OTTAWA DEMOLITION CONTRACTORS

Site Fencing & Noise

Site fences, working hours, trees and neighbours during a demolition.

4 Expert Answers from Demolition IQ

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Q1

When does the site fence have to come down after an Ottawa demolition?

Building By-law 2014-220 gives a clear deadline: the site fence must come down no more than 30 days after the demolition is complete.

The same by-law sets out when the fence has to go up in the first place. If the building is 3.0 m or less from a public way, the fence must be 1.8 m high. If a residential building of up to three storeys sits more than 3.0 m from a public way, a 1.2 m fence is required. Gates stay locked whenever the site is unattended. The fence requirement does not apply where all the demolition is contained within an existing structure and entry to the structure is limited, or where the hazard to the public is minimal.

The 30-day removal deadline runs from completion of the demolition, not from the date the permit was issued or the date work started. The by-law also requires the permit holder to give the City notice within two days of completion, so that notice and the fence removal are both tied to the same completion date.

One related timing point: the City requires an inspection at the commencement of demolition, booked 48 hours in advance. That inspection is separate from the fence deadline, but it is worth confirming both dates are in your contractor's plan before work starts.

Make sure the contract states in writing who is responsible for erecting the fence, who removes it, and that removal will happen within the 30-day window the by-law requires.

Q2

Do I have to tell my Glebe neighbours before the house comes down?

We found no City of Ottawa rule requiring you to give your neighbours advance notice before a residential demolition, in the City's demolition pages, the Building By-law or the Demolition Control By-law.

What the City does require is that work stays within the noise hours set by Noise By-law 2017-255. The City's 3-1-1 page groups demolition with infill projects under the stricter infill hours: no equipment before 7 am or after 8 pm on weekdays, and no equipment before 9 am or after 7 pm on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. Those hours limit when equipment may run; they are not a notice requirement.

Two things are worth checking before you get to the question of neighbours at all. First, ask the City whether the property falls inside the Area of Demolition Control under By-law 2012-377, which applies to residential properties in parts of the city and requires a separate demolition control permit. Second, ask the City whether the property is

designated under the Ontario Heritage Act or sits within a Heritage Conservation District, because either of those adds a consent step before demolition can proceed. Neither check involves your neighbours, but both affect your timeline.

The site fence required by Building By-law 2014-220 will be visible from the street: 1.8 m high if the building is within 3.0 m of a public way, 1.2 m high for a residential building of up to three storeys set further back. That fence goes up before work starts and comes down within 30 days of completion. It is a safety requirement, not a notice to neighbours, but it signals that something is happening.

Giving neighbours a heads-up is a practical choice, not a legal one. If you want to know whether anything about your specific property, its lot lines or a shared structure changes that picture, ask the City's Building Code Services before you sign a contract.

Q3

Demolition next to a Centretown sidewalk: what protects people walking by?

Two rules set the physical barriers between a demolition site and a Centretown sidewalk, and they come from different authorities.

Site fencing and covered ways

Building By-law 2014-220 requires the permit holder to erect and maintain a fence before demolition begins. The height that applies depends on the distance from the building to the public way. Where the building is 3.0 m or less from the public way, the fence must be 1.8 m high. Where a residential building of up to three storeys sits more than 3.0 m from the public way, 1.2 m is the minimum. Gates must be locked when the site is unattended. The fence comes down no later than 30 days after demolition is complete. The exemption for work fully contained within an existing structure does not apply to a full demolition next to a sidewalk.

Ontario Regulation 213/91, which binds the constructor doing the work, adds a second layer. Section 65 requires a sturdy fence at least 1.8 m high wherever the work may endanger people on a public way. Section 64 requires a covered way where the work is 4.5 m or less from a public way, unless the work is enclosed. These are the constructor's obligations, separate from the permit holder's.

Where equipment or materials need to occupy the City road allowance, the City's demolition permit page says an Encroachment Permit is required before the demolition begins.

Before you sign a contract, ask the contractor which fencing configuration they plan to install, whether a covered way is required given the distance to the sidewalk, and whether an Encroachment Permit is needed for any

equipment on the road allowance.

Q4

What hours can demolition equipment run on a weekday in Ottawa?

Noise By-law 2017-255 permits construction equipment, including demolition equipment, between 7 am and 10 pm on weekdays. That is the standard window the by-law sets.

There is a stricter set of hours that applies to infill housing work. The City's 3-1-1 page groups demolition projects under those infill hours, which prohibit equipment before 7 am or after 8 pm on weekdays. If your project falls under the infill category, the effective window is 7 am to 8 pm Monday through Friday.

Weekends and holidays differ too. Under the general hours, equipment may not run before 9 am on a Sunday or holiday. Under the infill hours, it may not run between 7 pm and 9 am on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. The by-law's definition of construction includes dismantling and demolition, so these hours cover the demolition itself. Ask the contractor which set of hours they will plan the job around.

The by-law also sets out an exemption for construction equipment outside these hours, which needs the Ward Councillor's agreement and has to be applied for at least 60 days ahead. We found no City rule requiring you to notify neighbours before a residential demolition begins.

Before you agree to a start date, ask the contractor which hours the crew will keep and put them in the contract.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Ottawa Demolition Contractors. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified contractors and your local building authority (the City of Ottawa) before any demolition. The City requires a permit to demolish a building or structure, and every utility connected to the property signs off before the permit is issued. Information is current as of November 22, 2026 and may change. Visit **ottawademolitioncontractors.ca** for the latest answers.