

Brooklyn Deck and Patio Addresses Rising Rainfall in Outdoor Design

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Brooklyn Deck and Patio, a deck and outdoor living contractor serving Brooklyn and Manhattan, is drawing attention to drainage planning in residential outdoor construction, following New York City Department of Environmental Protection data showing that high-intensity storms are becoming more frequent across the city.

DEP reports that as global and ocean temperatures rise, New York City is experiencing more frequent and intense storms, and that residents are seeing more flooding in their communities than ever before. The agency notes that the city's sewers protect fully against 98 percent of rain events, while storms dropping a large volume of rain in a short period can overwhelm the system.

The National Climate Assessment calculated a 71 percent increase in the annual amount of precipitation from heavy rain events across the northeastern United States between 1958 and 2012. The New York City Panel on Climate Change anticipates that the city could eventually see as much as 25 percent more annual rainfall than it does today, along with roughly 1.5 times as many days receiving more than an inch of rain.

For homeowners, those figures translate into a design question rather than an infrastructure one. Every outdoor surface added to a property either helps water leave or helps it sit, and that outcome is largely determined during design rather than discovered afterward.

"Where the water goes is not something to work out once the surface is down," said Dov Kohn, Owner of Brooklyn Deck and Patio. "On a Brooklyn property there is usually one good path off a surface, and the whole build has to respect it."

The company includes drainage, waterproofing, and thermal-movement detailing in every installation it completes. On rooftop terraces, that work carries additional weight, because the surface below cannot absorb

water at all and the waterproofing membrane cannot be compromised by the structure sitting on it.

Porcelain pavers installed on pedestal systems allow water to pass between units and move across the membrane toward designated drainage points without the surface fastening into the roof. That approach also permits individual units to be lifted later, which matters when access to the membrane below becomes necessary.

Ground-level work presents a different set of conditions. In a brownstone rear yard, grade and the position of downspouts determine where water collects, and surface material influences how quickly it clears once a storm has passed.

Porcelain and natural stone laid over a properly prepared base allow water to move through the joints between units. A surface set without attention to slope can hold water for extended periods, and in a narrow city yard bounded by neighboring properties on three sides, the available paths for that water are limited from the outset.

Decking surfaces handle water differently again. Board gaps allow water to pass through rather than pool, which places the emphasis on what sits beneath the surface and on how the framing directs water away from the building. The connection between a deck and the wall it meets is a point where water intrusion causes damage that is often not visible until it has progressed.

Freeze and thaw cycles compound these conditions through the winter months. Water that remains on or beneath a surface through a cold night expands as it freezes, and repeated cycles work against joints, fasteners, and the connections holding a structure to a building. A drainage problem that appears minor in September behaves differently by March.

"The detail that handles thermal movement is usually the same detail that keeps water moving," Kohn said. "They are one problem, not two."

Material choice interacts with all of it. Ipe and cedar hardwood, Fiberon composite, and porcelain each respond differently to sustained moisture, and the fastening and spacing appropriate to one is not automatically appropriate to another. The company selects the detailing alongside the material rather than applying a single approach across every surface type.

Brooklyn Deck and Patio also provides annual maintenance visits across Brooklyn and Manhattan, along with repair and maintenance on existing decks and terraces. On an older structure, standing water that has not cleared several hours after rain is often among the earliest indications that grade or drainage has shifted, and it commonly appears before any visible damage to the surface itself.

Surfaces reaching several years without inspection tend to show early signs at the points where water naturally collects. Those include areas adjacent to planters, sections along downspout discharge points, and the connection between a deck and the building it serves. Addressing those areas while the surrounding structure remains sound is generally less involved than addressing them after a full winter has passed.

Brooklyn Deck and Patio designs and builds custom decks, rooftop terraces, patios, pergolas, porches, railings, and outdoor living spaces for residential clients across Brooklyn and Manhattan. The company was founded in 2014 by Dov Kohn, a carpenter who spent more than 25 years in New York construction before starting the business, and holds certification as a Fiberon Certified Installer. Every installation carries a five-year workmanship warranty. The company received Best of Houzz Service recognition in 2022 and 2023.

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Brooklyn Deck and Patio designs and builds custom outdoor living spaces for homeowners and businesses across Brooklyn and Manhattan. Founded in 2014 by owner Dov Kohn, a carpenter by trade with over 25 years of construction experience in New York City

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