

Municipal Inspections

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Residential Deck Handout

BUILDING PERMITS: This handout intends to provide information on the minimum requirements applicable to the construction of a deck, whether attached to or detached from a residential dwelling. The Building Code requires the issuance of a building permit prior to the construction of an attached or detached deck that is 30 inches or more above grade at any point. Decks and platforms not more than 30 inches above adjacent grade and not attached to a structure with frost footings do not require a building permit. Please contact Municipal Inspections at 952-461-4777 for information on your specific project.

REQUIRED FOR PERMIT:

- Signed and completed building permit application form
- Two (2) copies of the deck plan, drawn to scale, indicating all structural members and footing sizes
- Two (2) copies of a Certificate of survey with the deck drawn on it to scale. An existing certificate of survey may be used if all existing buildings, property lines, setback hubs, and easements are shown.

BUILDING CODE REQUIREMENTS

The International Residential Code provides the following standards for the construction of a deck requiring a permit.

FROST FOOTINGS Required for any deck attached to a dwelling, porch or garage that has frost footings. The minimum depth to the base of the footing is 42".

LIVE LOAD All decks shall be designed to support a live load of forty (40) pounds per square foot.

GUARDS Required on all decks more than thirty (30) inches above grade or higher deck. Guardrails must be thirty-six (36) inches minimum in height. Open guardrails and stair railings must have intermediate rails or an ornamental pattern that a four (4) inch sphere cannot pass through.

CANTILEVERS "OVERHANGING JOISTS AND BEAMS" Joists should not overhang beams by more than two (2) feet, nor should beams overhang posts by more than one (1) foot unless a special design is approved.

FLASHING All connections between deck and dwelling shall be weatherproof. Flashing is required for all ledger boards.

FRAMING DETAILS Header beams and joists that frame into ledgers or beams shall be supported by approved framing anchors such as joist hangers or beam hangers.

NAILS & SCREWS Use only stainless steel, high strength aluminum, or hot-dipped galvanized.

WOOD REQUIRED All exposed wood used in the construction of decks is required to be of approved wood of natural resistance to decay (redwood, cedar, etc.) or approved treated wood. This includes posts, beams, joists, decking and railings.

STAIRS Minimum width is thirty-six (36) inches. Maximum rise is (7 3/4) inches. Minimum run is ten (10) inches. Largest tread width or riser height shall not exceed the smallest by more than **3/8 inch**. Open risers are permitted, provided opening between treads does not permit the passage of a four (4) inch sphere.

HANDRAILS The top shall be placed not less than thirty-four (34) inches or more than thirty-eight (38") inches above the nosing of the treads. Stairways having four (4) or more risers shall have at least one (1) handrail. Handrail ends shall be returned or terminated in posts. The hand grips shall not be less than 1 1/2 inches or more than two (2) inches in cross-sectional dimension or the shape shall provide an equivalent gripping surface. The handgrip shall have a smooth surfaced with no sharp corners.

STAIRWAY ILLUMINATION Exterior stairways shall be provided with an artificial light source located in the immediate vicinity of any landing.

SPECIAL DESIGN NOTE Some deck designs may not be appropriate should the placement of a screen porch or three (3) season porch on the deck platform be a future consideration. Also special design provisions may be needed for decks being supported by cantilevered floor joist systems.

LEDGER BOARD Secure ledger board with two (2) 3/8 inch lag screws or equal to support 480# per linear foot and fastened to structural members sixteen (16") inches on center.

LANDINGS All landings are required to be of a hard surface. The bottom of the stairs is still considered a landing. The minimum dimensions of the landing shall be 3 feet out by the width of the stairs.

COMPOSITE OR MAINTENANCE FREE DECKING All composite decking shall be approved for use by Municipal Inspections.

*** IMPORTANT ***

Attaching a Deck to a Bay Cantilever

Many bay cantilevered areas have not been designed to support an attached deck. Whenever a cantilevered bay exists, it must be determined if the original design was built to support a deck. If the cantilevered area was not reinforced, alternate methods may be used. See cantilever reinforcement page.

REQUIRED INSPECTIONS:

1. **Footings** After the holes are dug, but PRIOR TO POURING CONCRETE. Footing holes shall be free of all loose sediment and water.
2. **Framing** When less than 30" high and prior to deck board placement.
3. **Final** When the structure has been completed.

GENERAL NOTES

The stamped, approved plans and survey shall be kept on the job until the final inspection has been made. The Inspection Record Card shall be placed on the outside exterior wall near the deck and shall remain posted until the final inspection has been made. Call 952-461-4777 between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. to arrange for an inspection.

