
This pamphlet is a compilation of some of the standard requirements based on the State Building Code and City Zoning Ordinance for projects of this type. This information packet does not contain all of the specific codes for construction and should only be used as a guide. The permittee is responsible to meet all code requirements applicable to each project.

Building Permits

Building permits are required for all decks and porches.

Permit Fees

Decks are set fee of \$101.00 (includes state surcharge)

3-Season porches are based on construction cost, consistent with exhibit A of the City fee schedule.

Plan Submittals

Two (2) copies of the plans and one (1) copy of the site survey (You may draw this yourself). Show all dimensions; specify types and sizes of materials - provide as much construction detail as you can. You can call the City at 651-322-2024 to see if there is a site survey on file.

Setbacks

Setback requirements vary by zoning districts. Please check with the Planning Department at 651-322-2051 for the specific requirements for your property. In any case, no structure may encroach into any easement.

Tree removal

Should grading, or construction require tree removal, the city may require a tree preservation plan illustrating tree protection, removal, and replacement. Please check with the Planning Department for more information.

Live Load

Decks need to be designed for a 40-pound per square foot, live load and balconies to a 60 pound per square foot, live load.

Frost Footings

Frost footings are required for any deck or porch that is attached to a dwelling or garage that has frost footings. All footings must be 42 inches in depth - minimum. The number and size of the footing is determined by design and size of the deck.

Wood Required

All exposed wood used in the construction of decks/porches is required to be of approved wood of natural resistance to decay (redwood, cedar, or approved treated wood). This includes posts, beams, joists and decking. Any composite or plastic decking materials must be approved by the Building Official prior to installation. Not all products are approved for use on stairs. Additional engineering may be required.

Overhang

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 the deck/porch and dwelling shall be weatherproof. Any cuts in exterior finish shall be flashed and caulked.

Joist Hangers

Header joist more than six (6) feet long and joists over twelve (12) feet long shall be supported by approved framing anchors such as joist hangers.

Guardrails

All decks that are 30" or more above grade must be protected by a guardrail. Such rails shall be 36" minimum in heights. Open guardrails shall have intermediate rails or an ornamental pattern such that a 4" diameter sphere cannot pass through. Stair guard rails are such that a 4-3/8" sphere cannot pass thru. **Exception:** On an open stairway, the triangular opening formed by the riser, tread and bottom element of a guardrail must be sized so that a six-inch sphere cannot pass through.

Handrails

Stairways having four or more risers shall have at least one handrail with handrail ends returned or terminated in posts. The top shall be placed 34" to 38" above the tread nosing. Handrail grip size shall be between 1-1/4" to 2-3/4" in cross-sectional dimension or the shape shall provide an equivalent gripping surface. Handgrips shall have a smooth surface with no sharp corners.

Stairs

Minimum width is 36 inches. Maximum rise, tread to tread, is 7-3/4 inches. Minimum tread width is 10 inches. Largest tread width or riser height shall not exceed the smallest by more than 3/8 inch. Open raisers are permitted provided a 4" sphere cannot pass through.

Illumination

All exterior stairways shall be illuminated at the landing to the stairway. Illumination shall be controlled from inside the dwelling or automatically activated.

Windows

Windows located within a 5' from bottom and 3' from the top stair **AND** the bottom of the window is less than 5' above the walking surface, the window glass **IS REQUIRED TO BE TEMPERED.**

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.

Decks and 3-Season Porches Inspections Required by Law:

Forming for Footings or Postholes Inspected before placing concrete or posts - below grade minimum depth 42".

Electrical Wiring Rough-In Inspection before framing inspection and before concealing (call Mr. Patrick McMullen at (612) 866-1979 between 7:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m., Monday through Thursday, for electrical inspections.

Framing Inspection before exterior finish and roofing.

Insulation and Vapor Barrier Inspection prior to covering with interior finishes.

Electrical Final Inspection when all wiring and fixtures complete.

Final Inspection when complete.

POST INSPECTION CARD IN PROMINENT PLACE

Call before you dig. Gopher State One Call: 651-454-0002