

Exterior Decks

Frequently Asked Questions:

Do I need a permit?

Yes, a permit is required to place, erect, or construct an exterior deck.

Can I erect my Deck anywhere?

Yes, however if it is not attached to the principle structure then it is considered an accessory structure.

- Accessory structures have separate, specific, setback regulations that must be followed. Please refer to Information Sheet 3 - Sheds and Other Accessory Structures for further information about them.
- Attached decks must meet principal structure setbacks.
 - Prohibited beyond the build line in front yards and other yards with street frontage.
 - Rear yard = 25 feet (20 ft for R3 Zone)
 - Side yard setbacks range from 5 to 8 feet, depending on your residential zone district.

General Exterior Deck Construction Guidelines

- A. The maximum distance allowed between the guardrails is 4 inches.
- B. The handrail grip size must be between 1 ¼ and 2 inches.
- C. If there are three or more risers on the stairs a handrail on both sides of the stairs is required. The handrails must measure between 34 and 38 inches vertically from the nosing of the stair tread.
- D. The maximum height for a stair tread riser is 7 ¾ inches.
- E. The minimum distance for a landing tread is 10 inches.
- F. If the height of the deck is above 30 inches from the ground level a guardrail must be installed. The minimum height of the guardrail is 36 inches.
- G. Floor joist that do not rest on at least a 1 ½ inch ledger is required to be fastened with a joist hanger and approved joist hanger nails.
- H. The minimum distance from the top of the finished grade to the bottom of the pier hole is 32 inches.

- I. Specify the type of fasteners that will be used for connecting the floor joist to the support columns.
- J. Specify the size and type of material that will be used for the support columns.
- K. Specify the size, grade, and spacing of floor joist.
- L. Specify the size, grade, and application of the deck planking.
- M. The footing or pier hole width is determined by the load imposed. Specify the footing or pier hole width.
- N. Specify the locations of the pier holes.

What is the next step?

Complete and submit the permit application with your site plan. This can be obtained at City Hall or online.

PLEASE NOTE: These guidelines are not a comprehensive presentation of all the ordinances involved in placing, erecting, or constructing an exterior deck.

If you have questions or concerns please contact the Granite City Building and Zoning Department at (618) 452-6218.