

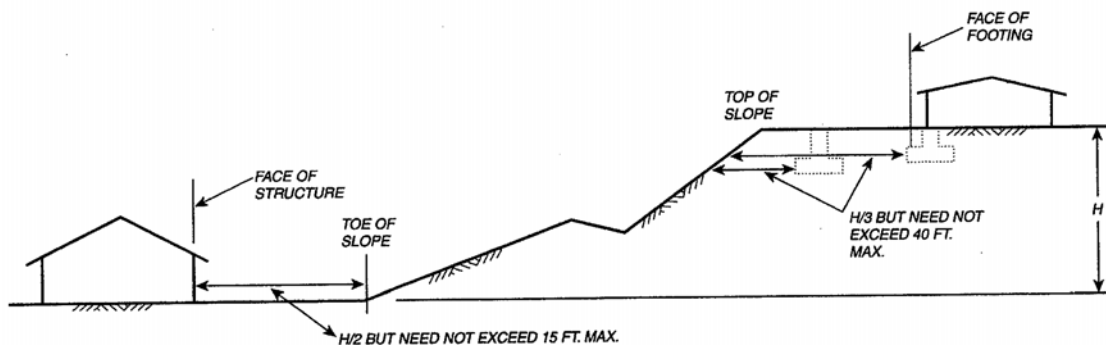
Development Services Center

BUILD-10 Slopes and Setbacks

This handout regards the proper placement of building foundations in relation to adjacent slopes. If you are considering building on or near a slope of 3 Horizontal : 1 Vertical (33%), the following information may be helpful. All material presented here is in compliance with the International Building Code (IBC), Chapter 18.05.

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 homeowner - from the dangers of landslide, slope erosion, and foundation displacement. (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.)

- 1) For a structure at the **base** of a slope, the setback must be a distance no less than $1/2$ the value of the slope's height. (However, this distance need not exceed 15 feet). The setback should be measured from the face of the building to the toe of the slope. See Figure 1805.3.1 from page 347 of the IBC, below.
- 2) 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 feet maximum). In this case, the setback should be measured from the face of the footing to the slope. See Figure 1805.3.1 from page 347 of the IBC, below.



For SI: 1 foot = 304.8 mm.

FIGURE 1805.3.1
FOUNDATION CLEARANCES FROM SLOPES



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