



BULLETIN RB06-005

(Updated 2015 Dec 10)

USE OF CHAIN-LINK FENCES FOR FENCING AND BARRICADING OF CONSTRUCTION SITES

Reference: Sentence 8.2.1.3.(1), Sentence 8.2.1.3.(2) and NBCC 2005 Intent Statements

Sentence 8.2.1.3.(1) “When a construction or demolition activity may constitute a hazard to the public and is located 2 m or more from a public way, a strongly constructed fence, boarding or barricade not less than 1.8 m in height shall be erected between the site and the public way or open sides of a construction site.”

Sentence 8.2.1.3.(2) “Barricades shall have a reasonably smooth surface facing the public way and shall be without openings, except those required for access.”

Question:

Does chain-link fencing comply with the above Sentences?

Commentary / Relevant Facts:

Intent Statements for 8.2.1.3.(2):

To limit the probability that persons will inadvertently wander onto the site, which could lead to persons being exposed to unsafe conditions, which could lead to harm to persons.

To limit the probability that persons will be injured from contact with rough surfaces of the barricade, which could lead to harm to persons.

The intent of providing a fence or barricade around a construction site is to:

- a) create a barrier against entering (especially by children) into the site, and
- b) prevent debris being accidentally thrown out of the site.

By limiting the height of a fence to 1.8 m, the Code recognizes that there is an extent to the level of safety that it can provide. If a person is intent on entering a site, he/she will overcome any barrier built to prevent such entering. A chain link fence, strongly constructed by being properly attached to posts which are well anchored into the ground will provide a reasonable barrier against entering. Although holes in such a fence can be misused as toe or finger holds, prevention of such abuse is outside the scope of the Code.

The closeness of the wire mesh in a chain-link fence will provide an effective barrier against flying debris in construction sites.

Chain-link fences have the following additional advantages:

- a) relatively low cost for the level of safety they provide, and
- b) by providing visual access, discouraging theft and vandalism inside a site.

Conclusion:

Yes. A chain-link fence is acceptable as fencing for a construction site, to comply with Sentence 8.2.1.3.(1) and Sentence 8.2.1.3.(2) with the following exception:

Chain-link fences should not be used where construction may cause hazard to the public and where a solid enclosure and covered way are required to comply with Sentence 8.2.1.1. and Article 8.2.1.2. of the Code.

Also acceptable is the use of mobile construction fencing which is typically 1.8m in height and made from welded metal tubing panels with wire mesh throughout the interior portion of the panel.

A snow fence may not be substituted for chain-link fence as it does not provide adequate stability and strength as a barrier.

Chief Building Inspector

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