



# BUILDER TIPS

## OPENINGS IN GUARDS / DESIGN TO PREVENT CLIMBING

The Town of Amherstburg Building Department will be providing Builder Tips on a regular basis as part of our customer service. They are designed to provide information to home builders as a way to improve the understanding of the building code. Please contact our office if you require additional information at 519-736-5408.

### **9.8.8.6. Guards Designed Not to Facilitate Climbing**

(1) Guards required by Article 9.8.8.1., except those in industrial occupancies and where it can be shown that the location and size of openings do not represent a hazard, shall be designed so that no member, attachment or opening located between 140mm (5 1/2") and 900mm (35 1/2") above the floor or walking surface protected by the guard will facilitate climbing.

### **3.3.1.18. Guards**

(4) Unless it can be shown that the location and size of openings do not present a hazard, a guard shall be designed so that no member, attachment or opening located between 140mm (51/2") and 900mm (35 1/2") above the level protected by the guard will facilitate climbing.

### **OBJECTIVE**

The main objective for providing guards in dwelling units is to prevent accidental falls from one level to another. Guards constructed with standard spindles must be spaced not more than 100mm (4") on centre in order to prevent children from getting their heads stuck between them.

Guards that are constructed with attachments of decorative elements that will facilitate climbing such as horizontal members, they must be attached so that they will not achieve a ladder affect which will tempt children to climb over the guard and risk of falling.

The diagrams shown below are based on opinions received from the National Research Council of Canada. Their diagrams suggest that horizontal member that are greater than 450mm (18") in height will not facilitate climbing and therefore do not provide a ladder affect. These diagrams can be used as a guide in obtaining Building Code compliance.

Where decorative elements are contained within the guard that would be not in compliance with the Ontario Building Code and considered climbable or openings exceeds the maximum permitted, the decorative elements may be covered with safety glass only and must be permanently fixed or attached to the guard.

