OTTAWA FENCES

Fence Repair

Leaning posts, broken boards, sagging gates and storm damage, and the by-law's upkeep rules

6 Expert Answers from Fencing IQ

ottawafences.ca/construction-brain

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Q1

Leaning fence after the spring thaw in Barrhaven?

A leaning fence after the spring thaw is a post problem until an installer tells you otherwise. The question is whether the posts have shifted at their base, whether the concrete footing moved, or whether the boards and rails are pulling away from posts that are still solid. A repair quote and a replacement quote can look very different depending on what the installer finds when they dig down.

What shows up in a repair or replacement price: the number of posts that need to be reset or replaced, whether old footings have to be broken out (posts set in concrete cost more to pull), the length of fence that needs new boards or rails, and whether the whole run needs to come out or just a section. Published Ontario installer pricing puts removal and disposal of an old fence at roughly $5 to $15 per linear foot, with posts in concrete at the higher end. If the posts are sound and the lean is in the boards, the cost is different from a full reset. Ask the installer to separate the post work from the board and rail work in the quote so you can see what each part costs.

Before any post holes are dug or reset, the Underground Infrastructure Notification System Act, 2012 requires a locate request. Ontario Dig Authority asks for it at least 5 business days before the dig. Ontario Dig Authority does not mark lines itself; each utility sends its own locator. Ask about any private lines on your property, such as a line running to a garage or shed, as we found no statement either way on whether those are marked.

If the fence sits on or near the property line, check where the line actually is before resetting posts. geoOttawa shows approximate lines; for exact placement, only an Ontario Land Surveyor can certify the boundary under the Surveyors Act. A fence installer cannot confirm where the line is.

The City of Ottawa Fence By-law No. 2003-462 requires that a fence be stable, vertical, in good repair, and free from accident hazards. A leaning fence does not meet that standard. If the fence is older and was built before January 1, 2004 under a former municipality's by-law, ask By-law Services before making changes that go beyond maintenance, because the by-law says "erect" includes alter and relocate.

Start with an installer who will look at the posts before quoting, because the scope of the work depends entirely on what is happening below grade.

Q2

Gaps under my fence after the ground settled in Gloucester?

Gaps under a fence after the ground moves are a repair question, not a replacement one, though the right fix depends on what caused the movement and how the posts are sitting now. A fence installer can quote the repair once they see whether the posts have shifted, whether the boards or panels need to come out to reset anything, and whether the gap runs the full length or only in spots.

The Fence By-law No. 2003-462, as published on ottawa.ca, requires that a fence be stable, vertical, of good-quality materials suitable for the purpose, and kept in good repair, safe and free from accident hazards (s.11, s.12). A gap at grade that leaves the fence leaning or unstable is the kind of condition the by-law addresses. Municipal Law Enforcement Officers enforce it; if you have received a notice, ask By-law Services what the order requires and by when.

For the repair itself, ask the installer to spell out in writing what they plan to do: whether they are resetting posts, adding a kick board or gravel board at the base, replacing individual boards, or some combination. Ask them to confirm the finished fence will meet the height rules for your yard, since any alteration is covered by the by-law's definition of "erect." If posts need to come out and go back in, the Fence By-law's upkeep rules still apply to the result, and the coating requirement applies to any new material that is not cedar, redwood or treated wood (s.15).

On the cost side, published Ontario installer pricing puts fence repair in a range where too few figures exist to quote reliably, so ask each installer for a written, itemised quote that separates labour, any new materials, and post work. Removal and disposal of old boards or a gravel board run roughly $5 to $15 per linear foot in published 2025-26 prices, and posts set in concrete cost more to pull. Get at least two written quotes so you have something to compare.

Before anyone digs to reset a post, check the approximate property line on geoOttawa, pull out your title documents to look for easements near the fence line, submit a locate request through Ontario Dig Authority (the Act requires it before any ground is broken, and Ontario Dig Authority asks for it at least 5 business days ahead), and ask about any private lines running to a garage or outbuilding, since we found no statement either way on whether those will be marked. If there are trees close to the post locations, check with the City's Forestry Services before digging, since the City's guide says you cannot dig within a tree's critical root zone without approval.

The most useful question to put to each installer before you agree to anything: ask them to show you, in writing, exactly which posts they plan to dig out and reset, and what they will do to bring the base of the fence back to grade.

Q3

Fence repair or new posts after a storm in Orleans?

Storm damage to a fence in Orleans falls under the City of Ottawa Fence By-law No. 2003-462,: a fence must be kept stable, vertical and in good repair, and a fence that is rebuilt has to meet today's limits of 1 m in a front yard and 213 cm (about 7 feet) in a side or rear yard. Because the by-law's meaning of erecting includes altering, ask By-law Services if you are unsure whether a repair counts as a rebuild.

On cost, published 2025-26 Ontario installer pricing for pressure-treated wood runs about $30 to $65 per linear foot installed, and cedar about $45 to $85 per linear foot. Post replacement on its own is not a figure we can quote from published sources; ask each installer to price it as a separate line in the quote. Published installer pages say posts set in concrete cost more to pull, so ask the installer to confirm what they find before work begins. Removing and disposing of damaged fence sections runs roughly $5 to $15 per linear foot, more where posts are set in concrete.

Before anyone digs a new post hole, the Underground Infrastructure Notification System Act, 2012 requires a locate request from whoever breaks ground, whether it is the contractor or a homeowner doing the work themselves; it is free, and Ontario Dig Authority asks for it at least 5 business days before the dig. Ontario Dig Authority does not mark lines itself; each utility sends its own locator. Ask about any private lines on your property as well, such as lines running to a garage or shed; we found no statement either way on whether those will be marked.

If the storm shifted the fence and you are not certain it was sitting on your property to begin with, check your deed and title documents and look at the approximate lines on geoOttawa before the new posts go in. Only an Ontario Land Surveyor, under the Surveyors Act, can certify where the boundary sits. A fence contractor cannot confirm the line.

A few things worth confirming in writing before any work starts:

- the length of the run being repaired or replaced, and the number of posts being pulled and reset
- whether the quote includes removal and disposal of damaged material
- who submits the locate request and when
- the post-setting method the installer plans to use, and how deep the quote assumes
- any written warranty on labour and materials

Requests sent from this site's form go to fence installers listed in the Ottawa Construction Network directory. Before you agree to anything, ask the installer to walk you through exactly what they found at each damaged post, so the quote says plainly which sections are a repair and which are a replacement.

Q4

Why is my fence leaning after winter in Ottawa?

A leaning fence after winter is something an installer needs to look at in person, because the cause can only be confirmed by checking the posts, the footings, and the ground around them. What the installer examines will shape what the repair actually involves and what it costs.

The things that show up in a fence repair quote for a leaning post include how many posts are affected, whether the posts need to be pulled and reset or can be braced, whether the footings are intact or need to be broken out and replaced, the condition of the boards or panels attached to those posts, and whether the fence is wood, vinyl, chain link or another material. Published installer pages say posts set in concrete cost more to pull, so ask the installer to specify what the quote assumes about the existing footings.

Before any post is pulled or any new hole is dug, a locate is required. Under Ontario's Underground Infrastructure Notification System Act, 2012, anyone who digs, including with a hand shovel, is an excavator and must submit a locate request before breaking ground. Ontario Dig Authority handles the request, and the utilities have five business days to respond. Ontario Dig Authority does not mark lines itself; each utility sends its own locator. Ask about any private lines on your property, such as a line running to a garage or shed, as we found no statement either way on whether those will be marked.

If the fence is being rebuilt rather than just repaired, the City of Ottawa Fence By-law, as published on ottawa.ca, applies. In a rear or side yard the limit is 213 cm (about 7 feet); in a front yard, 1 m. Height is measured from the grade at the base of the fence, and where the ground is higher on one side, from the higher side. A berm does not raise the allowable height. The Fence By-law also requires that a fence be stable, vertical and kept in good repair.

For the repair quote itself, ask the installer to list each post being reset as a separate line, to state whether old concrete is included in the removal price, and to put the warranty for the reset posts in writing.

The form on this page sends your repair details to Ottawa fence installers listed in the Ottawa Construction Network directory, and they reply by email with quotes.

Q5

Repair or replace a leaning cedar fence in Kanata?

Whether to repair or replace depends on what is actually failing, which is something an installer has to look at; if more than a few posts are involved, ask for a full replacement to be priced alongside the repair.

For repair work, published Ontario installer pricing puts post replacement at too few published figures to quote a range, so ask each installer to price it as a separate line. There are also too few published prices for board replacement and general repairs, so a written quote is the number to work from. For a full cedar replacement, published 2025-26 prices show installed cedar fence at about $45 to $85 per linear foot, with gates priced on top of that: a pedestrian gate about $500 to $1,500, a driveway gate about $800 to $2,200. Removing and disposing of the old fence adds roughly $5 to $15 per linear foot, and posts set in concrete cost more to pull.

A few things affect which way the quote goes. Cedar, redwood and treated wood are the three materials the City of Ottawa Fence By-law, as published on ottawa.ca, excepts from the requirement to protect the surface with paint, preservatives or another weather-resistant material, so a cedar fence meets that rule without coating. The by-law also requires the fence to be stable, vertical, of good-quality materials, kept in good repair, and free from accident hazards (sections 11 and 12). Municipal Law Enforcement Officers enforce the by-law.

On height: the Fence By-law sets 1 m in a front yard and 213 cm (about 7 feet) in a side or rear yard. If the existing fence is already at or near 213 cm, confirm the replacement matches that, measured from the grade at the base of the fence, not from a berm or raised bed.

Because any post replacement breaks ground, the Underground Infrastructure Notification System Act requires a locate request before digging. Ontario Dig Authority asks for it at least 5 business days ahead; the request is free. Ontario Dig Authority does not mark lines itself; each utility sends its own locator. Ask about any private lines on your property as well.

Photos of the lean, taken before any work starts, make it easier to compare what each installer says needs doing.

Q6

Fence panels blown out after a windstorm in Kanata?

Whether blown-out panels mean a repair or a replacement is something an installer judges on site, and the cost depends on how many panels are damaged, what material they are, and whether any posts shifted or cracked at the base. Published Ontario installer pricing for removing and disposing of old fence sections runs roughly $5 to $15 per linear foot, with posts set in concrete costing more to pull. Repair and post replacement have too few published figures to quote a range, so ask each installer to price those line items separately in writing.

Before anyone digs to reset or replace a post, the Underground Infrastructure Notification System Act, 2012 requires a locate request. Ontario Dig Authority asks for it at least 5 business days ahead of digging. Ontario Dig Authority does not mark lines itself; each utility sends its own locator. Ask the installer who will submit the request,

and ask about any private lines on your property.

The City of Ottawa Fence By-law, as published on ottawa.ca, says "erect" includes alter, construct, place and relocate. Height is measured from the grade at the base of the fence; where the ground is higher on one side, from the higher grade. A berm does not raise the limit. The by-law also requires that a fence be stable, vertical, of good-quality materials suitable for the purpose, kept in good repair, safe and free from accident hazards, and protected by paint, preservatives or another weather-resistant material, with cedar, redwood and treated wood excepted from that coating requirement. The finished side must face the street and neighbouring properties.

If the fence was built before January 1, 2004 under an older municipality's by-law and sits above today's limits, the by-law allows it to continue in use and be maintained. Because altering a fence counts as erecting it, ask By-law Services before making changes to one that exceeds current limits.

For the repair quote itself, ask each installer to break out the cost of materials and labour for the panels, the cost for any post work separately, the removal and disposal fee per linear foot, and whether the quote assumes posts are set in concrete. Ask what post method and depth the quote assumes, and get the warranty in writing.

Keep photos of the damage taken before anything is removed, along with the written quote and the invoice, so the repair record shows what was replaced and why.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Ottawa Fences. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified contractors and your local building authority (the City of Ottawa) before starting any fence project. Fences in Ottawa must meet the City's Fence By-law, and a free locate is required before digging any post hole. Information is current as of November 15, 2026 and may change. Visit **ottawafences.ca** for the latest answers.