

**NC Department of Insurance  
Office of the State Fire Marshal - Engineering Division  
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**Notching Deck Rail Posts**

**Code:** 2012 NC Residential Code  
**Section:** AM111

**Date:** Dec. 13, 2017

**Question:**

Can the 4"x4" guard rail post as illustrated in figure AM111 be a notched section at its connection to the band joist and girders?

**Answer:**

No. Notching the rail post would reduce the section of the post that resist the required loads from Table R301.5. Notching of this post would require an engineer's analysis to determine if the remaining wood section can resist the loads from Table R 301.5.

**Keywords:**

Handrail, support, cutting