INFORMATION PACKAGE ON RESIDENTIAL DECKS
From the City of London Building Division

Ontario Building Code and Zoning Information

Given the variety of sizes, heights, and assembly methods in deck construction, it is beyond the scope of this information package to address all circumstances affecting deck construction. As a result, the requirements and guidelines listed in this information package are simply intended to provide assistance for readers planning to construct a deck.

Do decks require permits?
Yes, a building permit is generally required for decks greater than 24” (600 mm) above grade or serving the principal entrance into a dwelling unit. However, please refer to the following Deck Information table for specific circumstances which may dictate whether or not a permit is actually required for a particular deck.

A deck may require a building permit based on the following criteria: size/area, height above finished grade, location in respect to the dwelling, and access conditions. The following table identifies specific criteria which will determine whether or not a deck may require a building permit:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deck Information</th>
<th>Building Permit Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serving a principal entrance of a dwelling unit</td>
<td>Permit Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Regardless of height &amp; size)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater than 24” (600 mm) above grade, any size, and</td>
<td>Permit Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attached to a dwelling unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 24” (600 mm) above grade, any size, and</td>
<td>Permit Not Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attached to a dwelling unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater than 24” (600 mm) above grade and detached</td>
<td>Permit Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from a dwelling unit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 24” (600 mm) above grade and detached</td>
<td>Permit Not Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from a dwelling unit</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Where can I obtain a building permit for a deck?
A permit may be acquired by submitting all required information to the City of London Building Division, on the seventh floor of City Hall, located at 300 Dufferin Avenue, London, ON. You may also apply online at:
http://www.london.ca/online-services/Pages/E-Permits.aspx

The following diagram illustrates the main components contained in a deck structure:
All Decks must be constructed in compliance with the applicable Zoning By-Laws. Refer to the following link in order to access the municipality’s Zoning By-Law: http://www.london.ca/business/Planning-Development/zoning-by-law/Pages/HowToUseZBylaw.aspx

For backyards in residential settings, a “Rear Yard” refers to a yard extending across the full width of a lot between the rear lot line and the nearest main wall of any main building or structure on the lot. Similarly, a “Setback” signifies the shortest horizontal distance between a point, line, or structure and the nearest part of any building, structure, excavation, or open storage on a lot.

Due to the numerous zoning classifications and corresponding restrictions, setbacks and other applicable zoning requirements may vary depending on the type of property. Any zoning-related questions may be directed to a Zoning Officer at the City of London – Building Division (Telephone: 519-930-3510).

Guide for Permit Applications for Decks

The following documentation must be submitted with an application for a deck:

• Application for a Permit to Construct or Demolish: A standardized application form prescribed by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing must be completed. The application can be obtained on the City of London’s website at: http://www.london.ca/business/Permit-Licences/Building-Permits/Documents/2012BldgPermitApp.pdf

• Schedule 1: Designer Information: Division C, 3.2, of the Ontario Building Code stipulates that any design activities, including deck drawings, submitted after December 31, 2005, unless carried out by the actual owner or by an architect/professional engineer, must be completed by an individual possessing qualifications set out in Sentence 3.2.5.1. The Designer’s information is to be included on the Schedule 1: Designer Information form, including a BCIN which shall similarly be presented on all architectural drawings submitted in the design package. Refer to the following link: http://www.london.ca/business/Permit-Licences/Building-Permits/Documents/Schedule_1_Designer_Info.pdf

• Two Copies of Survey/Plot Plan indicating:
  • Location of all structures presently on the property;
  • Location of septic tank and tile bed, if applicable (measurement to the proposed deck must be indicated);
  • Location of proposed deck, including stairs, with accurate measurements to all lot lines and all deck and stairs dimensions.

  **Note:** All proposed construction must be kept away from existing septic tanks and tile beds, and clear access to septic tanks must be maintained for servicing requirements.

• Two Copies of Design Drawings and Specifications:
  • Plan View: The drawing must indicate beam and joist sizes, spacing, and direction of framing members, post and foundation/footing locations, including corresponding sizes, all applicable dimensions, location of stairs and appropriates widths, and connection of framing elements. Should the designer of the deck choose to include an engineered guard rail, submission of approved engineering will also be required with the application.
  • Cross Section(s): Cross sections must indicate height of the deck from finished grade, attachment details to building (if applicable) and other relevant structural framing details/information
  • Elevation(s): Elevation drawings to show guards/ railing, stairs, etc.

If the submitted package is accepted as a complete application, the review process will be completed within 10 business days, after which the building permit will either be issued or refused on the basis of deficient items. If the application is refused, a deficiency letter will be issued outlining all outstanding items. Once these items have been addressed by the applicant, the review will be performed shortly thereafter.

Should the application not be accepted on the grounds of zoning non-compliance, the applicant may apply to the Committee of Adjustment for a Minor Variance. Any further questions regarding zoning amendments may be addressed to a Zoning Officer (Telephone: 519-930-3510).
When can construction begin?
The construction of the deck can begin once the application review process has been completed and the corresponding permit has been issued to the applicant. Any proposed changes to the original plans must be re-submitted to the Building Division. All mandatory inspections required for the deck will be enlisted with the permit and a building inspector will inspect the project during specified stages of construction.

Refer to attached samples (Drawings C.D.I. NO. C3.1 – C.D.I. NO. C3.5) for minimum deck design requirements and standard construction techniques

Keep in Mind!

- Install guard posts minimum 1.5" below rim board/floor framing with appropriate support blocking
- Review location and required depth of pier footings
- Ensure rise and run of stairs to be uniform
- Leave deck skirting off until final inspection
- Install engineered guard rails as per submitted details
- Include notation for the type of railing being used. If SB-7 is not being applied, an engineer’s stamp is required.

- Do not notch posts
- Do not install privacy guard rails without approved engineered drawings
- Do not install joist hangers with deck screws or roofing nails
- Do not notch any structural member, including beams, floor joists, post railings and guards
- Refer to the following illustrations for additional deck details:

Please note this document is for general information purposes only, and should not be used for legal reasons. Although every effort is taken to ensure information contained herein is accurate at the date of printing, the City of London, and its agents cannot be responsible for any errors or omissions.