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RESIDENTIAL HANDRAILS & GUARDS

Guards 2016 CRC - Section R312, and 2016 CBC – Section 1013

R312.1 Guards. Guards shall be provided in accordance with Sections R312.1.1 through R312.1.4

R312.1.1 Where required. Guards shall be located along open-sided walking surfaces including stairs, ramps and landings, that are located more than 30 inches measured vertically to the floor or grade below at any point within 36 inches horizontally to the edge of the open side.

R312.1.2 Height. Required guards at open-sided walking surfaces, including stairs, porches, balconies or landings, shall be not less than 42 inches high measured vertically above the adjacent walking surface, adjacent fixed seating or the line connecting the leading edges of the treads.

Exceptions:

1. Guards on the open sides of stairs shall have a height not less than 34 inches measured vertically from a line connecting the leading edges of the treads.
2. Where the top of the guard also serves as a handrail on the open sides of stairs, the top of the guard shall be not less than 34 inches and not more than 38 inches measured vertically from a line connecting the leading edges of the treads.

R312.1.3 Opening limitations. Required guards shall not have openings from the walking surface to the required guard height which allow passage of a sphere 4 inches in diameter.

Exceptions:

1. The triangular openings at the open side of a stair, formed by the riser, tread and bottom rail of a guard, shall not allow passage of a sphere 6 inches in diameter.
2. Guards on the open sides of stairs shall not have openings which allow passage of a sphere 4-3/8 inches in diameter.

