RETAINING WALLS BUILT WITH ALTERNATIVE BLOCK MATERIAL OR STACKED ROCK WALLS

With the increasing use of alternative material for retaining walls instead of the standard concrete masonry units, this policy has been initiated to set the standards for submittal and inspection of these materials.

1. All submittals shall include a copy of the manufacturer’s specifications.

2. Submittals shall include all engineering as required by the manufacturer’s specifications.

3. Submittals shall include a detailed drawing showing the location of the retaining wall including the height of the wall, and the slope of the grade behind the retaining wall, which shall reflect the total height of the slope.

4. Inspection requirements will include a footing inspection prior to installing the footing material specified by the manufacturer or engineer.

5. Periodic inspections will be required during the installation of the retaining wall material to verify that the requirements of the specifications and/or Arizona registrant design have been met. This could include several inspections dependent on the height of the wall and the requirements of the specifications and/or Arizona registrant design. The number of inspections will be determined at the time of plan review based on the details of the submitted plan. In the case where the engineer has required special inspection by a third party inspection agency, the requirement for inspection by the Building Safety Unit will still be enforced.

6. The use of alternative block material in conjunction with landscaping that is not designed to be used as a retaining wall will not require plans or inspections as long as the wall does not exceed four (4') feet in height from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall.

7. Stacked rock walls exceeding 4 foot in height measured from the bottom of the wall or supporting a surcharge shall be designed by an Arizona registrant and requires the Arizona registrant’s final inspection, approval and report prior to Building Safety final.

8. Tiered retaining walls shall have a minimum 2:1 back span or be designed by an Arizona Registrant.
Work exempt from permit R105.2

Retaining walls which are not over thirty-two (32) inches in height, measured from the top of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge or impounding class I, II or III-3A flammable liquids.