



# **KJ Landscape & Design Reveals Permit and Bylaw Requirements Homeowners Miss Before Landscape Projects**

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KJ Landscape & Design, a full-service landscaping and outdoor design company serving residential and commercial properties across the region, has published guidance highlighting the permit and municipal bylaw requirements that property owners most commonly overlook before initiating landscape projects. The findings reflect a pattern observed repeatedly by landscapers in Ottawa, Ontario: homeowners who skip the regulatory review phase early in planning frequently face project delays, mandatory redesigns, or municipal fines that add high cost to what began as a straightforward outdoor improvement.

The guidance is particularly timely as the summer construction season drives a sharp increase in landscaping activity across Ontario. Many homeowners begin planning retaining walls, driveways, patios, and tree removals without first consulting their municipality's zoning and building departments. This gap is one of the most avoidable and costly mistakes property owners make, and one that experienced contractors encounter on a regular basis.

Among the most frequently missed requirements is the building permit threshold for retaining walls. In many Ontario municipalities, retaining walls exceeding a certain height – commonly 600 millimetres – require a building permit before construction begins. Homeowners who proceed without one risk orders to stop work, mandatory inspections, or even demolition of completed structures. Drainage bylaws present a related concern, as they govern how surface water is managed on residential lots and can impose restrictions that affect grading plans and patio placement well before a single stone is laid.

"Most homeowners assume that landscape work on their own property is unregulated, and that assumption creates real problems down the line," said Jamie, Founder and Lead Designer at KJ Landscape & Design. "Understanding the permit landscape before a shovel goes in the ground protects the investment and keeps the project on schedule."

Hardscape installations are among the project types most likely to intersect with local bylaws. Interlocking in Ottawa driveways and walkways that alter lot grading or redirect stormwater onto neighbouring properties may trigger grading permit requirements, and some municipalities require site plan approval for projects that exceed a specified impervious surface area. Contractors who review these thresholds at the design stage can help property owners structure their projects to stay within compliant parameters from the outset.

Tree removal is another area where regulatory requirements frequently catch property owners off guard. Many municipalities across the province have enacted tree protection bylaws that restrict or prohibit the removal of trees above a specified trunk diameter without prior approval. Property owners are well-served by engaging a qualified Ottawa tree service provider early in the planning process, one that can assess whether targeted trees fall under municipal protection and obtain the necessary approvals before removal work begins.

The firm advises homeowners to review three categories of requirements before initiating any landscape project: building and grading permits issued by the local municipality, utility locate requests to identify buried infrastructure, and conservation authority regulations that apply to properties near waterways, wetlands, or flood-plain zones. Experienced contractors familiar with local regulations can often identify applicable requirements during the initial consultation, helping clients avoid the administrative and financial consequences of non-compliance.

"Permit requirements exist to protect neighbourhoods, property values, and the natural environment," said Jamie. "Working with landscape contractors who understand the local regulatory framework is one of the most practical ways homeowners can protect themselves."

KJ Landscape & Design is a locally owned and operated company specializing in full-service landscape design, hardscaping, interlocking, softscaping, and tree care for residential and commercial properties across the Ottawa region and surrounding Ontario communities, including Barrhaven, Kanata, Stittsville, Manotick, Kemptville, and Greely.

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## **KJ Landscape & Design**

*KJ Landscape & Design is a trusted Ottawa landscaping company specializing in custom outdoor living spaces, interlock walkways, patios, retaining walls, pools, tree services, and landscape design.*

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