WOOD DECKS

City of Brookfield, Wisconsin
Inspection Services Department
2000 North Calhoun Road
Brookfield, Wisconsin 53005

Phone(262) 796-6646 M-F (7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)
FAX (262) 796-6702

HERE IS A HELPFUL LIST OF THE MOST OFTEN ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS REGARDING WOOD DECKS

ALL DECKS MUST CONFORM TO THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS OF THE UNIFORM DWELLING CODE.

Q. Do I need a building permit?
A. Yes.

Q. How much will it cost?
A. $59.00 with a nonrefundable plan review fee of $37.00 due at application)

Q. How do I apply for a building permit?
A. Application forms are available from the Inspection Services Department service counter.

Q. Do I need plans?
A. Yes. You will need **two copies** of your plans showing:
(a) A top or "plan view" looking down on your project.
(b) A side or "cutaway" or "section" view showing your proposed method of construction, size and placement of joists, depth of posts (48" minimum depth is required below ground) and height of guard rail (36" minimum height from top of decking is required) when deck is 24" or more above ground.
(c) You will also need **five copies** of a current survey with the deck drawn to scale indicating how far it is from lot lines.

Q. How close to my lot line can I build my deck?
A. Generally, you must stay at least 20' from side and rear lot lines and 50' from any lot line on a street **(this is only for lots created prior to 1989). NOTE:** ***You want to be sure, so call us at (262) 796-6646 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., and we will check for you.***

NOTE: The property owner is responsible for correct placement of structures upon a parcel of land to comply with the building and zoning law.

The edge of the City street pavement or back of curb is usually **NOT** located on a property line.

Q. Do I need concrete footings under my deck?

A. Yes. Concrete is required. Footings must be 48” deep with a minimum of 12” of concrete and sized to distribute the loads of the deck to the soils.

Q. When must I call for inspections?

A. (1) When 48" deep (minimum) holes are ready for viewing before posts are installed.
(2) When all joists are in place before decking is installed.
(3) When you are all done.

Q. What are the most common errors made on decks?

A. (1) No pier depth inspection.
(2) Pier depth less than 48".
(3) Guard rail less than 36" high.
(4) Guardrail balusters too far apart -- must not be able to pass a **4"** diameter ball through it.
(5) Stairs are wrong! The “riser” height and “tread” depth must be uniform with each other. Maximum riser height allowed is 8". Minimum tread depth (front to back) allowed is 9". This is crucial for a safe stair.

Good luck with your project! Remember we are here to serve and protect you, our residents.
Our hours are Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Field Inspectors are in from 7:00 - 8:00 a.m. and 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. Our telephone number is **(262) 796-6646**. Please call if we may be of further assistance. **PLEASE CALL DIGGER’S HOTLINE AT LEAST 3 DAYS PRIOR TO STARTING YOUR PROJECT. (800) 242-8511 OR (800) 542-2289**