

Thinking of building a seawall?

If you're the owner of a coastal property and thinking of constructing a seawall, please get in touch with us early on in your planning. You may need to apply for a building consent and/or resource consent for your work.

Council resource consent and building control staff will work with you to clarify what consents you need. The first step is a meeting to discuss your specific situation.

There are a range of factors that affect building consent and resource consent requirements, including:

Note that in addition to Kāpiti Coast District Council consent(s), you may also need a Greater Wellington Regional Council coastal permit – see 'Coastal permits' over page.

Site boundaries	A property owner's approval is required for building consent and generally for resource consent also. A site survey may be required if it's unclear whether all of the work proposed is within your property.
Volume and location of earthworks	Resource consent is required for earthworks within 20 metres of coastal water, or on slopes of more than 28 degrees, or involving more than 50m ³ of earth and altering the ground level by more than a metre.
Design of proposed wall	As part of the building consent process any potential effects on neighbouring properties, such as erosion, need to be considered. In addition, the intended lifespan of a structure is assessed (a lifespan shorter than the default 50 year period can be nominated).
Height of wall and slope / land use above wall	Most building work requires a building consent. In some circumstances, however, retaining walls 1.5m or less in height do not require building consent – for example if the ground above the retaining wall is flat and there is no additional load such as from a driveway or building. See 'Building consents' over page. Retaining walls over 1.5 metres in height may also require resource consent.

With some details of your specific situation, Council staff can provide advice on your building and resource consent requirements.

Please call us on 0800 486 486 and book a meeting on seawall consent requirements for your property.

Bring along to the meeting any documentation you have and photographs of the location of the intended seawall. It's helpful if your design professional and/or contractor attends the meeting also.

Further information

Resource consents

Where an activity isn't permitted under our Proposed District Plan, property owners are able to apply for resource consent. Find out more at kapiticoast.govt.nz/district-plan and kapiticoast.govt.nz/resource-consents.

Earthworks need a resource consent if they:

- are on slopes of more than 28 degrees.
- are within 20 metres of a waterbody, including wetlands and coastal water, except for cultivation of a field or domestic gardening.
- involve the disturbance of more than 50m³ of land and alter the ground level by more than one metre.

See Chapter 3, Natural Environment (page 3-15), of the Kāpiti Coast Proposed District Plan Appeals Version (2018), for more details.

A retaining wall over 1.5 metres in height is considered to be a building under the District Plan and needs to comply with the relevant zone permitted activity standards for:

- height
- height in relation to boundary
- yard setbacks.

The coastal and relocatable building line restrictions for Paekākāriki, Paraparaumu, and Raumati of the Kāpiti Coast Operative District Plan (1999) also still apply.

Building consents

Most building work requires a building consent, which verifies that the work proposed complies with the Building Code. Find out more at kapiticoast.govt.nz/building-consent-guidelines.

For a guide on building work that doesn't require a building permit see building.govt.nz/schedule-1-guidance. Note that all building work must meet the performance standards set by the

Building Code, even if building consent isn't required.

The Building Act 2004 sets out the rules for the construction of buildings and structures in New Zealand. Sections 71-74 of the Act refer to land subject to natural hazards. See legislation.govt.nz for details.

Coastal permits (administered by Greater Wellington Regional Council)

You may need a coastal permit if your proposed activity will occur within the coastal marine area. The coastal marine area includes the foreshore, seabed, sea surface and air above the sea from the mean high water springs mark:

Mean high water springs means the average of each pair of successive high waters during that period of about 24 hours in each semi-lunation (approximately every 14 days, when the range of tides is the greatest). Visually this level is generally close to being the "high water mark" where debris accumulates on the shore annually.

Greater Wellington are happy to work with you to assist in determining if the proposed work is below the mean high water spring, although a registered surveyor may be required if there is any dispute. If required, a survey would be at your own cost.

Find out more about coastal permits at gw.govt.nz/forms or email Greater Wellington Regional Council at notifications@gw.govt.nz.

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