



City of Columbus
Mayor Michael B. Coleman

Department of Building & Zoning Services

757 Carolyn Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43224-3218
(614) 645-7433 (614) 645-7840 FAX

September 17, 2009

Revised May 24, 2013

Construction Industry Communication #23

From: Keith Wagenknecht, Chief Building Official

Re: Permits required for installation of a deck -- 1, 2, 3-Family dwelling units.

Background: The City of Columbus has historically not required a permit for an exterior deck meeting the definition of an accessory structure defined as follows: An unheated, one (1) story, detached building that is accessory to a one (1), two (2), or three (3) family dwelling and contains less than one hundred sixty-nine (169) square feet of gross floor area – CBC Section 4113.37 (D) (3). However, the City of Columbus has required plan review and permits for any deck which is served by an exterior door. The 2013 Residential Code of Ohio has been revised and does not require plan approval for any deck that is:

1. 200 square feet or less
2. Is not more than 30 inches above grade at any point when measured 3 feet out from the edge of the deck
3. Is not attached to the dwelling unit
4. And is not served by a required egress door from the dwelling.

Decks meeting all of the four items above do not need a building permit, but must obtain zoning approval only.

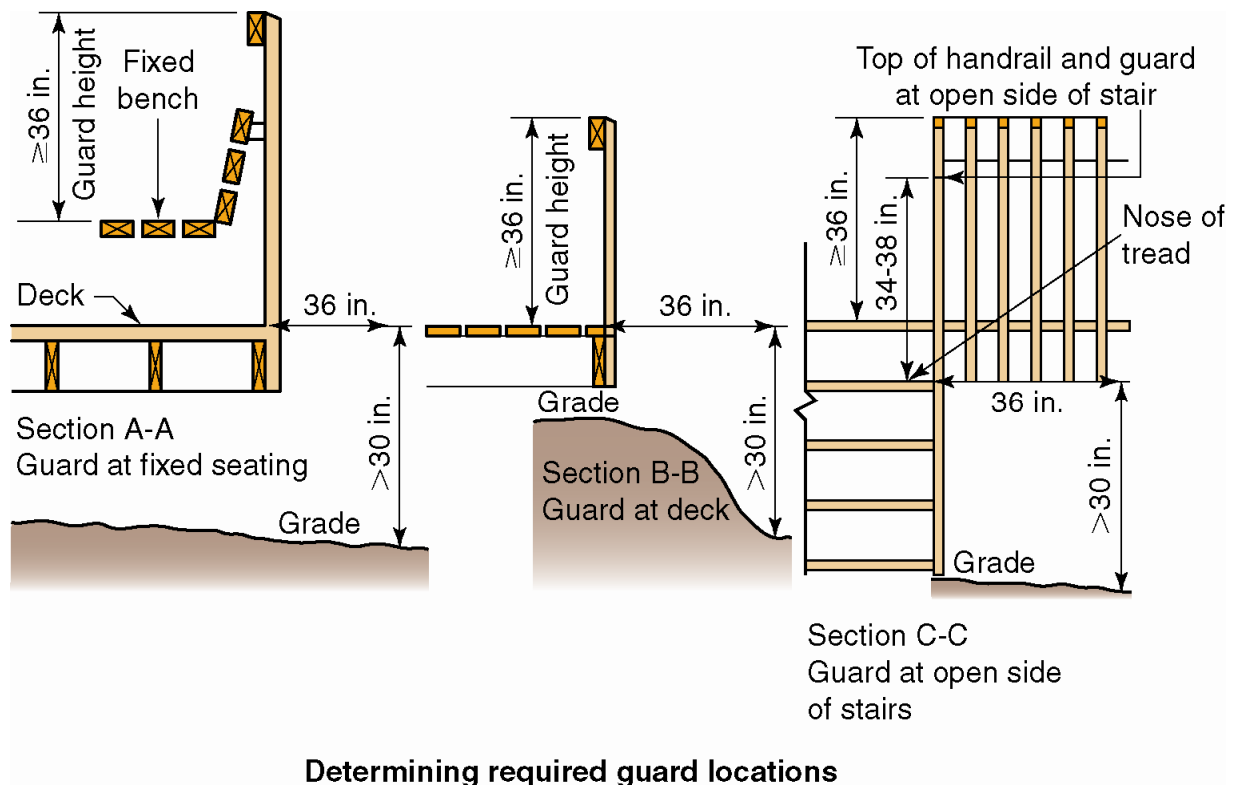
Memorandum: Decks must comply with the following minimum provisions of the RCO.

311.3.1 - The step from the dwelling onto the deck shall not exceed 8 ¼ inches when measured from the top of the door threshold to the deck surface provided the door does not swing out onto the deck.

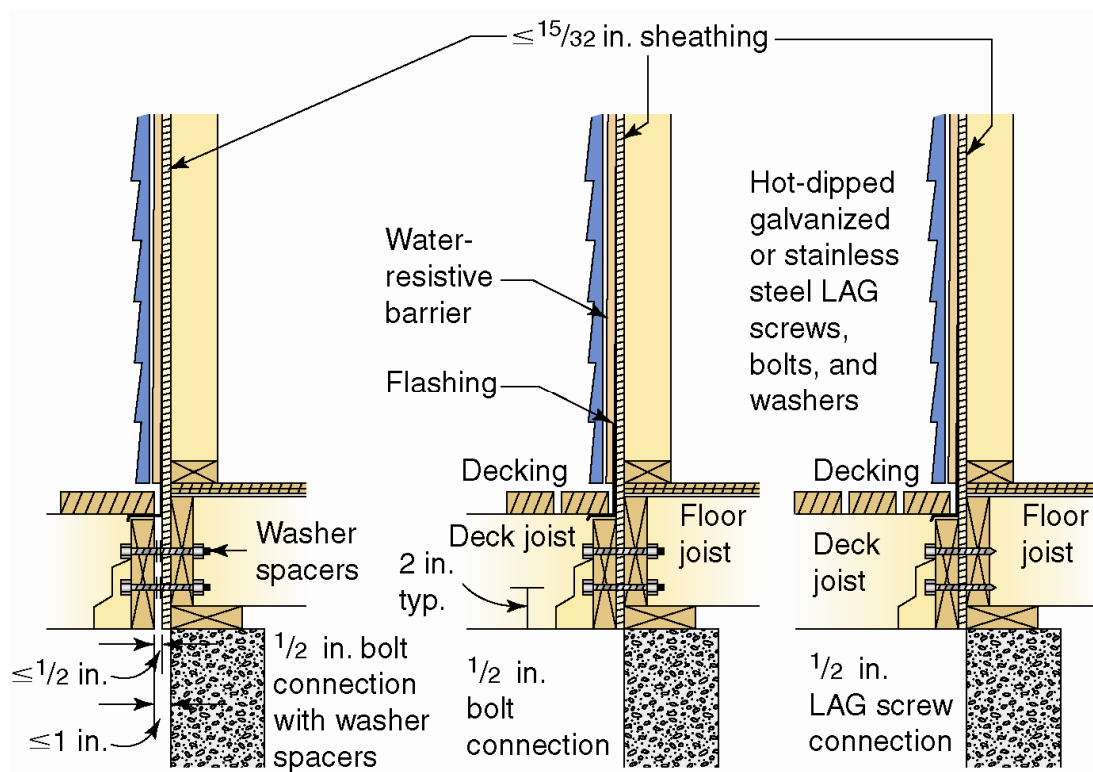
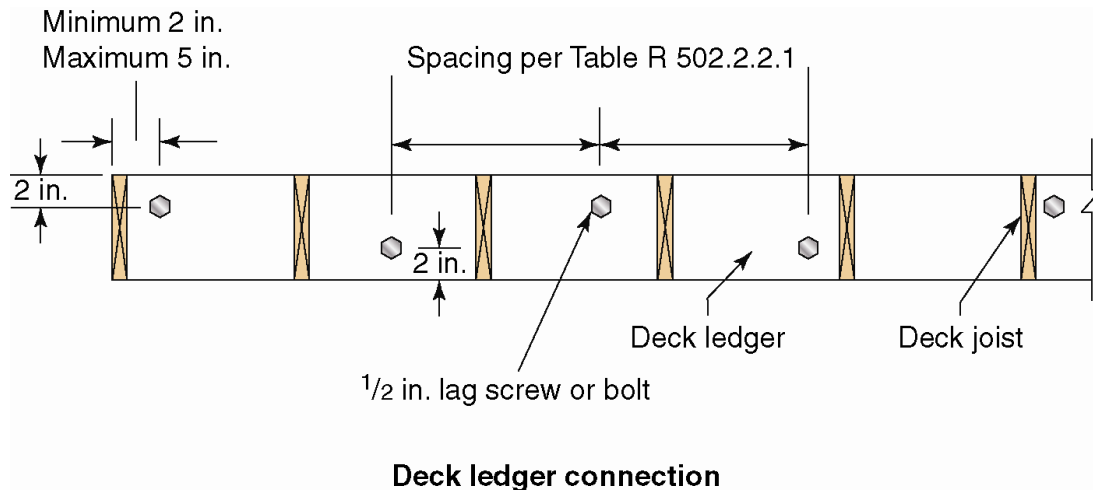
311.7.4 – Stair Treads and Risers: Risers no more than 8 ¼ inch high, treads not less than 9 inches, open risers shall be permitted provided that the opening between treads does not permit the passage of a 4 inch sphere. (Not restricted for decks 30 inches or less to grade.) Solid risers shall have a minimum ¾ inch to maximum 1 ¼ inch nosing.

311.7 A 34-38 inch high handrail shall be provided on at least one side of the steps when there are 4 or more risers.

312.1 Requires a 36 inch high guardrail be provided on all decks where the grade is more than 30 inches to the deck surface when measured 3 feet out from the edge of the deck. The guardrail shall be provided along the edge of the deck surface and or perimeter fixed seating.



502.2.2 Decks attached to the structure shall be designed and installed to resist both vertical and horizontal movement. Such attachment shall not be accomplished by the use of toenails or nails subject to withdrawal.



703.8 Requires corrosion-resistive flashing be provided in the exterior wall envelope in such a manner as to prevent entry of water into the wall cavity or penetration of water to the building structural components where porches, decks or stairs are attached to a wall or floor assembly of wood-frame construction.

A permit is required to ensure compliance.