



Building Information for Decks



The information contained within this guide is provided to assist contractors and do-it yourselfers with the process of applying for and obtaining a building permit to construct a deck.

When is a permit required for a deck?

Building permits are required for decks that are higher than 600mm (23 5/8") above adjacent ground level or are structurally attached to the house or any other building with a foundation. Decks smaller than 108 sq.ft. and not attached to any other structure (i.e. built on deck blocks and not structurally connected to the house) do not require a building permit.

Be advised that even though a building permit may not be required, required zoning setbacks still must be maintained and construction must comply with the Ontario Building Code.

Fast-track application process

The Township of Cavan Monaghan will endeavour to "fast-track" applications for deck permits upon submission of a complete building permit application, including a detailed site plan and construction drawings. Building Department staff will strive to review and issue the building permit within 5 business days.

What information is required to be submitted for a building permit?

Submission for a building permit shall include the following information:

- Complete building permit application form, including property location and description, value of proposed work, address of owner/applicant and relevant phone numbers.
- Permit application forms must be signed and dated.
- A detailed site plan with full property description, property dimensions, all buildings on site, proposed construction location on the property and its proximity by dimension to property lines (see sample drawing).
- Two copies of detailed construction drawings indicating all of the structural components of the proposed construction showing size and depth of piers, size and type of materials (joists, beams, decking etc.), method of attaching ledger board to the house (if applicable) and guard design.
- If the proposed structure will be adjacent to a septic system, approval for its location shall be obtained from the Peterborough County-City Health Unit 705-743-1000.
- A permit fee of \$125.00 to be paid in full at time of application.

Zoning requirements

Please contact the Building Department at 705-932-9319 to determine the required setbacks that shall be maintained in locating the deck on the property.

Guard and handrail design

The Ontario Building Code requirements for the construction of guards and handrails and their attachment to decks are very restrictive. Guards are required to be constructed in accordance with Supplementary Standard No.7 to the Ontario Building Code. Included in this guide are the most popular and least difficult guards to construct that will meet these criteria.

The minimum size of spindles and balusters used in guard construction is required to be at least 32mm x 32mm (1-9/32" x 1-9/32"); this is especially pertinent with decorative or turned spindles. Spindles and balusters shall be oriented so that they are not spaced less than 100 mm (4") apart and do not facilitate climbing. Pre-fabricated guard systems may be accepted by the Building Department upon submission of Ontario certified engineered drawings for the system. All specifications of the drawings must be followed completely to achieve compliance.

Guards for decks serving not more than one dwelling unit shall not be less than 900mm (2'-11") Where the walking surface served by the guard is not more than 1800mm (5'-11") above the finished ground level. Where the surface is higher, the guard shall be 1070mm (3'-6") high.

How can I ensure that my permit is fast-tracked?

To ensure that your permit application can be fast tracked make sure that your submission incorporates the following:

- The application and documentation that is submitted is complete. Incomplete applications and insufficient information or details will delay the procession of your permit.
- The piers and beams are sized properly. Piers and beams shall be designed in accordance with the information provided herein.
- Decks shall be constructed on piers that extend a minimum of 4' below grade to attain frost protection.
- Use only guard and handrail designs that are in compliance with the Ontario Building Code.
- Deck frames shall not be structurally connected to brick veneer. Lag bolts shall extend through the brick veneer and be secured to the framed structure or foundation.

At what stages are inspections required?

Generally, there are 2 inspections:

- Excavation for piers must be inspected prior to pouring concrete or placing piers to ensure frost protection is achieved and piers are placed on undisturbed soil.
- Final inspection of finished deck. All guards and stairs to be complete. This inspection is required to sign off and close the permit. A separate framing inspection will be required if installation of the decking membrane will prevent inspection of the deck framing (i.e. deck is very low to grade).

Should you have any questions regarding the information contained within this guide or require additional information with regard to building permits, please contact the Building Department:

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