

# DECKS

## Guidelines for Planning Deck Construction

### PERMITS

Building permits are required for all decks that are attached to the home or are 30 inches or more above grade. Decks and platforms not more than 30 inches above adjacent grade and not attached to a structure do not require a building permit.

All decks and platforms are required to meet the land use requirements of East Bethel's zoning code. Zoning questions should be directed to the local Planning/Building Departments. This is an important first step in the planning of any deck project.

### PERMIT FEES

Deck fees are \$150.00. The plan review is done by the building inspector in order to spot potential problems or pitfalls that may arise. The inspector may make notes on the plan for your use. The plan review and inspections are done to provide a reasonable degree of review and observation so the project will be successful, safe, and long-lasting. The building inspector will need a number of items. This includes:

- an application for permit,
- site plan or survey (with specific setback information),
- and deck plan with all applicable detailed plans.

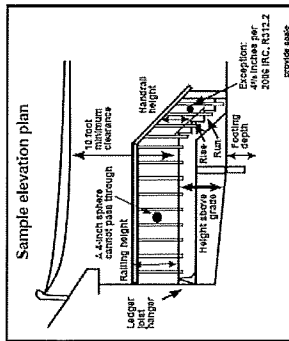
Examples of these are provided in the rest of this brochure. The inspector may inform you of potential problems or make suggestions. Safety will receive the greatest priority.

**CITY OF EAST BETHEL** Phone: 763-367-7844  
**2241 221ST AVE NE** Fax: 763-434-9578  
**EAST BETHEL MN** www.ci.east-bethel.mn.us

S:\Building Dept New\Permit Handouts\Deck Handout  
 Revised 2/6/2013

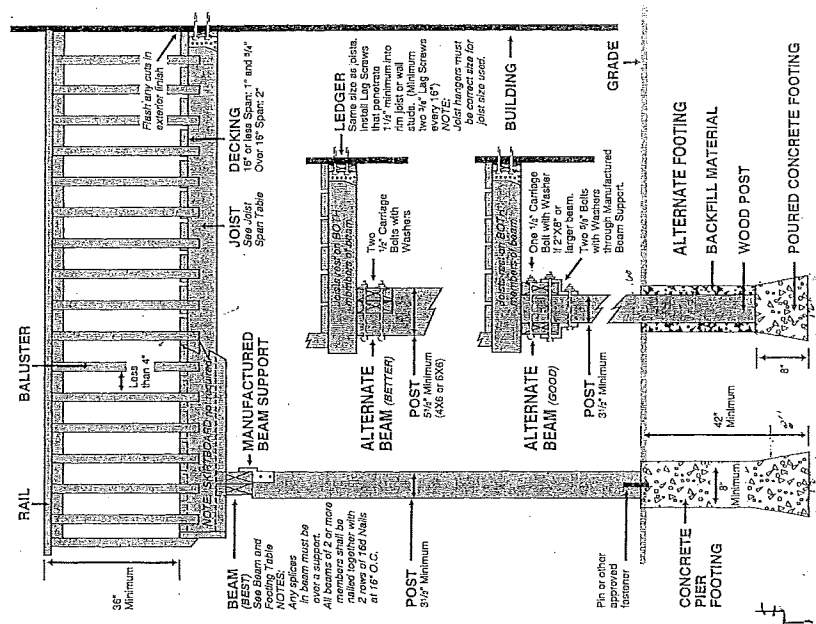
## DECK FINAL INSPECTION CHECKLIST

1. Is deck ledger bolted to house with a minimum 1/2" lag bolts and washers (or equivalent) in each joist space?
2. Are all joist hangers fully nailed with GALVANIZED JOIST HANGER nails in every hole?
3. If deck surface is over 30" above grade, is your guardrail at least 36" high? (Open guardrails shall have intermediate rails or an ornamental pattern such that a sphere 4" in diameter cannot pass through.)
4. If the deck surface is over 30" above grade, are all openings LESS than 4"?
5. Is the top of your stairway handrail between 34" and 38" high measured at stair nosings?
6. If your stairway has 4 or more risers, do you have a handrail on at least one side? (The handrail must be graspable, shall not be less than 1 1/4" nor more than 2" and have a smooth surface with no sharp corners.)
7. A stairway more than 30" above grade requires 36" guardrails on BOTH sides, with spacings LESS than 4 3/8".
8. Are all stair risers the same height, and not more than 7 3/4"?
9. Are all stair treads at least 10"?
10. Is the deck ledger board properly flashed where it meets the house?
11. Are all of the nails, screws, fasteners, and hardware approved for use with lumber?
12. Is all lumber either treated or of a species resistant to decay (i.e. redwood, cedar, etc.)?
13. Are cantilevers a maximum of 24" overhang?
14. Are all joists, beams, posts, and footings as per the approved plan?



### ELEVATION PLAN

1. Height of structure of grade.
2. Size and depth of footings.
3. Guard height and spacing.
4. Stairway rise/run and handrail height (if any).
5. Clearance of over-head wires (if applicable).



## REQUIRED INSPECTIONS

**BEFORE YOU DIG:** Call Gopher State One Call (800) 252-1166 or (651) 454-0002 to locate any utilities such as phone lines, data communication cables, invisible dog fences, underground sprinkler systems, septic systems, etc.

- 1. Footings:** After the holes are dug, but **PRIOR TO THE POURING OF CONCRETE!**
- 2. Framing:** To be made after all framing, blocking, and bracing are in place and prior to covering the construction so it is accessible for inspection.
- 3. Final:** To be made upon completion of the deck, lighting requirements, and finish grading.
- 4. Other inspections:** In addition to the three inspections above, the inspector may make site visits upon requests to assist you with questions or concerns during the construction process.

## SETBACKS

Setbacks from property lines vary depending on the zoning district your home is located in. Verify setback requirements with the Building/Planning Departments if you have questions.

## GENERAL BUILDING CODE REQUIREMENTS

- Footings must extend to frost depth which is 42 inches.
- 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. Decks exposed to the weather must be constructed of approved wood with natural resistance to decay such as redwood, cedar or treated wood, or other material (composite plastics, etc.) with prior approval of the Building Safety Department.
- Pressure-Treated Wood  
Recent changes have been made in the chemicals used in the manufacture of pressure-treated wood. Chromated copper arsenate, also known as CCA, is being phased out and the most common new treatments approved for outdoor use are Alkaline Copper Quaternary

known as CCA, is being phased out and the most common new treatments approved for outdoor use are Alkaline Copper (ACQ) and Copper Azole. According to the lumber and fastener industry, the newer chemicals being used to treat the wood approved for outdoor use are considerably more corrosive than those previously treated with CCA and therefore require special fasteners, hangers, and greater care in the selection of materials that may come in contact with the wood. The fastener industry has indicated that some of the hangers and fasteners currently on the market may not perform with some of the new treatments.

Designers, builders, and home owners will need to pay particular attention to the grade marks on the lumber, and verify that proper hardware (hangers, nails, brackets) are appropriate with the particular treatment of the lumber. This not only applies to decks utilizing these products but sill plates and posts as well. The code references the American Wood Preservers Association (AWPA), which has published information on this issue. Particular attention should also be made to the manufacturer's installation instructions for the hardware. Questions should be directed to your wood and fastener supplier.

- Columns and posts in contact with the ground or embedded in concrete, earth, or masonry must be of special pressure treated wood approved for ground contact.
- Cedar or redwood posts need an 8 inch separation from the ground.
- All decks, balconies or porches, open sides of landings, and stairs which are more than 30 inches above grade or a floor below must be protected by a guard not less than 36 inches in height. Open guard and stair railings require intermediate rails of an ornamental pattern such that a sphere 4 inches in diameter cannot pass through.  
If a stairway is to be provided, it must be not less than 36 inches in width. Stairways may be constructed having a 7/4 inch maximum rise

constructed having a 7 3/4 inch maximum rise (height) and a 10 inch minimum run (length). The largest tread rise and tread run may not exceed the smallest corresponding tread rise or run by more than 3/8 inch. Stairway illumination is required by the code. Open risers are permitted provided the opening between the treads does not permit the passage of a 4" sphere.

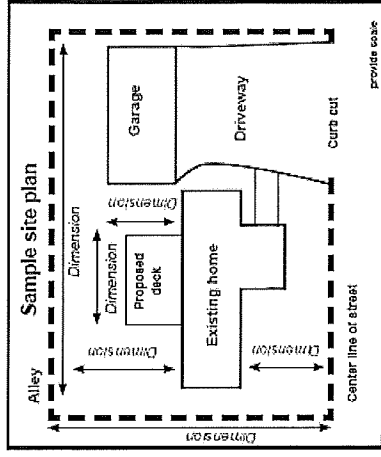
- Handrails are required on all stairways having 4 or more risers. Handrails may not be less than 1 1/4" nor more than 2 5/8" in cross sectional area. Top of handrail must be not less than 34 inches nor more than 38 inches above the nosing (front edge) of treads and they must be returned to a wall or post.
- The electrical code requires overhead power lines to be located a minimum 10 feet above decks and platforms. Existing lines may need to be raised if a new deck is to be installed beneath them.
- When locating a deck, care must be given to the location of existing gas and electric meters, wells, and septic systems. These may need to be relocated to allow for construction of the deck. Septic systems and wells may be difficult to relocate, requiring an alternative location for the deck, or alternative construction methods prior to placement of any deck that will interfere with these devices, contact the Building Department.

## PLANS: SITE, FLOOR, AND ELEVATION

The following text and sample drawings show the minimum detail expected so the permit process can proceed smoothly. **TWO sets of each plan are required.** Plans do not need to be professionally drawn. Plans should include all of the information requested. The application for permit can be filled out at the time you drop off your plans.

**Certificate of Survey or Site Plan** drawn to scale indicating the lot dimensions, the location and size of the existing structure(s), and the location and size of the proposed structure. Indicate the setbacks from property lines of the existing and proposed structure (s), including septic system area and wells if applicable.

**PLEASE NOTE: Design requirements may change with the addition of a 3-season porch.**



## FLOOR PLAN

- Proposed deck size.
- Size and spacing of floor joists.
- Size and type of decking material.
- Size, type, location and spacing of posts.
- Size and type of beams.
- Fastening and hanger details.

