

This handout is a **guide** only and does not contain all of the requirements of the Minnesota State Building Code or city ordinances.

PERMITS:

Building permits are required for construction of all new three or four season porches and for conversion of a three season to a four season. The Building Code in Minnesota requires porches that are to be heated (four season) to comply with the state energy code in addition to the other provisions of the code for construction of unheated structures. Porches must also meet the land use and setback requirements of the zoning code. Setbacks from property lines vary depending upon zoning district your home is located in. This is an important first step in planning your porch. Zoning questions should be directed to the Planning Division (763) 493-8056.

PERMIT FEES:

The building permit fee is based on the project's construction cost. A building inspector in order to spot potential problems and to see that minimum building code is being met does the plan review. Inspections will be done during the project to insure code compliance.

INFORMATION NECESSARY WHEN APPLYING FOR A BUILDING PERMIT:

- Building permit application / Two sets of plans & construction details
- Survey
 - Indicate lot dimensions
 - Show location and size of existing structure(s)
 - Show location and size of proposed structure
 - Indicate setbacks from property lines of existing and proposed structure
- Plans
 - Proposed size of porch
 - Location and size of windows and door openings
 - Size of headers over all doors and window/screen openings
 - Size, spacing and direction of rafters (roof) materials
 - Size and spacing of floor joists
 - Size, location and spacing of posts
 - Type (grade & species) of lumber to be used
 - Height of structure from grade
 - Size and depth of footings
 - Beam size supporting floor joists and/or rafters
 - Subfloor material
 - Ceiling height
 - Type of sheathing and siding
 - Size and spacing of rafters and type of roofing underlayment and roof covering
 - Pitch of roof (note: If truss roof system is to be used, submit one copy of stamped pre-engineered truss design.)
 - Guardrail type and height (if any)

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- Type of openings (screened, window, sliding doors, etc.)
- Method of attachment to existing structure
- Energy calculation worksheet (required if porch is to be heated)

BUILDING CODE REQUIREMENTS:

- Footings must extend to a minimum depth of 42"
- Wood joists 18" or closer to grade or wood beams 12" or closer to grade and their supports must be of an approved treated wood.
- Columns and posts supporting porches and stairways exposed to the weather or to water splash must be supported and connected to concrete piers or metal pedestals projecting above grade. Columns and posts in contact with the ground or embedded in concrete or masonry must be approved pressure treated wood suitable for ground contact.
- Porches, balconies, or raised floor surfaces more than 30" above the floor or grade below shall have guards not less than 36 inches in height. Open sides of stairs with a total rise of more than 30" above grade or a floor below must be protected by guards not less than 34 inches in height. Required guards shall have intermediate rails or ornamental closures that do not allow the passage of a sphere 4 inches in diameter.
- If a stairway is to be provided, it must be not less than 36" in width. The maximum riser height shall be 7 3/4" (3/8" maximum variation in riser heights.) The Minimum tread depth shall be 10" (3/8" maximum variation in tread depths.)
- Handrails are required on all stairways having 4 or more risers. Handrails may not be less than 1 1/4" nor more than 2" in cross sectional area (diameter). Handrails must be installed not less than 34" nor more than 38" above the nosing (front edge) of treads and they must be returned to a wall or post.
- If an exterior stairway is to be provided, the structural members shall be of approved wood of natural resistance to decay such as cedar or redwood, or treated wood when such members are exposed to the weather.
- Wall framing studs must be placed with their wide dimension perpendicular to the wall, and not less than three studs must be installed at each corner of an exterior wall.
- Top plate bearing and exterior wall studs need to be capped with double top plates installed to provide overlapping at corners and at intersections with other partitions. End joints in double top plates must be offset at least 24".
- Approved ice and water barrier underlayment materials must be installed on all roofs over porches. The ice and water barrier is required from the eaves to 24" inside the exterior wall line of the building.

REQUIRED BUILDING INSPECTIONS:

- Footings: After the holes are dug and any reinforcement is in place, but prior to the pouring of the concrete.
- Framing: To be scheduled after the roof, all framing, fire blocking and bracing are in place and all pipes, chimneys and vents are complete and the rough electrical, plumbing and heating are approved.
- Insulation: To be scheduled after all insulation material, including the vapor barrier, are in place but before covering (required for four season porch).
- Final: To be scheduled upon completion of the building and finish grading.