PLANNING & BUILDING SERVICES

SLOPES & SETBACKS

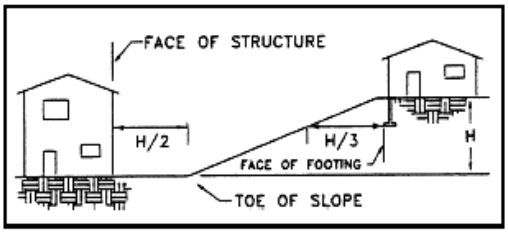
GENERAL INFORMATION

Liberty Lake Critical Areas Ordinance and the International Building Code regulate construction or other activities on or adjacent to slopes. This handout addresses the proper placement of building foundations in relation to adjacent slopes. If you are considering building on or near a slope of 3 Horizontal to 1 Vertical, (33%), the following information may be helpful. All material presented is in compliance with the International Building Code.

This handout serves as a brief overview on Slopes & Setbacks, for more information on specific requirements, please refer to the City of Liberty Lake Building Code.

- A building's clearance, (horizontal distance from an ascending or descending slope), is known as its "setback". Setbacks are required in most situations where a structure is to be built near a slope. This important regulation is a safety measure devised to protect the public and more specifically, the home owner, from the dangers of landslide, slope erosion, and foundation displacement. Note: The building official may approve alternate setbacks, however, an investigation of materials, slope, load intensity and erosion, along with recommendations prepared by a qualified engineer may be required.
  - For a structure at the base of a slope, the setback must be a distance no less than ½ the value of the slope's height. However, this distance need not exceed 15'. The setback should be measured from the face of the building to the toe of the slope. See Figure 1.
  - For a structure at the top of a slope, the setback must be a distance of at least 1/3 the value of the slope's height. This distance need not be more than 40' maximum. In this case, the setback should be measured from the face of the footing to the slope. See Figure 1.

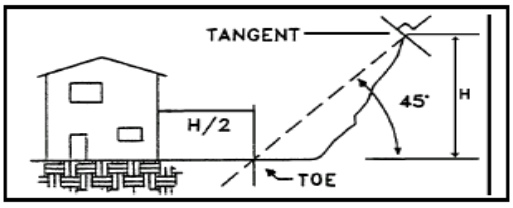
Figure 1



NOTE: If the slope exceeds 1 Horizontal to 1 Vertical, either a special toe or an imaginary slope must be used, depending on the structure's location. The new positions are calculated and can be figured in the following manner:

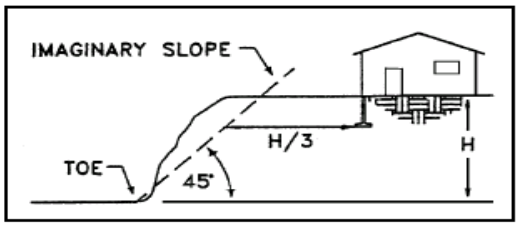
TOE - Draw a plane tangent to the slope at an angle of 45° to the horizontal. The point at which the plane intersects the ground surface is considered the toe. See Figure 2 on Page 2.

Figure 2



TOP - Draw a plane from the toe of the slope at an angle of 45° to the horizontal. The required setback should be measured from this imaginary slope. See Figure 3

Figure 3



Please note that while every effort is made to assure the accuracy of the information contained in this brochure it is not warranted for accuracy. This document is not intended to address all aspects or regulatory requirements for a project and should serve as a starting point for your investigation.

For detailed information on a particular project, permit, or code requirement refer directly to applicable file and/or code/regulatory documents or contact the City of Liberty Lake Planning & Building Services.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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