

# City of Hendersonville

## Department of Building & Codes

### Basic Deck Checklist

#### Based on the 2012 International Residential Code

Whether you are planning on building a new deck or just replacing your old one, we have provided this basic checklist to help you maneuver through the building code requirements and inspection process. We have included several important notes and hints that should assist you in avoiding the most common mistakes, as well as insuring a safe and structurally sound deck. Should you have any questions concerning this checklist, feel free to contact a Building Inspector at 615-822-3802. More detailed deck requirements and construction details are available online at the City of Hendersonville's webpage.

**PERMIT:** Once you're ready to begin the actual building process, the first thing that will be needed is a building permit. You will be asked to provide a copy of your Mortgage Loan Survey or a plot plan. In most cases you can obtain a copy of your individual lot from a recorded subdivision plat that is on file at the Sumner County Register of Deeds Office or possibly from the Hendersonville Planning Department.

**DECK PLANS:** The City of Hendersonville has made available on its webpage a prescriptive deck construction guide. This document, American Wood Council's DCA 6-Prescriptive Residential Wood Deck Construction Guide to include the June 1, 2013 Southern Pine design value updates, has been "deemed to comply" with all applicable building code requirements. You can refer to the Wood Deck Construction Guide for most of the construction details described below.

**LOCATION:** Dependent upon the zoning of your property, your deck will be required to maintain certain clearances (zoning setbacks) from your property lines. You can determine what these setbacks are by stopping by the Planning Department at City Hall.

**FOOTINGS:** Often referred to as the "post holes." They are the primary foundation and support for the deck. The minimum dimensions for the post holes should be a minimum of 15" in diameter and 12" deep. The exact dimensions for your deck can be determined from the table provided in the Wood Deck Construction Guide. **Remember, a footing inspection is required prior to any placement of concrete.**

**JOISTS:** A span chart that addresses most normal span conditions is available as part of the Wood Deck Construction Guide. All joist ends must have proper bearing. When not utilizing joist hangers, proper bearing is 1 1/2" of bearing on a beam or a ledger. When using approved joist hangers, all pre-drilled holes in each joist hanger must be utilized, with approved hanger nails, minimum 8d common nails, but *NO SCREWS*. If you are using a ledger, the joist must be attached to the ledger by 3 nails or an approved hanger.

**STAIRS:** The max riser of a step is 7 3/4". The max variance between the shortest and tallest riser in any one run of stairs is 3/8". The minimum tread depth is 10". Make sure to include both the top and bottom steps whenever calculating rise/run for the steps.

**HANDRAIL:** A handrail is required when there are 4 or more risers on a particular run of stairs. Handrail heights are to be a minimum of 34" and a maximum of 38".

**GUARDRAIL:** A guardrail is required when the height of the deck is more than 30" above the adjacent ground. The minimum height of the guardrail is 36" from the top of the decking, with no opening more than 4" apart *including spindles*. The only exception to this requirement is the open side of your risers. In that case, the minimum handrail height is 34" from the nosing of your steps up to the top of your handrail.

It would be virtually impossible to address every potential issue that has come up while inspecting previous decks. However, this basic checklist should help answer most of your FAQ's as well as address some of the most common mistakes that are made. Should you need more in-depth information or if there is an issue that has not been addressed, feel free to contact this office at 615-822-3802. It is highly recommended that you use the provided Prescriptive Residential Wood Deck Construction Guide. Inspection requests can be made by calling the Inspection Line at 615-590-4642.

**PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO REQUEST YOUR FINAL INSPECTION!!!!!!**