

Decks

A deck is an exposed exterior wood floor structure, which may be attached to the structure or free standing. The following information obtained from this brochure will help you in the process of obtaining permits, building the deck and assist you in the inspection process.

Applying for permit:

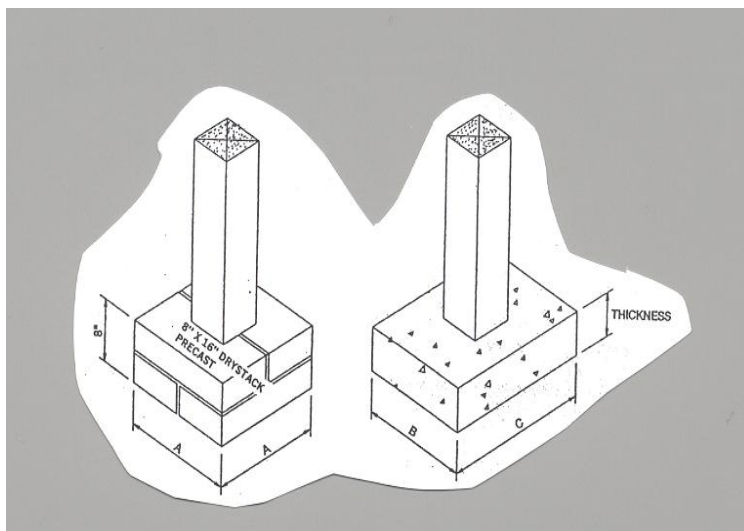
Plans must be submitted showing the following:

- Location of deck being attached to structure. Please show all property lines with distances from proposed deck to these lines.
- Show dimension of deck; location of all footings and distance between footings.
- All framing lumber dimensions including post size and height, load bearing girders, floor joist and spacing, deck material to be used, handrail details with the height for the steps and the guardrail details including height and picket spacing is required. Guardrails and pickets are not required when less than 30" to finish grade from the deck surface.
- Since there are many variables as to type of deck and size of deck, please consult with the building inspector for spans of floor joist, girder sizes etc. More information may be required depending on size and height of the deck and whether it is freestanding or attached to the existing structure.

General Building Information:

Footings:

All support post for the deck including the steps and landings shall rest on a minimum of 16" x 16" x 8" thick concrete masonry or 16" x 16" x 8" thick poured in place concrete footing. The top of the concrete block or poured footing shall be a minimum of 4" below grade.



Steps and Stairways:

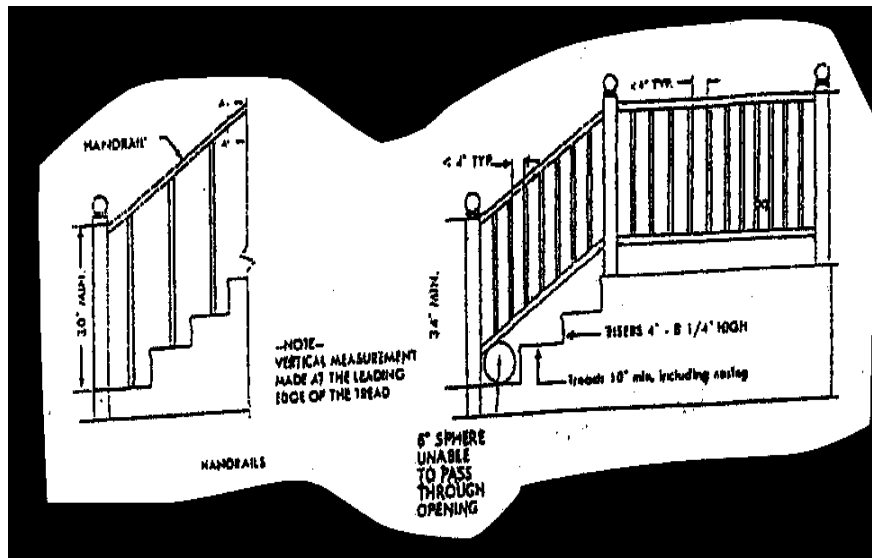
Stairways shall not be less than 36" in clear width. Steps shall have a maximum riser height of 8 1/4" and the minimum tread depth shall be 9". Handrails are needed on stairways consisting of three or more steps and handrails shall be a minimum of 30" above the step to a maximum of 38". Handrails are required on open sides of stairways.

Guardrails:

Decks located more than 30" above grade shall have guard rails not less 36" in height. Guardrails and handrails are required on open sides of stairways, decks and landings and shall prevent the passage of an object 6" or more in diameter. Horizontal spacing between the vertical members in required guardrails shall be a maximum of 4" at the nearest point between the members.

Supporting deck to structure:

When the deck is fastened to the structure, 5/8" galvanized bolts shall be used (not lag bolts). These bolts shall run through the structure and be fastened with galvanized washers and nuts. The maximum spacing is 24" between bolts and should not be more than 2-1/2" from the edge of lumber. Also, when fastening deck to the structure, a metal flashing (galvanized) shall be used between the deck and the structure. Free standing decks shall be braced to provide lateral stability. When the deck floor height is less than 48", lateral bracing is not required. Bracing shall consist of a 4 x 4 wood knee brace and shall be provided on each support post in both directions. The braces shall attach to each post a point no less than 1/3 of the post length from the top of the post and shall be angled between 45 degrees and 60 degrees from the horizontal. Braces shall be through bolted with one 5/8" galvanized bolt on both ends of the brace.



Common asked Questions:

Q: Can I use pre-cast post blocks for my footing and support my deck from these?

A: No, these blocks are not approved for supporting of deck post.

Q: What type of flashing do I need to use between the house and the deck?

A: Only galvanized can be used or other approved flashing material.

Q: Can I use lag bolts to fasten my deck to the house? What about on the bracing of the deck?

A: No, only through bolts (5/8") are approved to fasten any deck to a structure or to be used in bracing.

Q: Can I fasten my deck to my mobile home?

A: No. The mobile home codes will not allow this unless a registered engineer has determined that it can be done. The deck shall follow the guidelines for a freestanding deck.