

NADRA 10-POINT CONSUMER DECK SAFETY CHECKLIST

May is Deck Safety Month® — an annual campaign spearheaded by the North American Deck and Railing Association (NADRA) to raise awareness of the importance of safe, well-maintained outdoor living spaces. Since declaring May as Deck Safety Month® in 2006, NADRA has encouraged homeowners, builders, and inspectors to “Educate. Inspect. Correct.”, helping prevent deck-related injuries by promoting simple, regular safety checks

Here’s NADRA’s 10-Point Consumer Deck Safety Checklist — a quick visual inspection guide to help ensure your deck remains a safe gathering spot all season long.

1. Split or Decaying Wood

Probe ledger boards, support posts, joists, deck boards, railings, and stairs. Wood that penetrates easily ($\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ ”) or shows small insect holes may be rotting.

Railings and Banisters

Verify that all guardrails and banisters are firmly secured, especially on elevated decks.

Cleaning and Maintenance

Remove leaves and debris to prevent slips and mildew. Reapply waterproofing coatings as needed to protect wood and fasteners.

Lighting and Electrical

Ensure all deck lighting works and pathways are clear. Confirm outlets and appliances are up to code, childproofed, and cords do not create tripping hazards.

Outdoor Furniture & Storage

Test furniture stability and secure swings or hammocks. Keep chemicals (BBQ fluid, cleaners, matches) safely stored away from children.

Surrounding Trees

Inspect overhanging limbs for signs of decay that could fall onto the deck.

Loose or Corroded Fasteners

Tighten any popped nails or screws and replace rusted anchors, especially in ledger boards. The deck should feel stable without sagging or sway.

Grills, Fire Pits, Chimneys, Heaters & Candles

Position heat sources on non-flammable pads, follow manufacturers’ instructions, and maintain clearance from combustible materials.

Flashing

Check the metal or plastic guard at the house-deck junction to ensure it directs water away and is firmly in place.

Stairs

Confirm handrails and stringers are secure, risers are intact, and any open stair openings are less than 4” to prevent trips and falls.

Learn more at www.nadra.org/deck-safety.