



THE TOWN OF *INDIAN RIVER SHORES*

Seawall Construction Permitting Checklist

To build or repair a seawall in Indian River Shores, you will need to submit the following:

Essential Forms & Disclosures

- Multi-Trade Permit Application: One fully completed [Multi-Trade Combined Permit Application Form](#) signed by both the property owner and the contractor.
- Town Stormwater Permit: A completed [Stormwater Permit Application](#) detailing how the upland drainage profile changes with the new wall. (If applicable).
- Subcontractor Affidavits: Required if independent electrical (for dock lighting/lifts) or plumbing subs are tied to the job.
- Recorded Warranty Deed: A recorded copy verifying property ownership.
- Recorded Notice of Commencement (NOC): Must be officially recorded at the Indian River County Clerk's office and uploaded before the town will schedule the first site inspection.

Signed & Sealed Engineering Plans

All technical documents must be digitally signed and sealed by a Florida Licensed Design Professional (Civil/Coastal Engineer):

- Structural Cross-Sections: Complete blueprints detailing the bulkhead material, sheet pile driven depth, concrete cap specifications, and the tie-back anchor layout.
- Certified Boundary Survey & Site Plan: Must accurately map the Mean High Water Line (MHWL) and show the exact footprint of the new wall relative to your property lines.
- Adjoining Profile Overlays: Clear elevation callouts proving the new cap height integrates flush with your immediate neighbors' existing seawall caps.
- Geotechnical/Soil Report: A localized soil analysis report ensuring the ground can take the weight of the structure.

Environmental Surveys & Approvals

- Certified Tree Survey: A survey highlighting the exact house/site overlay. This must prove heavy machinery will not compress protected roots or alter coastal tree canopies.
- Erosion Justification: Licensed engineer statement verifying that non-structural approaches (like living shorelines or riprap) are structurally inadequate to handle active erosion.

- FDEP Permit Approval: Copy of the approved Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.
- USACE Section 404 Clearance: Exemption or permit documentation from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Seawall Height

The Florida Building Code (FBC) does not set a single, statewide mandatory seawall height. Instead, the state delegates authority to local municipalities and counties to dictate specific elevation requirements based on regional flood risks, tidal data, and sea-level rise projections.

Seawall heights in Indian River Shores are not arbitrarily assigned. Instead, engineering plans are evaluated on a case-by-case basis during the building permit process, relying heavily on the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) of your specific parcel.

The Baseline: The top of the new concrete or vinyl seawall cap will be engineered to tie flush into your yard's natural grade and align cleanly with the heights of adjacent properties to prevent blocking views or causing pooling water.

The FEMA Tie-In: The engineer will factor in the local Base Flood Elevation (BFE). Town floodplain management rules require the finished floor of nearby structures to be elevated 2 feet above BFE. Your seawall height will be calculated to handle corresponding storm surges and retain backfill safely.

Environmental & Location Constraints

Oceanfront / Atlantic Side: Consistent with state, county and local regulations, construction of a vertical seawall on the oceanfront is generally prohibited. The state Coastal Construction Control Line (CCCL) and local environmental policies prioritize natural dune dynamics and "living shorelines". Seawalls are usually only permitted as an emergency measure to protect an existing structure in imminent danger.

Lagoon: If you are building along the Indian River Lagoon, you must ensure that your seawall height and grading do not create localized flooding. The Town requires that grading abutting a water feature incorporate water detention to limit direct, unmanaged runoff into the aquatic preserves.

For further questions please contact the Indian River Shores Building Department at inspections@indianrivershores.gov.