

**NC Department of Insurance
Office of the State Fire Marshal - Engineering Division
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Outdoor Receptacle Requirements for Dwellings

Code: 2014 NC Electrical Code
Section: 210.52(E)

Date: March 16, 2017

Question:

Can the receptacle required by 210.52(E)(3) also be considered the receptacle required by 210.52(E)(1) even if the outlet cannot be reached while standing on the grade? Does a screen door or gate hinder the access to the required receptacle of section 210.52(E) enough to deem the receptacle not readily accessible?

Answer:

The language in section 210.52(E)(1) of the 2014 NC Electrical Code has been altered from the 2011 edition mandating the required front and back outdoor receptacles from being “accessible while standing at “grade level” to being “readily accessible from grade.” The new language allows for a receptacle to be located in the middle of the wall line of a deck that cannot be reached through the pickets so long as you can walk up the steps and access the receptacle without infringing on the “readily” accessibility.

The receptacle in subsection (1) can also serve as the receptacle required by subsection (3) if both sections are complied with simultaneously. Subsection (1) mandates that the required receptacle cannot exceed 6 ½ feet from grade level, and Subsection (3) mandates that the required receptacle cannot exceed 6 ½ feet from the decking surface.

Example: One receptacle will be placed in the center of the wall line on a 20 foot long the deck with open steps (there is 10 feet of decking on each side of the receptacle). The decking surface is 4 ½ feet above the grade level. If the receptacle is no more than 2 feet above the decking surface, then both subsections (1) and (3) are satisfied and another receptacle is not required by the Code. If the receptacle is 2 ½ feet above the decking surface, subsection (1) is not satisfied because the receptacle is 7 feet above the grade level. Therefore, subsection (3) is compliant but another receptacle must be added to comply with subsection (1).

If the screen door or gate can be opened without tools (other than keys) for access to the receptacle, then it has not infringed on the “readily” portion of being accessible.

Keywords:

grade level, readily accessible

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