

CONSTRUCTION TIP SHEET: RESIDENTIAL GUARDS

This Tip Sheet reflects code requirements of the Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code (MUBEC)

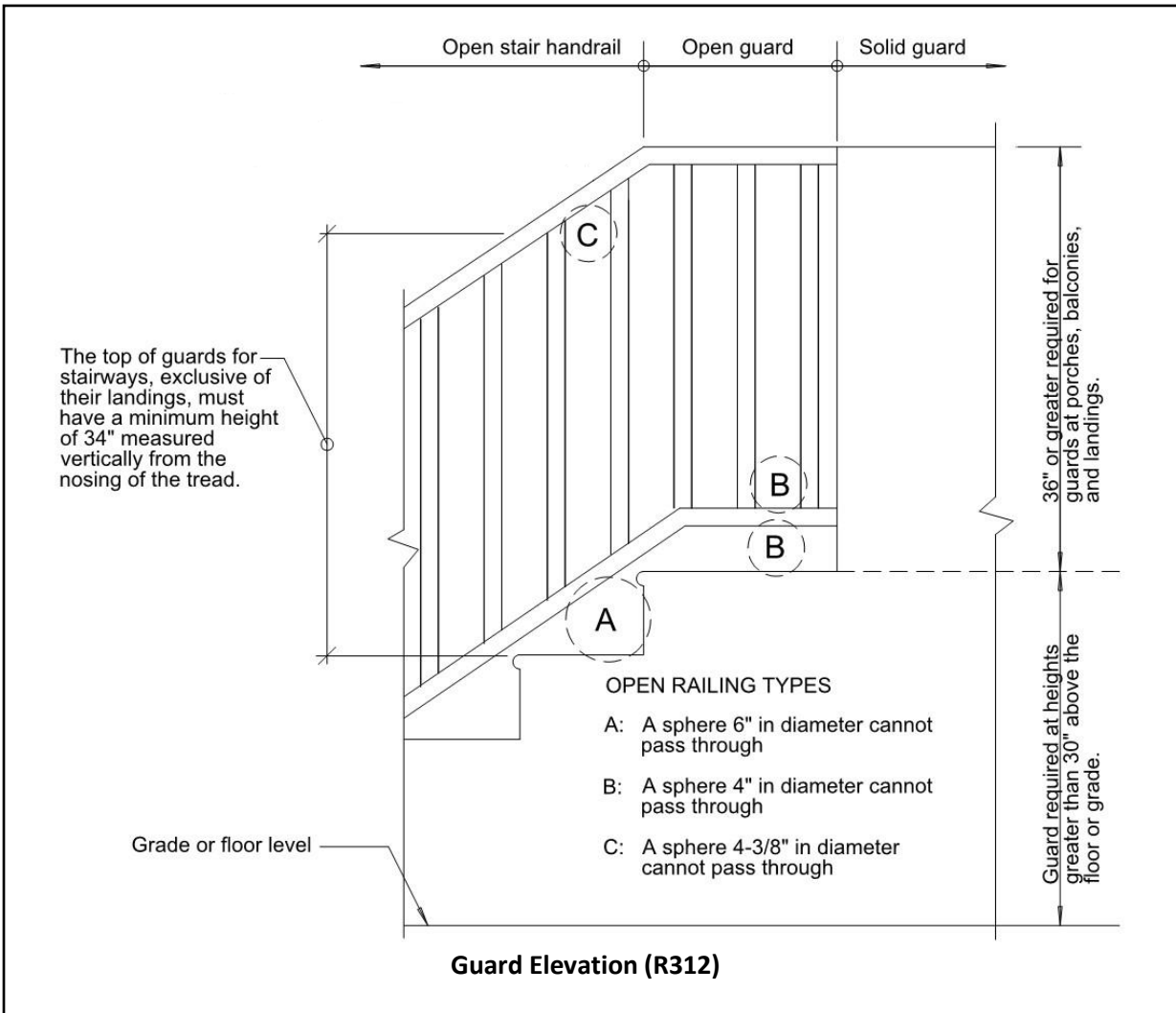
Note- The intent of this Tip Sheet is to provide a general understanding of the code requirements and does not address the subject in great detail.

DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS: (See diagram on the following page)

- a. **Required:** Guards are required anywhere there is a porch, balcony, landing, etc. at a height greater than thirty (30) inches above the adjacent floor or grade.
- b. **Height:**
 - i. For Stairways: Minimum height of thirty-four (34) inches measured vertically from the sloped line adjoining the tread nosing.
 - ii. For Porches, Balconies and Landings: Minimum thirty-six (36) inches measured vertically from the adjoining floor surface.
- c. **Openings:**
 - i. Triangle under the guards to the tread/riser: A sphere six (6) inches in diameter cannot pass through.
 - ii. Space under the guard and between balusters to adjoining floor surface: A sphere four (4) inches in diameter cannot pass through.
 - iii. Space between balusters on stairway guards: A sphere four and three-eighths (4-3/8) of an inch cannot pass through.
- d. **Structural Design:** Guards shall be structurally designed to comply with International Residential Code Table R301.5 (see below).

TABLE R301.5
MINIMUM UNIFORMLY DISTRIBUTED LIVE LOADS (in pounds per square foot)

USE	LIVE LOAD
Uninhabitable attics without storage ^b	10
Uninhabitable attics with limited storage ^{b, g}	20
Habitable attics and attics served with fixed stairs	30
Balconies (exterior) and decks ^e	40
Fire escapes	40
Guards and handrails ^d	200 ^h
Guard in-fill components ^f	50 ^h
Passenger vehicle garages ^a	50 ^a
Rooms other than sleeping rooms	40
Sleeping rooms	30
Stairs	40 ^c



****IMPORTANT DETAIL: Guardrails and handrails are two separate components, which have different requirements. Please check both tip sheets for corresponding requirements. "Residential Guards" and "Residential Handrails".**