

## Post-Storm Deck & Porch Safety

During Hurricane Sandy, decks and porches may have been damaged and structurally weakened by the storm. **Building owners or occupants should not use these structures until they have had them inspected** by a New York State-licensed professional (Registered Architect or Professional Engineer) or contractor and properly repaired, if needed.

Licensed professionals and contractors should examine these structures for:

- Leaning
- Posts and foundations that have moved
- Separation of these structures from buildings
- Failed beams, posts, planks or handrails
- Failed connections
- Any other possible warning signs of a potential structural failure

Please call 311 to report any non-compliant deck or porch conditions or 911 if you believe a deck or porch poses an immediate safety risk.

### Repairs

If repairs are needed, building owners must hire a New York State-licensed professional (Registered Architect or Professional Engineer) to file plans with the Department and a hire a contractor to make the necessary repairs.

Minor deck or porch repairs, such as replacing less than 25% of a railing or decking (not including beams), are considered minor alteration work and can be done by the homeowner without having to obtain permits.

### Definition

Decks and porches are raised floors that are level with or below the first story of a house and supported by a structural frame. The difference between the two is that a porch provides access to a building's primary entrance and a deck does not have a roof.