

# Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Mobile Homes

## Definitions and basic requirements

### What is the difference between a mobile home, a manufactured home, and a modular home?

Although state codes separately define and distinguish between “manufactured homes” and “mobile homes” on the basis of federal or state construction codes for such dwellings, county codes make no such distinction. Mobile homes are treated the same as manufactured homes for regulatory purposes under county codes.

“Modular homes” are those that are constructed in sections in a factory, but are assembled on site and do not include a permanent chassis. Such homes are treated the same as conventional site-built homes under county codes.

### What is the difference between a mobile home and a “travel trailer”?

According to county code, a “mobile or manufactured home” is a single family dwelling fabricated on a permanent chassis and is designed to be used for permanent human occupancy. The county code defines a travel trailer as any transportable trailer available for recreational use, rather than permanent occupancy. A manufactured or mobile home is labeled by the manufacturer for permanent occupancy. The term manufactured or mobile home does not include "recreation vehicle," "commercial coach," "camping vehicle," "travel trailer," "park trailer," "tip-out," and any other similar vehicle which is not designed and constructed for use as a single-family dwelling and is not otherwise labeled as a manufactured or mobile home under any federal or state law.

Only manufactured or mobile homes, as defined by the Clark County Code are eligible for a permanent mobile home placement permit. Travel trailers cannot be approved as permanent dwellings.

### What minimum state requirements apply to mobile homes?

In order to qualify as a residence, a mobile home must be approved by the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries (L&I), as evidenced by a Labor and Industries insignia. If the mobile home predates June 15, 1976, special approval from L&I is required.

L&I approval is required for interior alterations and additions to mobile homes, as well as woodstove and electrical permits. Contact L&I at:

312 SE Stonemill Drive, Suite 120  
Vancouver WA 98684  
(Cascade Park Area)  
(360) 896-2300  
[www.lni.wa.gov](http://www.lni.wa.gov)

### Are there restrictions on where mobile homes can be placed?

Whether or not a mobile home is permitted, and what type of review and standards that will apply is determined by the lot’s zoning designation and the date that the lot was created. The potential requirement scenarios (typically referred to as placement standards) are as follows:

### “Type A” Placement Standards. Requirements for legal lots in the rural area (outside the urban growth boundary) and for lots within the

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Community Development  
1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver, Washington  
Phone: (360) 397-2375 Fax: (360) 397-2011  
[www.clark.wa.gov/development](http://www.clark.wa.gov/development)



For an alternate format, contact the Clark County ADA Compliance Office.  
Phone: (360) 397-2322  
Relay: 711 or (800) 833-6384  
E-mail: [ADA@clark.wa.gov](mailto:ADA@clark.wa.gov)

**urban growth boundary that were created prior to November 19, 1997.**

If your lot falls into this category, no review is required through the planning division. You need only apply for a placement permit through the Building Division.

**“Type B” Placement Standards. Requirements for legal lots in single family urban zones and certain multifamily zones created after November 19, 1997.**

Within the single family zones (R1-20, R1-10, R1-7.5, R1-6, and R1-5) and certain multi-family zones (R-12, R-18, OR-15 and OR-18), mobile homes are prohibited on lots that were created after November 19, 1997 unless the developer of the subdivision or short plat specifically requested that they be permitted. In those cases mobile homes are allowed only if authorized by a note on the final plat.

When a plat allows mobile homes in these zones, the special provisions of Section 40.260.130 apply as follows:

**Minimum Size.** Two fully enclosed parallel sections of not less than 864 square feet or a multi-story structure with equivalent square footage.

**Minimum Dimensions.** 24 feet by 36 feet or 864 square feet.

**Minimum roof pitch and materials.** Roof pitch shall not be less than a 2.85 foot rise for each 12 feet of horizontal run. Roofs shall be composition or wood shake or shingle, non-reflective coated metal, or similar material.

**Skirting and Siding.** Except where the foundation base of the mobile home is flush to ground level, each mobile home shall install skirting material which is of similar material, color and pattern as the siding of the home; or a masonry foundation. Exterior siding shall be similar in

appearance to siding materials commonly used on conventional site-built single-family residences.

**Age of Mobile Home.** The mobile home shall bear an insignia of approval from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and be constructed to state and federal requirements after June 15, 1976.

**Storage or Garage.** Each mobile home shall have a minimum of two off street parking spaces. In addition, each mobile home shall provide:

In the R1-20, R1-10, R1-7.5 zones, an enclosed single car garage of not less than 288 square feet is required.

In the R1-6, R1-5, R-12, R-18 and OR-18 zones, a storage building of at least 100 square feet is required.

Where required, the siding of the garage or storage building shall be similar in color and pattern as the siding of the home.

**“Type C”. Other situations**

Mobile homes are allowed under the same circumstances as conventional site built homes in the Urban Holding zones (UH-10, UH-20 and UH-40), or the Rural Commercial and Neighborhood Commercial districts (CR-1, CR-2 and C-2). zones. The special “Type B” placement requirements of CCC Section 40.260.130 do not apply in these zones.

**Regardless of when the lot was created, mobile homes are prohibited in the R-22, R-30, R-43, OR-22, OR-30, and OR-43 zones.**

**What are the submittal requirements for a placement permit?**

Please see the separate *Mobile Home Permit Submittal Checklist* handout.

### **What other requirements might apply?**

As with “regular” homes, there are special requirements for the placement of a mobile/manufactured home within the wildland/urban interface/ intermix area and within a flood plain district. Staff at the Permit Center can tell you if these regulations apply to your land.

### **Wildland Urban Interface/Intermix Area**

Mobile homes located in those areas designated as wildland/urban interface/ intermix area by Clark County Code (CCC) Section 15.13.030 shall be entirely enclosed with nonporous skirting consisting of metal, a minimum of 1/2 inch plywood or other approved material.

### **Flood Hazard Areas**

If the mobile home is to be located in a flood hazard area a flood plain permit subject to CCC Chapter 40.420 is required. A separate flood hazard area handout is available from the Clark County Public Service Center, Permit Services Center, located at 1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver WA.

### **What if the owner of the mobile home is not the owner of the property?**

Where the owner of the mobile home is not the sole owner of the lot upon which the home is to be located, both the property owner and the mobile home owner shall jointly apply for the mobile home placement permit. Due to the applicability of the Mobile Home/Landlord Tenant Act, the mobile home owner shall not be responsible for paying impact fees, sewer connection fees or other entrance fees pursuant to Revised Code (RCW) 59.20.060 2(e).

### **Use of mobile homes as temporary dwellings or “hardship permits”**

Temporary placements of mobile homes (also called Hardship Permits) are only permitted in certain circumstances. One or

more temporary dwellings may be established and maintained on a lot, tract, or parcel if the parcel is already occupied by a principal dwelling, for use by one of the following:

- A. A person who is to receive from or administer to a resident of the principal dwelling, continuous care and assistance necessitated by advanced age or infirmity, the need which is documented by a physician's medical statement; or
- B. A caretaker, hired-hand or other similar full-time employee working on the property in connection with an agricultural or related use of the premises; or
- C. Relatives, who are related by blood or marriage to a resident of the principal dwelling; over 62 years of age with an adjusted household gross income, as defined on IRS Form 1040 or its equivalent, which is at or below 50% of the median family income for Clark County (as adjusted).
- D. Within the forest and agricultural districts (CCC Chapter 40.210) only:
  1. Relatives, or
  2. A purchaser of the lot, tract, or parcel if a seller who is at least sixty years of age has retained a life estate to occupy the principal dwelling as a primary residence.

### **What are the lot requirements for placing a temporary mobile home?**

The lot must be at least one acre or at least twice the minimum lot area required by the applicable zone. For example, a lot of one acre would qualify in any zone that allows temporary dwellings, but to qualify in the R1-6 zone (which has a 6,000 square foot minimum lot size), the lot would have to be at least 12,000 square feet.

If more than one lawfully existing site-built residence exists on the lot, one temporary dwelling may be placed for each lawfully existing site-built residence. A lot whose primary dwelling(s) is (are) a mobile home(s) will qualify for only one temporary dwelling.

In addition, within the agriculture and forest districts (FR-80, FR-40, AG-20) the private well and septic systems for the additional dwelling(s) shall be located where they will minimize adverse impacts on resource land, which, if practical shall be within 200 feet of the principal dwelling.

### **What are the height and set back requirements for a temporary mobile home?**

The maximum height of a temporary mobile home shall be 12 feet, as measured from the average surrounding finish grade to the midpoint of the peak of the roof. See CCC 40.100.070 definition of "height, building" for details.

The temporary mobile home shall be located at least 20 feet from the primary structure, and meet all other setbacks of the applicable zone.

### **How "permanent" can a temporary mobile home be?**

The temporary mobile home shall be installed and maintained in a manner which will facilitate its removal at such time as the justifying hardship or need no longer exists.

In addition, a current vehicular license plate, if applicable, shall be maintained on the temporary dwelling.

### **When does a temporary mobile home have to be removed?**

Upon cessation of the hardship or need, the temporary dwelling shall be removed or the owner of the lot, tract or parcel shall comply with all applicable zoning subdivision requirements (i.e. apply for a short plat or subdivision).

### **What are the submittal requirements for a temporary mobile home?**

Please see the separate *Mobile Home Hardship Permit Submittal Checklist* handout.

### **For how long is a permit for a temporary mobile home valid?**

A temporary dwelling permit is valid for two years, and may be renewed for successive two year periods if the applicant submits evidence of the continuing need. By the end of the two year period (or successive extensions), the applicant must notify the county in writing that the temporary mobile home has been removed and request an inspection to verify that the temporary mobile home has been removed.

### **Can a temporary permit be revoked?**

Yes. If the requirements of CCC 40.260.130 or any other applicable land use or nuisance requirements are violated, the permit may be revoked following a public hearing by the Clark County land use hearing examiner.

### **Use of mobile homes as storage buildings**

If a mobile home is proposed to be used for something other than as a dwelling (such as a storage building), Labor and Industries is required to rescind the insignia, and the mobile home is treated by Clark County as a "regular" structure, and must meet the applicable building permit requirements instead of a placement permit. Kitchen facilities must be removed to prevent the new use from being used as a dwelling.

### **Miscellaneous requirements**

#### **What permits are required to move a mobile home?**

If you intend to move your mobile home over any county and/or state roads, and the mobile is more than eight feet wide and the combination of mobile and towing vehicle is longer than 35 feet, you will need to get an "over-legal" permit prior to moving the mobile home. You must apply for the

mobile home placement permit prior to applying for the over-legal permit.

Over-legal permits can be obtained at the county's Public Service Center on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. Please call (360) 397-2375 ext. 4290, for hours of operation and fees.

### **What other permits may be required in addition to a placement permit?**

Additional permits may be required for decks, patio covers, garages, wood stoves, road approaches, septic systems, sewer and water connections, over-legal and electrical permits. In some instances, environmental permits may also be required. Also, mobile homes manufactured prior to 1976 must be re-certified by Washington State Department of Labor and Industries. Proof will be required.

### **Do I need a permit for a deck?**

A three foot square (3'X 3') entry landing / deck and associated stairs can be approved as part of the placement permit. Decks or landings larger than 3'X3' require a separate permit.

Plot plans must show the location and size of the landings with stairs. Decks over 18 inches in height above the ground are required to comply with zoning setbacks for structures in your zoning district.

### **Can I attach a garage or shop to my mobile home?**

Labor and Industries reviews and approves all new mobile homes at the factory and must approve any change to the structure of a mobile home, including additions. You will need written approval from L&I prior to applying for a building permit from Clark County Permit Services and Building Safety.

### **Will I need an architect or engineer?**

Normally, when a mobile home is placed according to the manufacturer's state-approved specifications, an architect or engineer is not required. However, if a mobile home is placed on a steep slope,

within a year flood plain, or placed over a basement, engineering by a Washington State licensed architect or engineer may be required.

Relocated mobile homes must follow either the manufacturer's anchoring instructions OR the design of a Washington State License professional engineer or architect, OR follow the standards found in ANSI A225.1. Please contact a Clark County Plans Examiner or Building Inspector if you need more help.

### **What inspections should I expect?**

The following inspections are required for mobile home placements; more than one inspection may occur when the building inspector visits your site:

**Make sure your approved permit and plans are posted in a prominent location at the job site for the day of inspection.**

Reinforcing steel in spread footings. In cases where the manufacturer requires steel in spread footings, we need to inspect the steel placement prior to pouring concrete.

Zoning setbacks. This should occur after the mobile has been placed on the site.

Water and sewer/septic installation. This inspection should be requested after the water/septic lines have been placed in ditches, but before covering and before the mobile skirting has been installed.

Support blocking. This inspection should be requested after the mobile is placed, but before the installation of skirting.

Tie-downs. This inspection should be requested before the skirting is installed.

Gas Piping. This inspection should be requested after the installer has pressurized the system to at least 10 psi for a minimum of 15 minutes and installed a pressure gauge. Any reading of less than 10 psi on the pressure gauge will fail inspection.

**Skirting.** This inspection is one of the last inspections and should be requested after the above inspections have been approved.

**Foundation ventilation.** This inspection may be requested after skirting has been installed.

**Decks, stairs and railing.** As noted previously, decks will require separate permits if larger than 3' X 3'. This inspection should be requested any time prior to final inspection. All exterior doors shall have decks/landing per code.

**Final inspection.** This inspection should be requested after all work is finished, including decks and steps. All plumbing and mechanical systems shall be operable and the mobile should be ready for occupancy.

If any inspection cannot be approved, a written Correction Notice will always be left by the inspector. Please make the corrections and call again to schedule a re-inspection.

### **How do I request an inspection?**

Once your permit has been approved and you've reached the point where you need an inspection, just call the IVR Inspection Request line at (360) 397-2477. Please have your permit cards ready when you call. You will need your case number and the three digit code for the inspection you are requesting (found on your inspection card), and a pen and paper to record your confirmation number.

You may also request inspections online at [www.clark.wa.gov/community-development](http://www.clark.wa.gov/community-development)

### **Can my application or permit expire?**

Yes. Your application will expire if you do not pick up your permit within 180 days of the application date. Your approved permit will expire two years from day of issuance. You may be eligible for an extension of your permit or application if you make a written

request before the permit or application expires. Speak with a Permit Technician for details and costs.

### **Other agencies you may need contact:**

#### **If you live in the city limits of Yacolt:**

Clark County provides building permit services under contract to the residents of Yacolt. If you live within the city limits of Yacolt, please visit the Yacolt city hall prior to making application at the county's permit center. When you apply to the county, you will need to provide a letter of approval from the city. In addition, any proposal involving the construction of a new building, or changes to the dimensions of an existing building must be accompanied by two copies of a city-approved plot plan.

#### **City of Yacolt**

202 W. Cushman, Yacolt  
Phone: (360) 686-3922  
Call for hours.

#### **For sewer connection permits:**

Different sewer providers and jurisdictions each have their own unique requirements and connection fees. Sewer providers include:

#### **City of Camas**

605 NE Fourth Avenue  
Camas WA 98607  
Phone: (360) 834-8860

#### **Clark Regional Wastewater District**

8000 NE 52nd Ct  
Vancouver WA 98665  
Phone: (360) 750-5876

#### **City of Vancouver**

4400 NE 77th Ave  
Vancouver WA  
(360) 487-7800

#### **City of Washougal**

1701 C Street  
Washougal WA 98671  
Phone: (360) 835-8501

If you need help in determining your provider, please contact a Clark County Permit Technician.

Prior to issuance of your placement or building permits, you must provide us with a copy of your paid application for a Sewer Permit from the appropriate jurisdiction.

In most cases, mobile homes placed in existing mobile home parks will not need to provide an application for a sewer permit.

### **For septic tank permits**

If the permit request is for a new mobile home placement and you will be installing a septic tank system, you must get a permit for a septic tank from Clark County Public Health prior to getting approval of your mobile home placement permit.

If you intend to use an existing septic tank system, you must provide us with a septic release letter from Clark County Public Health that the existing system is adequate and approving the connection.

### **Clark County Public Health**

1601 East Fourth Plain Boulevard  
Vancouver, WA 98661  
Phone: (360) 397-8000

### **Electrical permits and woodstove permits**

The Washington State Department of Labor & Industries is responsible for issuing electrical and woodstove permits and performing follow-up field inspections.

### **For road approach permits**

If your driveway will connect directly to a public roadway, you must have written permission in the form of an approved road approach permit in order to do so. Road approach permits are necessary to insure that your access meets requirements for sight distance, intersection spacing, and culvert construction (if applicable).

If you need a road approach for access onto a county road, it will be automatically added to your permit application by staff.

If your driveway enters onto a private road, you will not need a road approach permit from Clark County; although you will need to show proof that you have the legal right to use the access easement.

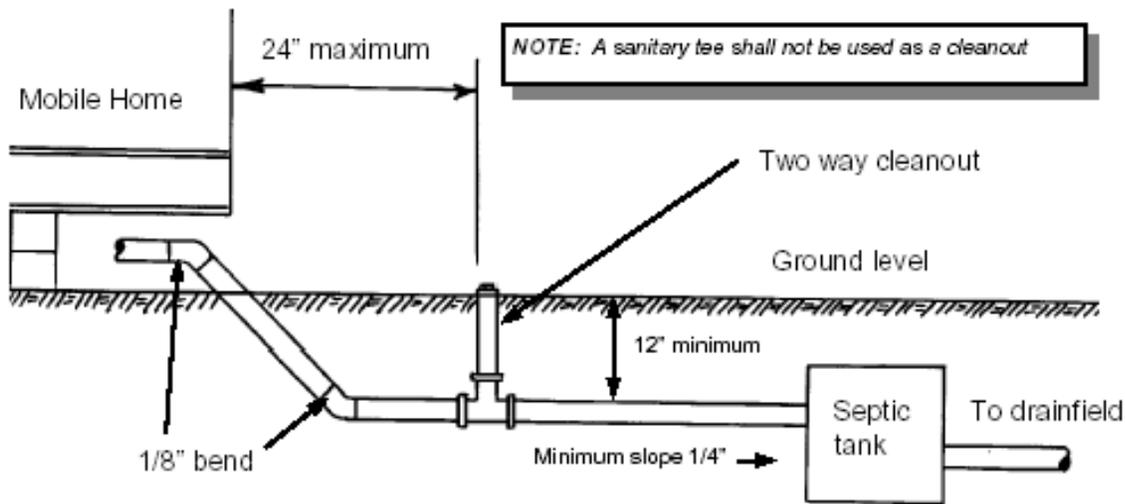
For questions on access to county or private roads contact:

Clark County Community Development  
1300 Franklin Street  
Vancouver WA 98660  
(360) 397-2375 ext. 4078

For access onto state highways contact:  
Washington Department of Transportation  
4200 Main Street  
Vancouver WA 98660  
(360) 696-6243

**Typical Septic Plumbing**

Note: A sanitary tee shall not be used as a cleanout.

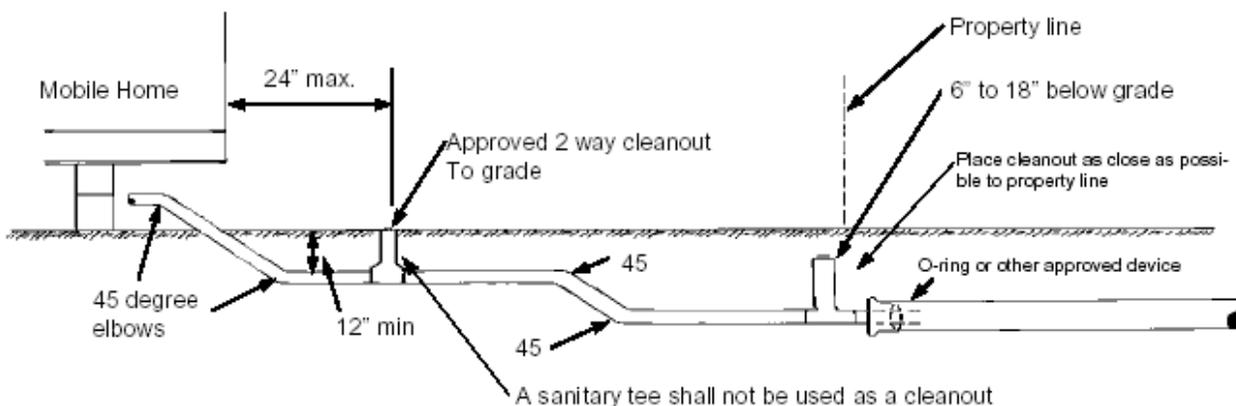


Piping shall be sized per Uniform Plumbing Code. Please contact a Plans Examiner for more information.

**Notes:**

There are special requirements for piping installed under a concrete slab. Contact the county Building Safety Division for more information if you are installing piping under a slab.  
 A sanitary tee shall not be used as a cleanout.  
 Place cleanout as close as possible to property line.

**Typical Sewer Service Installation (for jobs inspected by Clark County)**



**Minimum sewer pipe diameter by sewer provider:**

Clark Public Utilities	4"
Clark Regional Wastewater District	4"
City of Battle Ground	4"
City of Ridgefield	3"
City of Vancouver	3"
City of Camas	3"
Private septic system	3"

**Typical Water Service Installation**

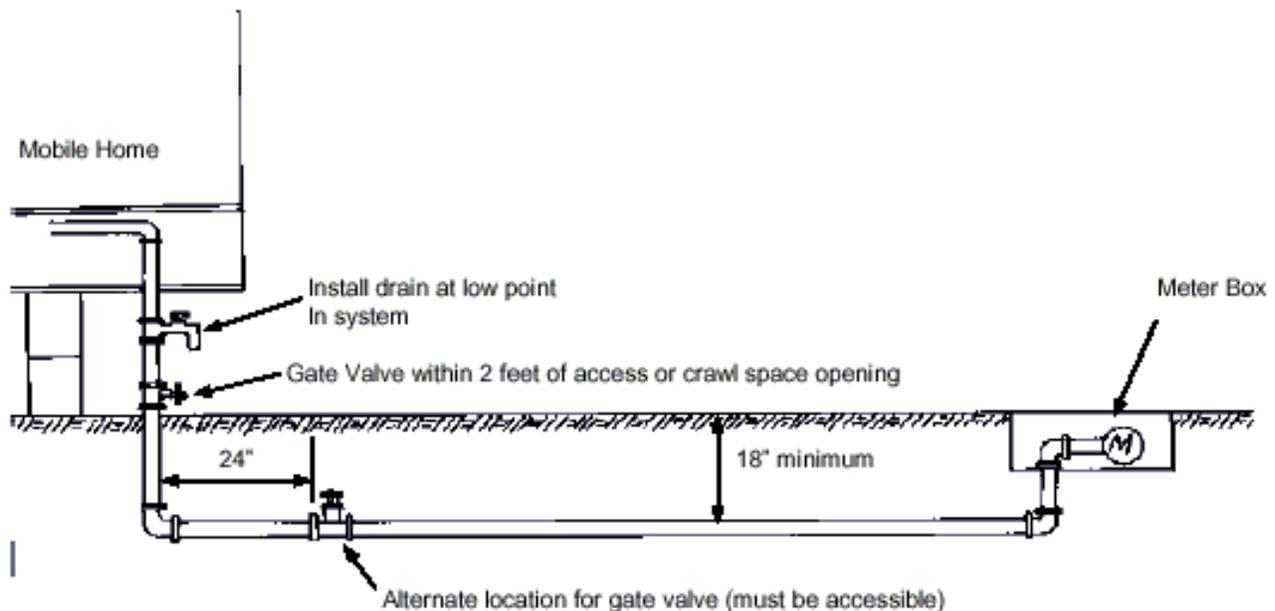
The diagram below illustrates the required elements and minimum distances for a water service installation conforming to the Uniform Plumbing Code which has been adopted by Clark County.

Use only approved water pipe materials: Materials for water service may be the same as approved materials used within the building. Typical water service material is PVC schedule 40 or polyethylene 160 PSI or higher. For approved materials, contact the Building Safety Division or supplier.

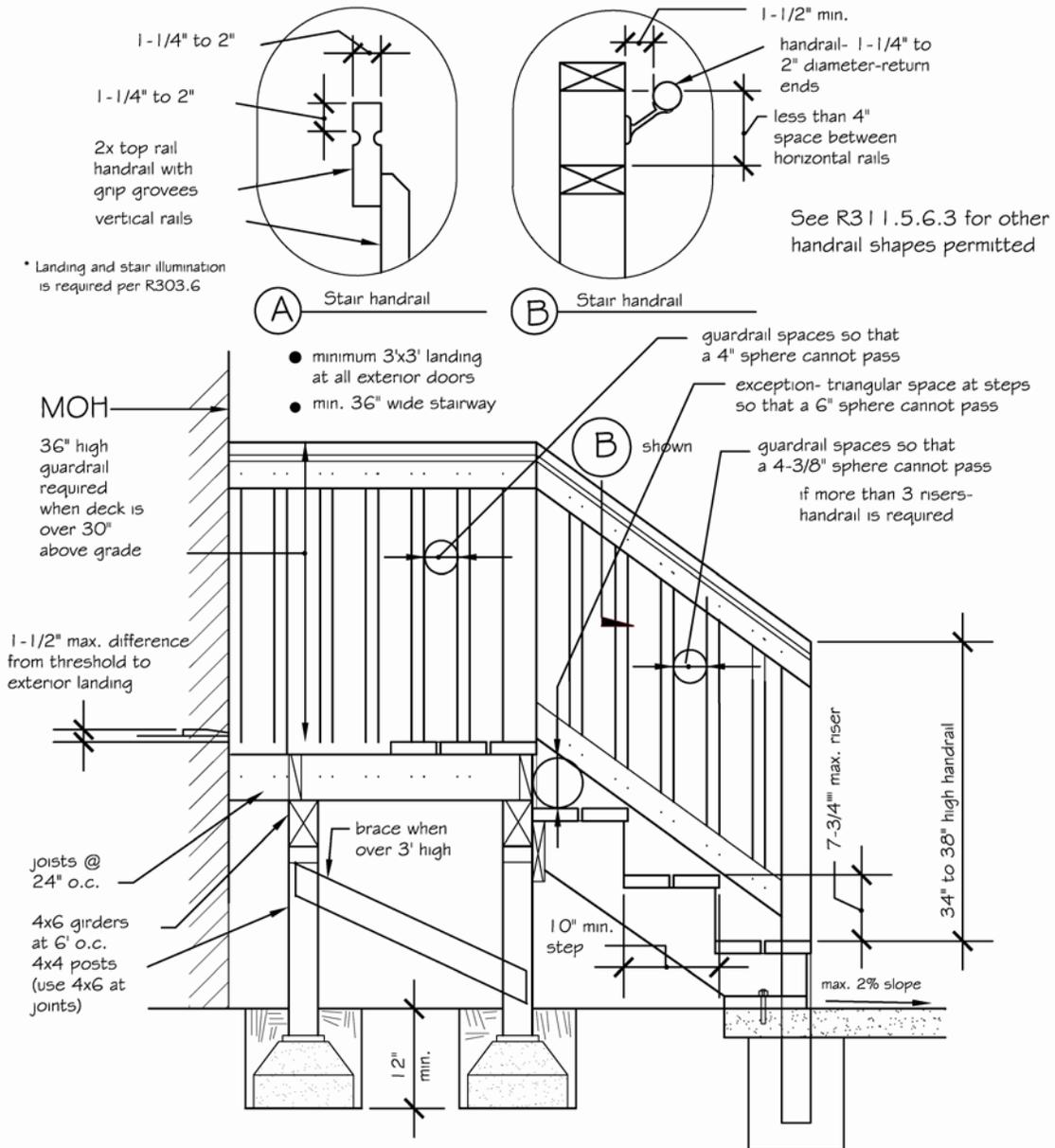
**Note:**

There are special requirements for piping installed under a concrete slab. Contact the county Building Safety Division for more information if you are installing piping under a slab.

Plastic water piping may terminate within a building, provided the connection to the potable water distribution system shall be made as near as is practical to the point of entry and shall be accessible. Barbed insert fittings with hose clamps are prohibited within the building.



### Typical Decks, Stairs, and Railing



All exterior decks exposed to the weather must utilize decay-resistant wood such as heartwood of redwood, black locust, cedars or pressure-treated wood in accordance with International Residential Code Section R319.1.