

City of Walnut Creek
Building Division
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Information Bulletin No. IB-53

GUARDRAIL HEIGHTS FOR RESIDENTIAL DECKS AND BALCONIES

Section 509.2 of the 2001 California Building Code (CBC) requires the top of guardrails to be not less than 42 inches in height. Exception 1 permits the top of guardrails to be 36 inch minimum height for: Group R, Division 3 and U-1 occupancies; for interior guardrails “within” individual dwelling units, for Group R, Division 3 congregate residences, and within guest rooms of Group R, Division 1 occupancies.

Information Bulletin 2002-10 (SHL) dated May 21, 2002, from the California Department of Housing and Community Development, Division of Codes and Standards, provides an interpretation and clarification to Section 509.2 of the CBC. This interpretation clarifies the requirement of the minimum 42 inch high guardrail requirement for private exterior decks and balconies in Group R, Division 1 and Group R, Division 3 congregate residences

Guardrails for all private exterior balconies and decks, except for Group R, Division 3 and U-1 occupancies, and for all other residential decks and balconies are required to be not less than 42 inches in height.