

Site Coverage & Decks Information Sheet



What is site coverage?

Site Coverage includes areas where materials or structures that do not qualify as floor area cover the soil. Examples include, but are not limited to: **patios, walkways, driveways, decks, steps, decomposed granite, gravel and hot tubs.**

Structures on the property that qualify as floor area such as the house, garage, storage shed, etc. are not considered site coverage.

How much site coverage can I have?

The allowable site coverage depends on the base floor area for your site. Site coverage is limited to 22% of the base floor area. You can acquire bonus site coverage if at least 50% of all site coverage on the property is made of permeable materials (see definition). The bonus is an additional 4% of the site area.

The table below shows the allowable site coverage for several common lot sizes with and without the bonus:

Lot Size	Base Floor Area	Allowable Site Coverage (22% of Base Floor Area)	Allowable Site Coverage with bonus (50% or more site coverage is permeable)
4,000	1,800	396	556
5,000	2,150	473	673
6,000	2,460	541	781
7,000	2,730	601	881
8,000	2,960	651	971
9,000	3,150	693	1,053
10,000	3,300	726	1,126

Site Coverage Materials

Permeable materials include, but are not limited to, sand-set bricks or pavers, gravel, and spaced decking. These materials are considered site coverage, however, they are counted as permeable and the use of these materials will assist in obtaining the site coverage bonus as described above.

Impermeable materials include, but are not limited to, decomposed granite, asphalt, concrete, mortared brick and stone, ponds, hot tubs, outdoor fireplaces and structures under five feet tall.

Do I need a permit when modifying site coverage?

You will need a permit any time you replace, add or relocate site coverage. The process requires that you first obtain Design Study approval. Some projects that involve site coverage also require a building permit, such as the construction of a deck or stairs.

What are the planning and building requirements for constructing a deck?

Please provide the following information when applying for the construction (or replacement) of a deck:

- A site plan showing the property lines, footprint of the residence and all site coverage elements. Include the dimensions of the proposed deck and identify its setbacks from the adjacent property lines.
- Provide a data table showing the existing and proposed site coverage calculations.
- Provide an elevation drawing of the deck showing its height relative to the grade and provide details about the footings, guardrails, handrails and steps. Also, show how the deck is attached to the house.

Important facts about site coverage and decks:

- Properties that exceed the allowed site coverage are permitted to reorganize the non-conforming site coverage only if it is located behind the front 15' setback and does not qualify as a structure (i.e. deck, balcony, etc).
- On properties that exceed the allowed site coverage the deck may not be demolished and rebuilt unless the site coverage is first brought into compliance. The deck may, however, be repaired. Decks that encroach into a setback also cannot be rebuilt, but can be repaired.
- Second-story decks and first-story decks with a finished floor greater than three feet above the grade, may be subject to a volumetric analysis depending on the size of the deck (ask planner for information).