

Question: Following your inspection we are currently still in negotiations to purchase a cottage in the Val des Monts area. I have a question regarding the Front deck and its supports which while on site we agreed would have to be replaced. What is the best way to replace them and what materials would you recommend ? K. Banelis

Answer: The deck in question is quite long at about 25 feet and extends out about 10 feet from the building. The supports are roughly 8 feet long with inadequate lateral support. That explains the undesired movement. The supports in question are rotten from the bottom because they have been sitting on the ground for far too long.

Because of this, the deck itself has actually dropped and it too will need re-leveling. Because of the terrain I would suggest new bases under the posts. Each old post will need to be supported before being completely removed. Use of a telescopic Jack post will allow you to support the area as well as enable you to level the current deck.

Once the old post has been removed, clear an area approximately 3 feet by 3 feet. Start with at least 8 to 10 inches of compacted gravel topped with 2-4 inches of stone dust. Then, once leveled, place a 24"x24" patio stone in the exact spot centered where you want to place the new post.

Then, on the patio stone, place a pre-cast "deck block" in which you can place the new 4x4 post. Once all is perfectly leveled, securely fasten the replaced post to the existing structure and add cross bracing to the top section of the post to reduce the previously mentioned lateral movement. Repeat this procedure for all the rotten posts .....be careful !!!!

**Peter Weeks** has been a general contractor since 1988, he has been doing **Residential Home Inspections** for about four years. He is an Associate Member of OAHI (Ontario Association of Home Inspectors), CAHPI (Canadian Association of Home & Property Inspectors) and a member of the BBB in Good Standing.

A home inspection can be one of the most important investments you'll ever make. Choose Peter Weeks to provide you and your family PEACE OF MIND during the buying process.

