

# Requirements for Wooden Decks

**Permits Needed:** Building Permit Application for a Deck Permit - The PA State Building Code UCC requires a building permit when a deck structure meets the minimum height of 30" (inches) or greater. The Township issues a Zoning Permit for all deck construction that does not meet the 30" height above grade.

## General Requirements:

All decks shall be designed for a minimum **40 lb. live load**. Concrete shall be a minimum of 2,500 psi. Decks 30" or more above grade and stairs with 3 or more risers shall be provided with graspable handrails and guard railings at 3ft. height with openings of less than 4". Standard pressure treated lumber shall not be placed below grade.

**Note: ACQ treated lumber requires special hardware to be used to construct your deck.** Provide a copy of the manufacturer's requirements with your permit. **Section 319.3 of the 2006 IRC Building Code requires:** Fasteners for pressure preservative-treated wood shall be hot-dipped galvanized steel, stainless steel, silicon bronze, copper. (Exception: one-half-inch diameter or greater steel bolts.) **IRC 2006 Code Section 301.1** states that all structures (decks) be constructed using a system which provides a continuous load path from point of origin to the foundation using load resisting materials.

## Plans Needed: (2 sets)

Depending on the complexity or scope of the specific project, the plan reviewer may request plans be signed and sealed by a design professional, licensed in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

**Note: plans from retail building supply companies are not considered complete construction documents and will not be accepted unless they provided all this information or be signed and sealed by a design professional. All designs shall indicate the following:**

- Drawing Submittal: Minimum scale of 1/8" per 1'-0" (feet), min drawing size of 8-1/2" by 11" paper, will accept legal, ledger (11' x 17') or blue-line prints.
- Zoning Code Review: Site (plot) plan drawing of property indicating the lot size, existing structure and the proposed footprint of new dwelling, addition, deck. Site plan shall be drawn to an engineering or architectural scale. Provide all yard setback distances in (feet) measured from all lot lines to proposed structure. It is the applicants responsibility to ask for their specific zoning districts area and yard setback distances.
- Floor Plan: Overall layout (design) of the deck, including proposed stairways.
- Footing Plan: Provide a layout of the pier footings. Indicate their distance from the house and from each other. Footings shall be solid concrete, minimum width of footings are 12" width at 36" deep and terminate above grade with an anchored post base.
- Elevation Plan: Provide relevant drawing, height of deck floor above finish grade. Indicate the deck's construction: design of pier footings, column design, column to beam connections, guard railing height. *See framing plan requirements.*
- Framing Plan: Note the identification of wood species and grade # for all load-bearing dimension lumber. Indicate the type (i.e. CCA, SA-B or ACQ pressure treated), location, size, joist spacing and span distance of all structural lumber (beams and joists). Indicate how all framing members are connected and specify what size & type of hardware, fasteners is to be used. Provide a ledger detail including the existing framing to which it is to be attached. Indicate all stair construction and guard railing framing details and their design height as referenced from deck floor or stairway tread to top of cap railing.
- IRC section 502.9 Framing. All deck framing construction must provide positive (wood construction) connections to ensure against uplift and lateral displacement. The use of Simpson "Strong-Tie" connections is required on all framing connections: Footing to Post Base (column) connection; Joist-to-Ledger Attachment/Joist Bearing on a Beam connections (girder); Girder-to-Post connections. Deck construction code specifications are available at Township's code department.

- **Obtain and Execute a Building Permit Application:** Provide all required information including the building contractor's information, property owner's information and all phone numbers (day time or cellular). **Application must be signed and dated to be accepted by the Township.**
  
- PA State Workers' Compensation Insurance Form: Shall be executed, notarized and signed by the building (general) contractor. State law mandates the Township enforce the worker compensation law.
  
- **Inspections:**
  - Footing: After pier footings are dug and before the placement of concrete.
  
  - Framing: After deck frame, flashing and hardware are completed, prior to deck boards being installed.
  
  - Final: Deck is complete including decking, stairs, guard railings and handrails.

3/2007