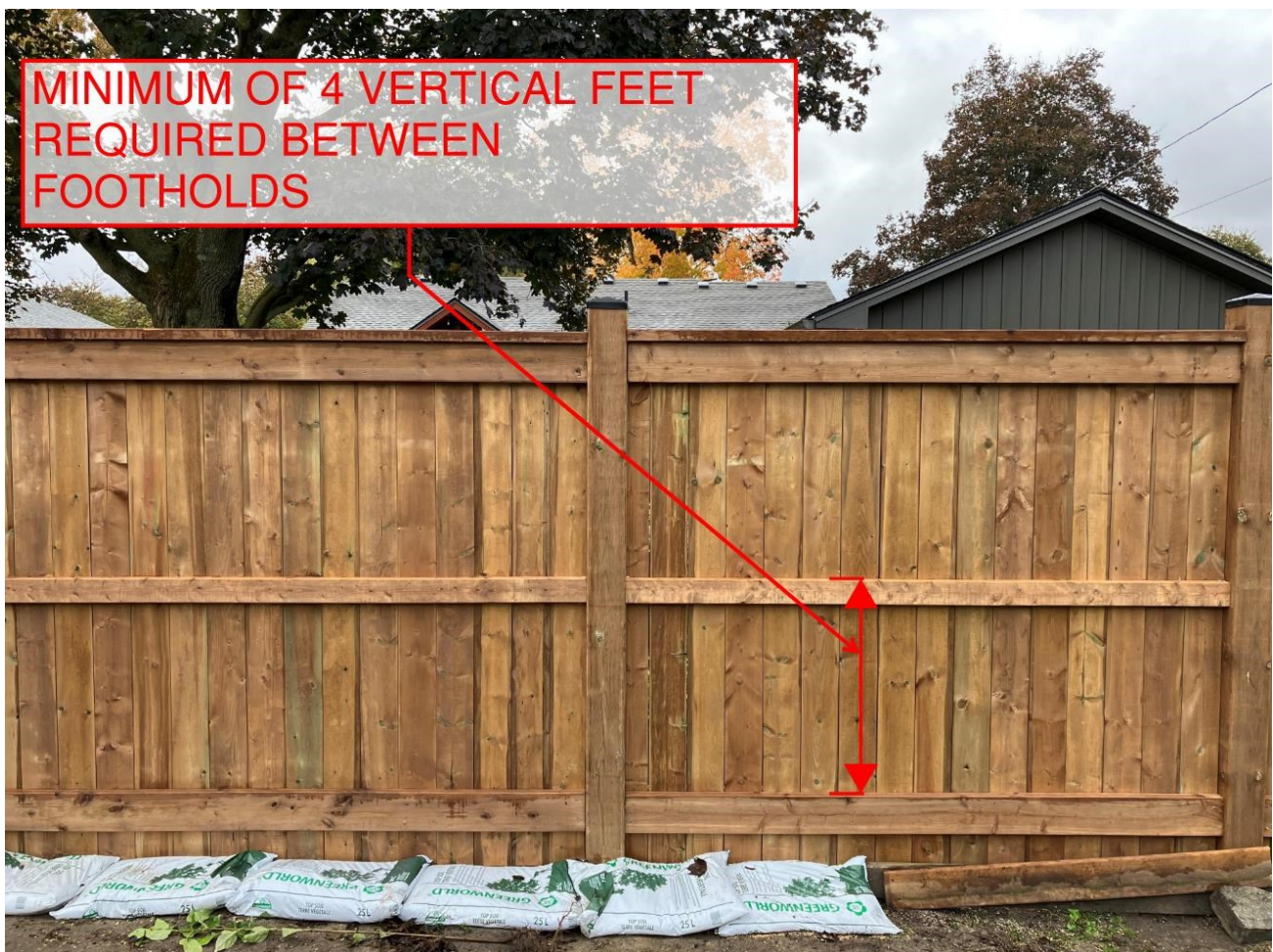


WOOD PANEL FENCING continued

This is an example of the exterior side of an enclosure which would not comply. While the overall enclosure height meets the 5ft height requirement, the by-law also requires a minimum vertical distance of 4' between footholds.

Center rails on the exterior of an enclosure are considered footholds. On this enclosure, the center horizontal rail is only 2ft above the lower rail, and only 2ft below the top of the fence. This enclosure would be considered climbable and would not be comply with the by-law.

Rails should be placed on the inside of the pool enclosure whenever possible to avoid their use as footholds. If only one side of the fence is planned to be boarded, consider your neighbour. If they have a pool as well then both sides of the fence would need to meet the by-law requirements.



WOOD PANEL FENCING continued

Existing fencing is often utilized when proposing a new pool. Fences that are not purpose built as a pool enclosure often do not comply with the pool enclosure by-law, typically due to center rails serving as footholds.

Where it is not practical to remove the cross member, it may be permitted to install a bevel board instead. A 2x2 picket may be cut on a 45 degree angle and fastened on top of the center rail to mitigate its use as a foothold.

The below example has bevel boards placed on the exposed rails. To meet the minimum 4ft vertical distance between footholds requirement, it may only be necessary to cover the center rail with a bevel board.



WOOD PANEL FENCING continued

Horizontal paneling is permitted but is not recommended for use in a pool enclosure. The orientation of the boards means that as they warp the panels becomes very climbable. Due to this effect, the boards must be tightly fitted with no gaps as indicated in the below example.

If the max post spacing of 8ft is used, a vertical slat must be fastened to all the panels at the mid-span between posts to mitigate the warping and keep all the panels together.

It is the pool owners responsibility to maintain their enclosure after the inspections are completed.



VERTICAL METAL PICKET

Vertical metal pickets are another option for pool enclosures. The pickets must be spaced no further than 4in apart. Additionally, the framework must not have any decorative or horizontal elements that could be used to facilitate climbing.

The below photo is an example of a 5ft tall enclosure that was determined to be compliant with the by-law.



VERTICAL METAL PICKET continued

Unlike the previous vertical picket example, this photo shows a fence assembly where the lower bottom rail was raised, and the middle center rail was lowered. This fence does not meet the 4ft vertical distance between foothold requirement and was determined to contravene the by-law.

It is recommended the spacing between the horizontal members be checked prior to purchasing a fencing kit. Some kits may allow the horizontal members to be adjusted to gain compliance, but other kits may have the members welded together.



CHAIN LINK FENCE

Another popular fencing choice for pool enclosures is chain link fencing. Like other fencing options, horizontal members must be kept to a minimum and placed inside the enclosure. The below photo shows a 5ft chain link fence fastened at the top to a rail and at the bottom to heavy gauge wire.

A significant component in determining compliance with chain link is spacing of the mesh used. The “diamond” pattern in the mesh cannot exceed 1.5in when measuring to opposite corners, or the widest distance.

The below fence uses the proper 1.5” diamond mesh pattern that the by-law requires. The smaller opening makes it much more difficult for the mesh to be climbed.



CHAIN LINK FENCE continued

The below photo shows a chain link fence where the mesh pattern is 2.5in measured from opposite corners. This fence mesh spacing is very common and used in all sorts of applications.

The wider spacing makes this mesh very easy to climb. As such this fencing is not permitted in the by-law. Ensure any fencing mesh you purchase for a pool enclosure complies with the 1.5in spacing requirement to avoid this issue.

