Proper planning of any construction project is essential to assure enjoyment of the finished product. This bulletin is designed to assist the builder in planning the construction of an open wood deck. The question that is most often asked concerns the foundation and above ground support for the project. Many times it becomes a problem when, at some future date, the owner decides to install a roof over an open deck or to make a room by enclosing the area.

Building Permits are not required for open decks that do not exceed 200 square feet in area, are not more than 30 inches above grade at any point, are not attached to the dwelling and do not serve the exit door required by Section R311.4 of the 2018 IRC. However, you would have to contact the Pinal County Community Development Zoning Division (520-866-6442) for their requirements prior to construction. With the lack of approved drawings, permit and inspection, there is often no way for Building Safety to advise prospective builders of the minimum requirements for any loads, such as enclosure walls and roof structures, which the deck may be asked to support at a future date. Enclosure walls and roof structures as well as decks that are over 30 inches above finished grade do require building permits, see Figure C page 3. Bulletin 004, Submittal Requirements, describes what is necessary to obtain a permit.

Because of the many and varied ways of constructing a deck, the following is only a suggested method, but it should give you an idea of what to plan for. Figures A and B on page 2 refer only to projects that will not be covered or enclosed. If the deck is supporting a roof load or an enclosure load, a whole different foundation system is usually required. Different spans of framing members, sizes of posts, beams, joists and decking may require additional planning. If there are questions about your particular project, be sure to call the Building Safety division or visit an office for assistance.