

NCLCLB News

Your source for NC Licensed Landscape Contractor information.



FOCUS ON: Failing Walls

The most common customer complaints across the state are about failing retaining walls. As a North Carolina Licensed Landscape Contractor, you have pledged to provide a standard level of landscape service and safety. To help you set the standard on retaining walls there are basic guidelines in the Licensing Law (Rules), based on the insurance industry requirements, concerning height and engineering of walls, and types suitable for varying conditions, i.e. no dry stack stone above three feet above grade.

By law, you must meet these standards:

21 NCAC 28B .0508 WALLS

(a) When installing retaining walls, the licensed contractor shall:

- (1) Adhere to all pertinent codes.
- (2) Adhere to manufacturer's or design professionals specifications.
- (3) Bury the first course of a retaining wall.
- (4) Not construct dry-laid stone walls of a height more than 3 feet above grade.

- (5) Include a subdrain system that is constructed and sized to release the subsurface water behind the wall and not allow hydrostatic pressure to build behind the wall.
- (6) Construct on a level, well-compacted base of granular material at least 6 inches deep.
- (7) Place backfill behind retaining walls in lifts no greater than 6 inches before compacted (each lift shall be well-compacted).
- (8) Prevent excessive runoff from passing over a retaining wall.
- (9) Construct vertically-set timber walls with above-ground heights equal to or less than the depth of timbers below grade.
- (10) Install deadmen every fourth course on 8 feet centers when constructing horizontally-set timber retaining walls with staggered joints.
- (11) Stagger the joints when constructing dry-laid stone walls. If successive vertical joints occur, the licensed contractor shall avoid running vertical joints more than two courses.

(b) When installing freestanding walls, the licensed contractor shall:

- (1) Install footings for masonry and cast-in-place concrete freestanding walls of reinforced concrete. The top of the footing shall be at least 1 foot below grade.
- (2) Reinforce freestanding walls as needed to prevent displacement from wind loads.
- (3) Insure that moisture is prevented from entering a cavity wall during construction.
- (4) Insure that segmental wall construction meets segmental wall manufacturer's specifications.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 89D-15(2); 89D-15(16);
Temporary Adoption Eff. January 1, 2016; Eff. September 1, 2016.*

In addition to the state's Rules, there is a wealth of additional information and best practices in NCLCLB manuals and other industry group documents. Choose resources that work best for your business based on your designs and materials to ensure you are following the law and giving your customers the best service and safety possible. Here are a few example sources:

NCLCLB: Landscape Construction Manual of Practice. Order online:
<https://www.cengagebrain.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/en/micrositesus/1-2AS17ER?catalogId=10057&langId=-1&storeId=10151>

National Concrete Masonry Association:
<http://cmd.ncma.org/srw-best-practices-success/>

National Precast Concrete Association: <http://precast.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Retaining-Wall-Best-Practices-Manual.pdf>

American Society of Landscape Architects:
<https://thefield.asla.org/2015/03/24/dry-stacked-stone-walls/>

Maintaining Your License



Continuing Education

Licensed Landscape Contractors have six months left to complete their continuing education credits for the 2017-2018 license year.

Don't wait until the last minute to complete your continuing education as classes do fill up.

Landscape Contractor licensees need to complete seven (7) hours of Continuing Education (CEL) in a renewal year (August 1 - July 31):

- (3) CEs must be technical (landscape)
- (2) CEs must be business
- The (2) remaining credits can be technical or business.

Benefits to completing credits early:

- Choosing topics you're interested in, not just what is available to meet deadline.
- Saving money on travel and time away from the office.
- Finding available courses in your area before they sell out.
- Having ample time to submit license renewals without stress.

Find all approved classes online:

<https://nclclb.com/continuing-education/continuing-education-approved-courses/>



Disciplinary Statistics

As part of the law's efforts to protect consumers and landscapers, NCLCLB reviews, investigates and settles consumer complaints within its authority.

2016-2017 Disciplinary Statistics

42 - Complaints Received

29 - Dismissed for no jurisdiction (job under \$30,000 threshold, exempt by statute, etc)

17 - Cases investigated and settled

6 - Complaints under investigation



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