



# Building Permit for Patios and Decks

## A guide for the residential owner-builder

### Definitions

**Deck:** A flat floored roofless area adjoining a house or built as a structural part of it or freestanding, usually being open on one or more sides.

**Patio:** The court or courtyard of a house or other building; especially an inner court open to the sky. A recreation area adjoining a dwelling.

**Patio or deck cover:** One story structures not exceeding 12-feet in height. They may be a simple structure consisting of a roof and supporting members only or they may be enclosed. Patio covers may be freestanding (detached) or attached to the house.

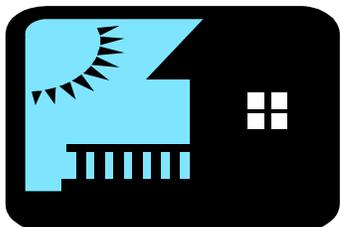
**Enclosed Patio:** Patio enclosure walls may have any configuration, provided the open area of the longer wall and one additional wall is equal to at least 65% of the area below a minimum of 6-feet 8-inches of each wall measured from the floor. Openings may be enclosed with insect screening or translucent or transparent plastic that is readily removable and not more than .125 (1/8 inch) thickness.

Patio and deck covers shall be used only for recreational outdoor living purposes and not as carports, garages, storage rooms or habitable rooms.

**Setback:** A distance from a curb, property line, or structure within which building is prohibited.

**Sunroom:** A glass enclosed porch or living room are allowed if certain conditions are met:

1. The area must meet Energy Requirement or the door leading into the sunroom from the house is left in place and the sunroom is not heated and utilized as habitable space,
2. The sunroom does not cover the required egress window of a bedroom,
3. The sunroom does not alter the natural lighting and ventilation requirements of the adjacent rooms.



### Setback Requirements

**Attached structures:** Patios, decks, covers, arbors or any other structure attached to a building must maintain a minimum five-foot side yard clearance on interior lot and an ten-foot setback on a corner side yard. There must be a minimum of a fifteen-foot distance between the structure and the rear property line.

**Detached structures:** Patios, decks, covers, arbors or any other structure detached from a building cannot be constructed closer than three-feet from any property line. Structures over nine-feet tall will require an increase in setback of one-foot per one-foot increase in height. The Planning Division can assist you with further setback information, call 707.746.4280.



### Handrails and Guardrails

Decks constructed 30-inches or more above ground are required to have a guardrail surrounding the deck and a continuous handrail along the flight of stairs serving the deck.

The top of the guardrail shall be a minimum of 42-inches from the ground. Open guardrails shall have intermediate rails or ornamental pattern such that a sphere four-inches in diameter cannot pass through.

Handrails are required on stairs which have four or more risers. The top of the handrails shall be placed not less than 34-inches nor more than 38-inches above the nosing of treads. They shall be continuous for the full length of the stairs and the ends shall be returned to terminate in newel posts. The handgrip portion of handrails shall not be less than 1 1/4 inches nor more than two inches in cross section and adequate smooth gripping surface with no sharp corners and spaced 1 1/2-inches from an adjacent wall.

## Permits Required

**Deck:** A platform or deck over 200-square feet in area that is 30-inches or more above the ground, is attached to a dwelling, is required to have a permit prior to being constructed.

**Note:** Decks constructed within six-inches of the ground should be made of redwood or pressure-treated lumber to avoid dry rot.

## Permit Information

When applying for a permit, certain information is required to begin the process:

- Description of work including drawing (see below),
- Street address of project,
- Property owner's name, address & telephone number,
- Valuation of the proposed work and
- Other information as required

Building permits are issued only to the property owner, an authorized agent or licensed contractor. Upon approval of the proposed work and issuance of the permit, the permittee has 180-days to commence work on the project.

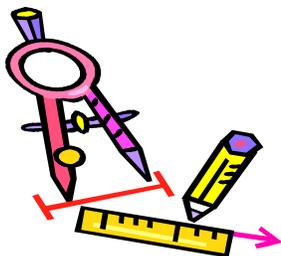
In some cases, Design Review may be required by the Planning Division. For example a "contributing" house in the Historic District or any house in the Arsenal Historic District. Call the Planning Division at 707.746.4280.

## Required Drawings

Submit three sets of plans which meet the following basic requirements: Drawn to a minimum scale of  $1/4" = 1' - 0"$

**Site Plan** - showing the size, position and setbacks of the proposed project in relation to existing buildings, property lines, and public utility easements. Provide building coverage in square feet (see Sample Site Plan)

**Framing plan and elevation** - showing size of rafters, beams and girders; the distance between supporting columns; methods of attachment to the house and foundation; the type of foundation used, and the materials used to construct the patio or deck.



## Inspections

**Deck:** The following inspections are made only if a permit is issued for the deck:

**Footing:** To be made after pier holes are dug and prior to concrete placement,

**Final:** To be made after girders are set and the deck, handrails and stairs, if used, are installed.

**Patio or deck cover:** Due to the nature of the structure, the frame and final are completed at the same time unless the patio walls are enclosed. If the walls are to be enclosed, an inspection of the framework is required.

## Building Permit Fees

Fees are charged for each type of permit issued, such as building, plumbing, electrical and/or mechanical. The permit fee is based on the valuation of the project and calculated from fee tables established in the code. The fees provide for the checking of plans and adequate field inspection of materials and construction methods.



## Call for an Inspection 707.746.4235

Inspection requests received before 4:30 p.m. are scheduled for the following day (M-F). All calls received after 4:30 p.m. are scheduled two days later. When you call the recorded message be ready to provide your permit number, job address, type of inspection and if you prefer a morning or afternoon inspection (no specific time can be arranged). You will **not** receive a call back. Morning inspections occur sometime between 8:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m. and afternoon inspections between 1:00 p.m.—4:30 p.m. The approved plans and inspection card are required to be on the job site and available to the inspector at the time of inspection.

### Building Division

General information	707.746.4230
Inspection requests only	707.746.4235
Facsimile	707.747.1637

### Planning Division

707.746.4280