

**Q: Can I have chickens, rabbits, horses, goats and/or other animals/livestock at my home?**

A. The keeping of certain animals in McMinnville is regulated, in part, by Section 17.54.140 of the McMinnville Zoning Ordinance, which can be accessed on the City's website. Under certain circumstances, it is permitted to keep chickens, rabbits, horses, goats and/or other livestock. It is not permissible, however, to keep exotic, dangerous or wild animals as determined by the Yamhill County Animal Control Office and the City Planning Department. For further information on this subject, please contact the Planning Department.

**Q: Who owns the property next to me?**

A. Information on property ownership can be obtained by calling the Yamhill County Assessor's Office (503-434-7521).

**Q: Is my property in the floodplain?**

A. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has maps available on their website that can help you to determine if your property is within a floodplain. Floodplain maps are also available for review at the Planning Department. The City restricts most all development from occurring within the 100-year floodplain. Further information regarding the City's Floodplain ordinance can be found in Chapter 17.48 of McMinnville's Zoning Ordinance.

**Q: Can anyone park in front of my house?**

A. The short answer is "yes" because public streets are owned by everyone and don't belong to any one person. However, a vehicle can only remain parked in the same location on a public street for a maximum of 72 hours. Beyond that, you can call the City and have the vehicle's owner fined and (possibly) have the vehicle towed.

**Q: Where can I place a play structure?**

A. As long as the play structure is less than six feet tall, it can be placed anywhere in the rear or interior side yard. If the structure is taller than six feet, it needs to be located at least five feet from the rear and interior side property lines.

**Q: What about bushes at street corners?**

A. Bushes at intersections can become a safety hazard when they grow too tall or grow out over the sidewalk. To help keep residential intersections safe, all plants should be limited to no more than three feet in height within an area called a "vision clearance triangle." This triangle is found by measuring 30 feet down each curb, starting at the intersection. Then connect those two 30-foot points with an imaginary line. This forms the vision clearance triangle. This helps to ensure that anyone approaching the intersection can clearly see any oncoming traffic. The only exception to this rule is that trees planted within this area are permitted as long as they are free of limbs for the bottom eight feet of the tree.

**About this information....**

The McMinnville Planning Department Informational Brochure series has been developed to provide general information on land use regulations commonly affecting activities undertaken by the public and administered by this office. The information contained in these brochures is not intended to be a complete statement of all applicable regulations, and individuals are encouraged to contact the office for complete rules and permitting requirements.



**Get information  
24 hours a day....**

....about zoning, sign code requirements, land use applications and fees, Planning Department staff contacts, parking requirements, landscape requirements, historic preservation, meetings and committees, information about any of the other City departments, and more via the Internet:

<http://www.ci.mcminnville.or.us>



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

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## About the Department....

The Planning Department oversees land-use issues, the zoning ordinance, and economic development. The public is welcome to visit the Planning Department office to meet the staff and to receive help with any development related issues you may have. Also, if you have suggestions as to how we can improve our services, please contact us. We are open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

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## SETBACKS

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### **Q: What are building setbacks?**

A: Setbacks are required minimum distances between a building and the related front, side, exterior side (the street side of a corner lot), or rear property line. Setbacks for your particular property may be determined by calling or stopping by the Planning Department office.

### **Q: Can eaves, decks, and other similar things project into my property setbacks?**

A. Yes, some things can...

- Architectural features such as cornices, canopies, sunshades, chimneys, and flues can project up to 18 inches into a setback.
- Eaves can extend up to 30 inches into a setback.
- An unenclosed covered patio or covered deck (enclosed only by railings) can be placed in a rear yard of a residence as long as it is no closer than 10 feet to the rear property line.
- An uncovered deck can be located in a rear or side-yard setback behind the back building line of the house and no closer than five feet to a property line.
- Stairs may encroach up to five feet into a required front yard, provided that they are not enclosed or covered.

### **Q: Where can I place a swimming pool?**

A: A swimming pool can be located within a rear and/or side setback behind the back building line of the house, and no closer than five feet to a property line.

### **Q: Do I need to fence my swimming pool?**

A. Any pool 48 inches in height above ground level is considered its own fence, provided certain conditions are met. Contact the City Building Department (503-434-7314) for fence requirements for in-ground pools.

### **Q: Where am I permitted to place a storage shed or shop (accessory structure) on my property?**

A. An accessory structure may be placed anywhere on your property, provided you meet the required setbacks. If the structure is no larger than 100 square feet in area, and no more than 10 feet in height (as measured from the ground to the highest point), you may locate it within the rear-yard or side-yard setback and/or up to the property line behind the back building line of the house. Only one accessory structure may be placed within the setback area. If your property is located on a corner lot, contact our office for additional setback requirements.

### **Q: Can I build an addition to my home?**

A. Generally, the answer would be yes, as long as the addition does not encroach into any required setbacks or extend more than 35 feet in height, and that all other required building code requirements are met. In the multi-family zone (R-4), the height limit is 60 feet. You are encouraged to contact the City Building Department for further information regarding such plans.

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## FENCES

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### **Q: What height of fence can I build?**

A. In a front yard, fences can be no taller than three feet in height. A fence exceeding this height must be located no closer to the front-

yard property line than the front-yard setback of that zone. In an exterior side yard (the street side of a corner lot), a fence can be no taller than three feet, unless otherwise approved by the Planning Director. Fences in side yards and rear yards may be a maximum of seven feet in height (contact the Building Division for permit requirements). For the construction of a fence on a slope, contact the Planning Department. Additionally, private covenants may exist for your particular subdivision that would otherwise limit a fence's height or location. You are encouraged to research these documents prior to starting construction of any fence.

### **Q: Can I build a fence on my property line?**

A: A fence may be located up to, but not over, your property line(s).

### **Q: How do I find my property lines?**

A. Obtain a copy of your property's legal description, or copy of the plat map for your subdivision. Using this information, try to locate your property pins (iron rods inserted into the ground in each corner of your property). You may need to use a metal detector to find them. Stringing a line between those pins will give you a fairly accurate idea of where your property lines are. You may also want to hire a surveyor to locate your property corners and lines.

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## BUSINESS QUESTIONS

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### **Q: Do I need a license to operate a business in McMinnville?**

A. No. The City of McMinnville does not require a business license.

### **Q: Do I need a permit to operate a business in my home?**

A. Yes. Businesses operated, or based, from home are required to obtain a Home Occupation Permit from the Planning Department. An application for this permit is available in the

Planning Department, or can be downloaded from the City's web site. Further information regarding Home Occupation Permits and the conditions under which they must operate are found in Chapter 17.67 of the McMinnville Zoning Ordinance.

### **Q: Can I place a sign on my house for my home-based business?**

A: Yes, but it is limited to a name plate not over one square foot in size.

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## OTHER QUESTIONS

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### **Q: How do I find out my property's zoning?**

A. The easiest way to find out your property's zoning is to either call the Planning Department or stop by for a look at our zoning maps. Zoning maps are also available if you want to take one with you.

### **Q: Can I cut down the tree(s) in the planting strip in front of my home?**

A. Only following approval from the City, and only if the tree is dead, dying, severely damaged, or creating a public hazard. If you have a specific question about the removal of a tree in a planting strip, please call the City's Public Works Superintendent (503-434-7316). An application to remove a tree located in a planting strip must be submitted to the Planning Department. The request will be reviewed by the Landscape Review Committee at the next available meeting. You may also call the Planning Department if you have further questions regarding tree removal.

### **Q: Can I use my camper/trailer/RV for temporary or permanent living quarters?**

A. It is possible, but only in limited circumstances. For further information about this, please contact the City Planning Department.