



CODE TOPICS

2020 FBC 7th ED SECTION 454.2 RESIDENTIAL SWIMMING POOLS

HANDHOLDS FOR SAFETY

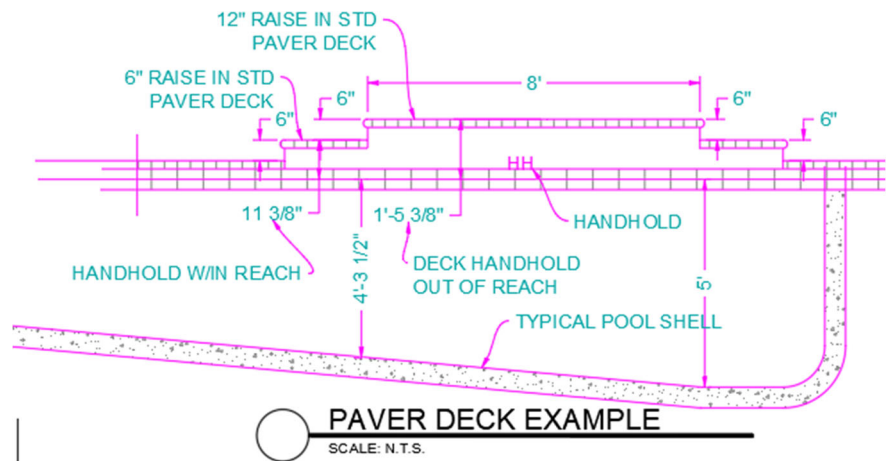
TOPIC BACKGROUND

Pool plans often show raised deck areas and based on the expected pool floor slopes handholds need to be in place at final inspection. Regardless of plan, if construction results in the following conditions, handhold(s) would be required.

WHAT THE CODE SAYS

WHAT ANSI 5 SECTION 17 SAYS:

- Handholds required where water depth exceeds 4 ft.
- Handholds must be accessible within 4 ft and not to exceed 8 ft.
- Handholds may be deck, coping or ledges no more than 12" above water line.
- Handholds may be rocks or masonry/tooled joints within 12" of water line.
- Handholds may be rope or rail places within 12" of water line.
- Ladders, stairs or underwater seats/benches may be used.
- Handholds not limited to items listed as long as the finish design affords a handhold within 12" of water line.



REQUIRED AT PLAN REVIEW

Your plan needs to show raised areas and how much it's raised, such as +6" from rest of pool deck. The raised deck area should have length dimensions. The type of handhold needs to be called out on the plan.

REASONABLE INTERPRETATIONS INCLUDE:

- Rock or stone finishes that allow for a full finger knuckle to grasp could be a handhold.
- During plan review or design, estimate the beginning of the 4 ft depth based on the planned water depths, and if there is more than 6" raised deck for more than 8 ft towards the deeper areas, one or more handholds are required.

REQUIRED DURING INSPECTION

Handholds shall be in place when shown on plan or required based on actual construction depths.

- Regardless of what is on the plan, handhold(s) may be required based on as-built conditions.

Disclaimer: This is offered as summary and guidance on code requirements. This does not authorize a code violation.

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