

Stairways, handrails, and Guardrails



The Minnesota State Building Code and Richfield City Code provide minimum standards for creating an environment of health and safety for all Richfield residents.

Detached one and two-family dwellings and townhouses not more than three stories above grade in height.

Steps

The largest tread width or riser height within any stairway shall not exceed the smallest by more than 3/8 inch. Stairs must be at least 36" wide.

Headroom

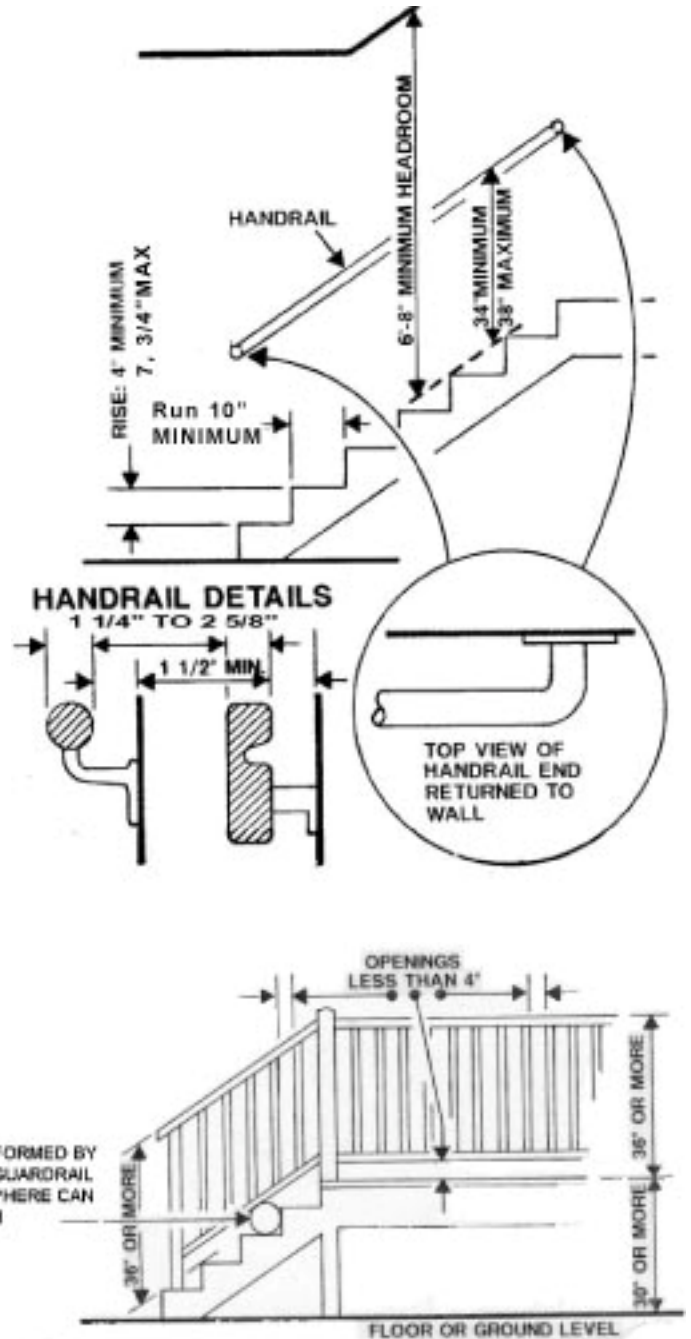
Every stairway must have headroom clearance of not less than 6 feet 8 inches measured vertically from the nose of the tread.

Handrails

Handrails having not less than 34 inches nor more than 38 inches above the nosing of the treads shall be provided on at least one side of stairways with four or more risers. Ends shall be returned or terminated in newel posts or safety terminals. The diameter of handgrips shall be between 1-1/4 to 2-5/8 inches, or the shape shall provide an equivalent gripping surface. The handgrip shall have a smooth surface with no sharp corners. Handrails are not required on stairways having less than four risers.

Guardrails

Guardrails are required when the walking surface is more than 30 inches above grade or the floor below. The top guardrail must be at least 36 inches high. The guardrail spacing or pattern must be designed so that a 4 inch sphere cannot pass through the opening.



This handout is written as a guide to common questions and problems. It is not intended nor shall it be considered a complete set of requirements.
City of Richfield 6700 Portland Avenue; Inspections Division (612) 861-9860; Zoning Administrator; (612) 861-9760 handout 7