

# Residential Deck Requirements

**BUILDING PERMITS:** Required for any deck attached to a structure or any detached deck more than 30 inches above grade.

**SETBACKS:** Decks may extend to within five feet of side or rear lot lines.

**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 footings is 60”.

**LIVE LOAD:** All decks shall be designed to support a live load of 50 pounds per square foot.

**GUARDRAILS:** Required on all decks more than 30 inches above grade or a lower deck. Rail must be 36 inches minimum in height. Open guardrails and stair railings must have intermediate rails or an ornamental pattern that a four inch sphere cannot pass through.

**CANTILEVERS “Overhanging Joists and Beams”:** Joists should not overhang beams by more than two feet, nor should beams overhang posts by more than one foot unless a special design is approved.

**FLASHING:** All connections between deck and dwelling shall be weatherproof. Any cuts in exterior finish shall be flashed.

**FRAMING DETAILS:** Header beams more than six feet long and joists over 12 feet long that frame into ledgers or beams shall be supported by approved framing anchors such as joist 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 36 inches. Maximum rise is 7 ¾ inches, minimum rise is 4 inches. Minimum run is 10 inches. Largest tread width or riser height shall not exceed the smallest by more than 3/8 inch.

**HANDRAILS:** The top shall be placed not less than 34 inches or more than 38 inches above the nosing of the treads. Stairways having four or more risers shall have at least one handrail. Handrail ends shall be returned or terminated in posts. The hand grips shall not be less than 1 ½ inches or more than 2 inches in cross-sectional dimension or the shape shall provide an equivalent gripping surface. The handgrip shall provide an equivalent gripping surface. The handgrip shall have a smooth surface with no sharp corners.

**SPECIAL DESIGN NOTE:** Some deck designs may not be appropriate should the placement of a screen porch or 3-season porch on the deck platform be a future consideration. Setbacks for porches are not the same as setbacks for decks.