

Warrior Built Company Connects Local Snow Loads With Winter Deck Planning

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MURRAY, UT - November 24, 2026 -
Riverton's building criteria, effective July 1, 2026, direct applicants to a Utah State University snow-load resource when planning construction. As winter approaches, the guidance provides a local starting point for residential deck planning in a community served by Warrior Built Company.

The city's design criteria do not give every property the same ground snow load. Instead, they point to a location-based resource that considers where a project is situated. The university's snow-load study relates snow conditions to elevation, so a value used for a site in one area should not be substituted automatically for a property at another elevation.

Ground snow load is a measure used in design, not a description of the weight of snow currently on a deck. It is also not automatically the finished design load for a particular deck or a roof. The applicable building code, the type of structure and the project's conditions determine how the information is used.

Deck design must account for the applicable live-load and snow-load requirements under the adopted building code. Live load accounts for temporary forces associated with use, while the structure's own weight and other applicable conditions also require consideration. A site-specific structural design is necessary rather than relying on a single ground snow-load figure.

These decisions reach beyond the boards visible on the finished surface. Joists carry the decking, and their spans and spacing affect how loads move to beams. Beams transfer those forces to posts or other supports, so their sizes and placement must work together with the rest of the frame.

Connections are part of that load path. A deck attached to a house needs an appropriate connection to the building; a freestanding deck needs its own means of support. Fasteners, hangers, post connections and bracing must be selected and detailed for the design rather than treated as interchangeable hardware.

Posts deliver loads to footings, which spread the forces into the ground. Footing design depends on the loads, soil and site conditions, as well as frost protection. Riverton's criteria specify a minimum frost depth of 30 inches, measured from the bottom of the footing to finished grade; the actual project details remain subject to review.

Considering these requirements before choosing a final layout can affect the distance between supports, the size of framing members and the room needed for footings. A roof or other covering can introduce additional loads and a different snow-load analysis. Changes made after a design is complete can require plans and connections to be reconsidered.

Snow may also collect unevenly where a deck sits beside a house or beneath a roof. Wind, nearby barriers and snow sliding from an upper roof can change where snow accumulates. Those conditions are reasons to review the complete property and structure, not just select a number from a map.

Permit requirements also depend on the proposed deck. Utah's residential amendments provide an exemption for a deck that meets all stated conditions, including a height of no more than 30 inches above grade at any point, no required guards and no service to the required exit door. The city's building department can confirm how those provisions and local zoning requirements apply to a particular address.

Snow removal and routine inspections remain part of caring for an existing deck, but they do not replace structural design. The initial plan establishes how the deck is intended to carry its loads through framing, connections and footings before any winter maintenance is needed.

Warrior Built Company provides residential deck design and construction services in the Salt Lake Valley, including Riverton. Its services include deck design and consultation, installation and construction.

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Warrior Built Company

Warrior Built Company is a veteran-owned deck builder in Murray, Utah, specializing in custom composite and PVC decks engineered for Utah's climate. The team brings decades of combined experience in framing, footings, and outdoor living construction.

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