OAK PARK

14300 Oak Park Blvd., Oak Park, MI 48237 (248) 691-7450 www.oakparkmi.gov

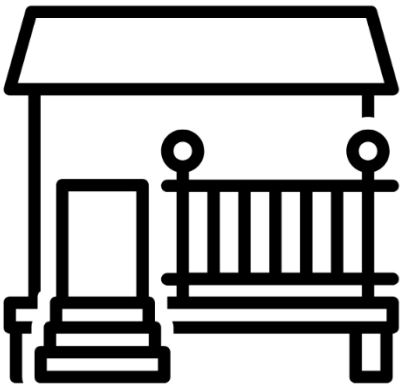
Porch Construction Building Guidelines

Materials
Porches may be constructed of concrete, masonry, treated or weather resistant lumber, or other approved materials.

To apply for a building permit
The following information is required to obtain a permit for a porch addition or alteration or reconstruction to a single-family residential structure:

- Two copies of a site plan (plot plan) and two copies of the construction plan are required to make application. Approved copies of each will be returned to the applicant.
- Site plan: Dimensioned drawing showing size of the property and buildings on the property and location of the proposed porch. Include the distance from the porch to all property lines.
- Construction plan: Construction drawings containing elevations, footing details, concrete cap size, framing details and lumber sizes for wood structures including all required connectors, handrail and guardrail design and details, etc. Wood porches constructed like a deck must follow the deck guidebook.

Work cannot start until the above information has been reviewed, approved and a permit has been issued.
To schedule a post hole or open trench inspection (before the concrete is poured), or a final inspection (when porch is finished), call 248-691-7450 the day before you want the inspection to be conducted. For wood decks a rough-frame inspection is required before the decking is installed.



Steps
Steps shall be at least 36 inches wide, have a 9 inch minimum tread width and 8.25 inch maximum riser height. Handrails shall be provided on one side of stairs with three or more risers (three steps). Handrails shall have minimum and maximum heights of 34 and 38 inches.

Footings
Posts and footings shall extend 42 inches below grade.

Guardrails
Porches greater than 30 inches above the ground shall have 36-inch-high guardrails. Spindle etc., are then required and must be spaced less than 4 inches apart.

(Cont.)

Things you should know before constructing your porch:

1. All exterior fasteners (nails, plates, angles, etc.) shall be galvanized or otherwise rust resistant.
2. All debris must be removed and the yard graded around the porch before the final inspection is requested.
3. Precast concrete steps shall be set on a minimum 4-inch concrete pad.
4. Wood stair stringers shall be secured at base to 4 inch by 4 inch posts 42 inches below grade or rest on a concrete pad.
5. Concrete caps shall slope for drainage away from the house.
6. All risers must be uniform in height including the step up onto the cap.
7. Electrical – Overhead wires must be at least 10 feet above the walking surface.
8. Enclosed porches with roofs, such as screened enclosures, sunrooms, etc., will be treated as an "addition" to the home, and as such, must meet different zoning requirements.

For more information, contact the City of Oak Park Building Department at (248) 691-7450.