



Division of Building Regulation

Retaining Walls

Retaining walls that are not laterally supported at the top and that retain in excess of 36" inches of *unbalanced fill* shall be designed to ensure stability against overturning, sliding, excessive foundation pressure and water uplift. Retaining walls shall be designed for a safety factor of 1.5 against lateral sliding and overturning.

Retaining walls supporting less than 3 feet of unbalanced fill are exempt from permitting requirements.

Retaining walls greater than 3 feet of unbalanced fill are required to be of engineered design.

Section R-404.4 of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Residential Construction Code provides information concerning retaining walls.