

City of Oskaloosa
Building Safety Division

REQUIREMENTS FOR BUILDING A PATIO, DECK OR FENCE

Pre-Planning – To obtain a permit you must provide us with a completed building permit application and plot plan. A plot plan shows where the patio, deck or fence is to be located on the lot with the distances noted to the lot lines. All buildings on your property must be shown on this drawing. Building drawings must show size, height of fence or deck and type of footing. Plans must be legible. A blank building permit application is available from the Building Safety Division or you may download this form from the Building Permits section of this web site.

General Requirements:

1. Locate property lines exactly. Estimates are not acceptable. City Personnel will not locate property lines.
2. **Remember** to call Iowa One-Call at 1-800-292-8989 before you dig.
3. The building permit fee is based upon the valuation of the patio, deck or fence. This means materials plus labor.

Patio – The construction of a patio is defined as being on grade or within 12” of the ground. Zoning setbacks and rules are not used for patio construction requirements. No permit is necessary to construct a patio. It is possible to construct your patio to your lot line. There are limits regarding maximum impervious coverage. You will need to contact the Building Safety Division concerning impervious coverage.

Deck – A deck is a raised platform projecting from the wall of a building accessible at or from grade, and attached to the ground. Deck size is subject to the same zoning and setback requirements as the principal structure.

Construction Details – Frost-depth footings are required for the deck if it is 30” above grade or higher, whether attached to the principal structure or detached with a load-bearing roof.

General Requirements:

1. Frost-depth footings are to be 8” wide and extend 42” deep from the finished grade. Soil to wood contact must be avoided.
2. Concrete for post-hole footings shall be 3,000 lbs. concrete.
3. All deck wood shall be treated and marked or branded by an approved agency certifying for an exterior application. Fasteners are to be galvanized or non-corrosive.
4. Galvanized joist hangers shall be used in place of toe-nailing.
5. Cantilevered deck joists over support beams shall not extend more than 2’ over the beam.
6. Flashing shall be installed at the connection point of the deck and existing structure when the exterior finish material is removed.
7. Wood decking shall be nominal 1” material when joists or stringers do not exceed 16” o.c. spacing, or 5/4” and nominal 2” lumber may be used on 24” o.c. joist or stringer spacing.
8. Decks 30” or more above finish grade shall be protected by a guardrail of not less than 36” in height. Open guardrails shall have intermediate rails or side rails installed. If balusters are used, they must be spaced so that a 4” sphere cannot pass through the opening.
9. Stairs serving decks shall have a maximum rise or step of 8” in height and a minimum 9” tread width. A handrail shall be installed on at least one side at a height of 34” to 38” above the nosing of the treads. If both sides of the stairs are open, then handrails shall be installed on both sides. Stair width shall be a minimum of 36”. Stair treads shall be bearing on concealed cleats or cut into stringers. Stairs 36” wide will require 3 stringers.

10. Depending on construction techniques, decks more than 6' in height may be required to provide diagonal bracing to withstand lateral loads.

Fence – Residential fences or landscape features such as sculpture or walls may be erected or constructed on property lines provided no such fence in any front yard exceeds 4' in height, and 6' in height in the case of side or rear yard. Corner lots or lots with intersecting alleys are unique in regard to setback and visibility requirements. Woven wire, field fencing or barbed wire are not permitted in residential areas.

Inspections/Questions – You are responsible for calling the Building Safety Division to arrange for all inspections of your deck or fence. The post-hole footing deck inspection would be the first. Do not conceal any work. Be sure to call for a FINAL INSPECTION once construction is complete.

For further information, you may stop in or call the Building Safety Division at 641-673-7472.