

CALGARY DECK CONTRACTORS

Deck Repair & Restoration

Structural repairs, board replacement, joist and post reinforcement, and ledger board fixes for Calgary decks damaged by Alberta weather

21 Expert Answers from Deck IQ

calgarydeckcontractors.com/construction-brain

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Can I replace individual boards on a tongue-and-groove porch deck in Mount Pleasant without removing the whole surface?

Yes, you can replace individual tongue-and-groove boards on your Mount Pleasant porch deck, but it requires careful cutting and fitting since the boards interlock. This is definitely a DIY-friendly project if you have the right tools and take your time with the cuts.

The key challenge with tongue-and-groove replacement is that each board locks into its neighbours. You'll need to cut out the damaged board without damaging the adjacent boards that you want to keep. Start by using a circular saw set to the exact depth of your decking (typically 1 inch for standard T&G porch flooring) to make plunge cuts along both edges of the damaged board, staying about 1/8 inch away from the groove and tongue edges of the neighbouring boards. Then use a reciprocating saw or oscillating multi-tool to complete the cuts right up to the adjacent boards.

For the replacement board, you'll need to modify it to slip into place. Since you can't slide a full tongue-and-groove board into position with intact neighbours on both sides, you'll need to cut off the bottom lip of the groove on your replacement board. This allows you to angle the board down into position, engaging the tongue of the existing board while the modified groove sits over the tongue of the board on the other side. Use a table saw or router to carefully remove just the bottom portion of the groove — about 1/4 inch deep.

Calgary's dry climate actually makes this repair easier than in more humid regions. The low humidity means your existing T&G boards have likely shrunk slightly, creating small gaps that give you a bit more working room. However, make sure your replacement board is the same species and similar moisture content as the existing deck. If you're replacing cedar boards, try to source cedar that's been air-dried locally rather than kiln-dried lumber that might shrink significantly after installation.

Match your fastening pattern to the existing installation. Most T&G porch decking is face-nailed through the board surface, though some installations use blind nailing through the tongue. Use galvanized or stainless steel nails or screws to prevent rust staining — especially important in Calgary where chinook moisture cycles can accelerate corrosion of inferior fasteners.

Plan to re-stain the entire deck surface after your repair. Even if you match the wood species perfectly, new lumber will stand out against weathered boards until the whole surface is refinished. Calgary's intense UV at 1,045 metres elevation means unprotected wood weathers quickly, so fresh boards will be noticeably different in colour. Spring through early fall is ideal for this work, when temperatures are consistently above 10 degrees Celsius for proper stain curing.

This is definitely a job you can handle yourself if you're comfortable with power tools and precise measuring. The most critical part is making clean, accurate cuts to remove the damaged board without affecting its neighbours. Take your time with the cutting, and test-fit your modified replacement board before final installation.

Need help finding a deck professional if the damage is more extensive than expected? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with experienced contractors from the Calgary Construction Network who specialize in porch and deck repairs.

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- Besademolition
- UR COWRY CABINETS
- BOND CONTRACTING & CONSTRUCTION INC
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Q2

How much does it cost to add extra support posts under a Calgary deck to stop the bounce in the middle?

Adding support posts to eliminate deck bounce typically costs \$800-\$2,500 in Calgary, depending on the number of posts needed, footing requirements, and access conditions. Most bouncy decks need 2-4 additional posts with proper footings to achieve adequate support.

The bounce you're feeling indicates that your deck joists are spanning too far without intermediate support, or the existing beam structure is undersized for the load. This is a common issue with older decks built to less stringent standards, or DIY decks where proper beam sizing wasn't calculated. **The solution involves installing additional support posts with concrete footings that extend below Calgary's 1.2-metre frost line.**

Cost breakdown for additional support posts:

- **Single support post with footing:** \$400-\$800 installed (includes excavation, sonotube, concrete, pressure-treated post, and beam connection)

- **Two posts with beam:** \$800-\$1,500 (most common solution for bouncy decks)
- **Three or four posts:** \$1,200-\$2,500 depending on spacing and beam requirements

The exact number of posts depends on your deck's current joist span and beam layout. **Most deck joists should span no more than 12-16 feet without intermediate support**, depending on the joist size and spacing. If your joists are spanning 16-20 feet or more, that explains the bounce. Adding a beam supported by posts at the midspan point typically eliminates the problem entirely.

Calgary-specific considerations make this more complex than in other cities. Every new footing must extend at least 4 feet below grade to prevent frost heave during chinook freeze-thaw cycles. Shallow footings will shift and lift, potentially making the bounce worse over time. The posts themselves need proper galvanized hardware connections to resist Calgary's extreme temperature cycling, and the beam-to-post connection must be engineered to handle both vertical loads and lateral movement from wind and thermal expansion.

Access and timing affect the cost significantly. If your deck is elevated and the area underneath is accessible, installation is straightforward. If the deck is close to grade or surrounded by landscaping, excavation becomes more difficult and expensive. The work should be done during Calgary's building season (May through October) when the ground isn't frozen and concrete can cure properly.

This is definitely professional work requiring a structural assessment. A qualified deck contractor needs to evaluate your existing joist spans, beam sizes, and load paths to determine exactly where support posts should be placed. Simply adding posts randomly won't solve the problem and may create new stress points. The contractor will also need to verify that the existing ledger board connection to your house can handle the redistributed loads.

Signs you need immediate professional attention: If the bounce is severe (more than 5mm deflection when walking), if you hear creaking or cracking sounds, or if you notice any separation between the deck and house, stop using the deck until it's professionally evaluated. Bouncy decks can indicate serious structural deficiencies that may lead to collapse if not addressed properly.

Need help finding a deck contractor experienced with structural repairs? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with professionals who understand Calgary's unique footing and structural requirements for a free assessment of your bouncy deck situation.

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Q3

How do I tell if my deck in Calgary needs a full rebuild versus repairs and what should an honest contractor tell me?

A deck needs a full rebuild when the structural elements (posts, beams, joists, or ledger board) are compromised, while surface issues like worn boards or faded stain typically require only repairs. An honest Calgary contractor should walk your deck with you, point out specific problems, explain why each issue does or doesn't affect structural integrity, and give you realistic timelines for both repair and replacement options.

Key structural red flags that indicate a full rebuild: Look for posts that are loose, rotted at the base, or pulling away from footings — this is common in Calgary when footings weren't installed to the required 4-foot depth and have shifted through freeze-thaw cycles. Check for sagging or bouncy sections, which indicate failed joists or undersized framing. Examine the ledger board connection to your house — if you see rot, water staining, or the ledger pulling away from the house, this is a serious structural issue. Any deck that rocks, sways, or feels unstable when you walk on it likely has foundational problems that require rebuilding rather than patching.

Surface and cosmetic issues that can be repaired: Individual rotted or damaged deck boards can be replaced without touching the substructure, provided the joists underneath are sound. Loose or damaged railings can be rebuilt or reinforced. Faded, peeling, or worn stain is purely cosmetic and easily addressed with cleaning and re-staining. Even multiple damaged boards across the deck surface can be replaced economically if the frame is solid.

Calgary-specific deterioration patterns help determine rebuild versus repair needs. Chinook freeze-thaw cycling causes fasteners to work loose and wood to split at connection points — if this damage is widespread throughout the structure, rebuilding may be more cost-effective than extensive repairs. Calgary's extreme UV at elevation causes surface checking and splitting in cedar and pressure-treated lumber, but this surface damage doesn't necessarily indicate structural problems. However, if UV damage has penetrated deeply into load-bearing members or if end grain has been exposed to moisture infiltration for years, structural integrity may be compromised.

What an honest contractor should tell you: They should explain the difference between structural and cosmetic issues, show you exactly what they're seeing, and give you options with realistic cost comparisons. For example: "Your deck boards and railings need replacement, but the frame is solid — that's a \$4,000-6,000 repair versus \$12,000-15,000 for a complete rebuild." They should point out any safety issues immediately and explain why certain problems (like loose posts or failed ledger connections) can't wait. An honest contractor will also explain Calgary-specific factors — if your footings are shallow and causing structural movement, they should explain that proper 4-foot footings are required and that this affects the entire project scope.

Red flags from dishonest contractors: Be wary of anyone who immediately recommends a full rebuild without explaining what they're seeing, quotes only one option without discussing alternatives, or pressures you to decide immediately. Avoid contractors who can't explain why specific damage requires rebuilding versus repair, or who dismiss your questions about trying repairs first. A contractor who won't let you get a second opinion or who claims your deck is "dangerous" without showing you specific structural problems may be overselling.

The honest assessment process should include checking footing stability (are posts loose or shifting?), measuring joist sag and bounce, examining all connection points for looseness or rot, testing railing stability, and looking for widespread versus isolated damage. A good contractor will take photos of problem areas, explain what each issue means for safety and longevity, and give you a written breakdown of repair versus rebuild costs. They should also factor in Calgary's climate — if your deck is 15+ years old with multiple structural issues, they might honestly recommend rebuilding with modern materials and proper chinook-resistant construction rather than patching an aging structure.

Timeline considerations: In Calgary's short building season, repairs can often be completed in days or weeks, while full rebuilds require permits, inspections, and 4-8 weeks of construction time. An honest contractor will explain these timelines and help you decide whether to repair now and rebuild later, or tackle everything at once.

Need help finding a deck contractor who will give you an honest assessment? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with experienced professionals who will walk your deck and explain exactly what you're dealing with.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Mike's Restoration Service
- Amar Homes Inc
- Quality count construction Ltd.
- G.D.K Drywall LTD.
- Canadian Closet

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What is the average cost to replace all the deck boards on a 200 square foot deck in Calgary without rebuilding the frame?

Replacing just the deck boards on a 200-square-foot deck in Calgary typically costs \$1,600-\$3,000 for pressure-treated lumber, \$2,400-\$4,200 for cedar, or \$3,200-\$5,600 for composite decking. This assumes the existing frame (joists, beams, posts) is structurally sound and doesn't need repair.

Material costs drive most of the price difference. Pressure-treated decking runs \$3-6 per square foot for materials, cedar \$6-12 per square foot, and composite \$10-18 per square foot. Labour for board replacement is typically \$4-8 per square foot, depending on the complexity of cuts around posts, stairs, and railings. Removing old boards, disposing of debris, and installing new decking with proper fasteners takes a skilled crew about 1-2 days for a 200-square-foot deck.

Calgary's climate makes material choice particularly important for replacement projects. If your existing frame is 10+ years old and you're replacing boards due to rot, splitting, or severe weathering, consider upgrading to composite decking even if the original was wood. Composite handles Calgary's chinook freeze-thaw cycles, extreme UV at elevation, and hailstorms better than wood, potentially lasting 25+ years versus 8-15 years for wood in Calgary's harsh conditions. The higher upfront cost often pays for itself by eliminating the need for another replacement in 10-12 years.

Additional costs to factor in include fastener upgrades and disposal fees. Old deck boards often have rusted or stripped screws that need removal with special tools, adding labour time. If you're upgrading to composite, you'll need manufacturer-specified hidden fasteners or colour-matched screws (\$0.50-1.00 per square foot extra). Disposal of old pressure-treated lumber requires special handling at Calgary waste facilities, typically adding \$200-400 to the project cost.

Timing matters for deck board replacement in Calgary. The work can be done any time the temperature is above freezing, but if you're planning to stain new wood boards, wait until consistent temperatures above 10 degrees Celsius (typically May through September). Pressure-treated lumber should dry for 3-6 months before staining in Calgary's dry climate, so boards installed in spring can be stained in late summer or fall.

When to hire a professional versus DIY: Board replacement is within reach of experienced DIYers if the substructure is sound, but professionals work much faster and handle disposal. A DIY approach saves \$800-1,600 in labour but requires tools (circular saw, drill, pry bar), truck rental for materials and disposal, and typically takes a full weekend. Professionals complete the job in 1-2 days with proper tools, disposal connections, and experience working around existing railings and stairs without damage.

Red flags that indicate you need more than just board replacement: If you see sagging areas, bouncy spots when walking, or daylight visible through gaps in the frame, the joists or beams may need repair or replacement. Rotted or damaged framing turns a simple board replacement into a major structural project requiring permits and engineering. Have a contractor inspect the frame condition before committing to board-only replacement.

Need help finding a deck contractor for board replacement? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with experienced professionals who specialize in deck restoration and board replacement projects.

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- Calgary Custom Concepts

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Q5

My deck boards are checking and splitting after three Calgary winters — can they be filled and sanded or do they need replacing?

Surface checking and minor splits in deck boards can often be repaired with wood filler and sanding, but deep splits that go through the board or affect structural integrity require replacement. The decision depends on the severity of the damage and whether the splits compromise the board's strength or create safety hazards.

Assessing the damage is your first step. Surface checking — those hairline cracks that run along the wood grain — is cosmetic and expected in Calgary's extreme dry climate. These can be filled with exterior wood filler, sanded smooth, and restrained. However, deep splits that go completely through the board thickness, splits wider than 3-4mm, or any crack that allows the board to flex or feel loose underfoot indicates structural compromise and requires board replacement.

Calgary's unique climate accelerates wood checking more than most Canadian cities. **Chinook winds create rapid temperature swings that cause wood to expand and contract repeatedly throughout winter**, while our dry air (often 15-20% humidity) pulls moisture from wood faster than it can be replenished. Three winters of this cycling is exactly when checking becomes most visible on untreated or poorly maintained decks.

For repairable surface checking, use a high-quality exterior wood filler like Bondo Wood Filler or DAP Plastic Wood. Clean out loose debris from the cracks, apply the filler slightly proud of the surface, and sand smooth once cured. The key is using a filler that moves with the wood — rigid fillers will pop out during Calgary's next chinook cycle. After filling and sanding, apply a UV-blocking stain or sealer to prevent further UV damage and moisture cycling.

Boards requiring replacement include any with splits that go through the thickness, multiple deep checks in the same board, or boards that feel soft or spongy (indicating rot). When replacing individual boards, match the existing species and dimensions exactly. If your deck is pressure-treated lumber, new boards will be much greener and wetter than your weathered existing boards — expect some color variation until the new wood weathers to match.

Prevention is more cost-effective than repair. Calgary decks should be cleaned and restained every 2-3 years to minimize checking and splitting. Apply stain when temperatures are consistently above 10°C (typically May through September) and no rain is forecast for 24-48 hours. A quality UV-blocking stain costs \$3-8 per square foot professionally applied but prevents the \$8-15 per square foot cost of board replacement.

When to hire a professional: Simple wood filler repairs are DIY-friendly, but replacing multiple boards or any structural members requires proper tools and knowledge of fastener patterns and joist spacing. If more than 20% of your deck boards need replacement, consider whether a full deck rebuild with composite decking might be more cost-effective long-term — composite handles Calgary's climate cycling without the checking, splitting, and annual maintenance that wood requires.

Need help finding a deck professional for repairs or replacement? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with experienced contractors from the Calgary Construction Network who understand how Calgary's climate affects deck materials and maintenance.

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- Bracha Concrete & Coatings Inc.

- The Original Workshop
- UR COWRY CABINETS

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Q6

How much does it cost to repair hail damage on composite decking in Calgary after a summer storm?

Hail damage to composite decking in Calgary typically costs \$8-20 per square foot to repair, depending on the extent of damage and whether individual boards can be replaced or if larger sections need reconstruction. Most Calgary hailstorms cause surface pitting and impact marks rather than complete board failure, making spot repairs possible in many cases.

Surface damage and minor impacts are the most common hail damage on composite decking. Unlike cedar or pressure-treated lumber, which can be deeply gouged or punctured by large hail, composite decking's dense construction usually results in surface pitting, scuff marks, and small dents. Light surface damage may not require immediate repair from a structural standpoint, but homeowners often choose to replace affected boards for aesthetic reasons. Individual board replacement runs \$12-18 per square foot including labour, since the damaged board must be carefully removed without disturbing adjacent boards and the hidden fastener system.

Severe hail damage from Calgary's occasional golf ball-sized storms can crack or puncture composite boards, particularly older generation composites that are less impact-resistant than modern capped products. Cracked boards must be replaced immediately, as water infiltration through cracks can reach the substructure and cause rot in the wooden joists below. If multiple adjacent boards are damaged, contractors may recommend replacing an entire section, which can reduce per-square-foot costs to \$10-15 due to more efficient installation.

Calgary's hailstorm season runs from May through September, with peak activity in June and July when deck usage is highest. The city experiences some of Canada's most frequent and severe hailstorms due to its location on the eastern slopes of the Rockies, where warm, moist air collides with cooler mountain air. Modern capped composite products like Trex Transcend and TimberTech Advanced Protection are significantly more hail-resistant than first-generation composites, but even these premium products can be damaged by severe storms.

Insurance considerations play a major role in hail damage repairs. Most Calgary homeowner policies cover hail damage to decks, but coverage varies significantly between insurers. Document damage immediately with photos, and contact your insurance company before beginning repairs. Some insurers require specific contractors or

approval processes. Keep in mind that filing a hail claim may affect your premiums, so compare the repair cost against your deductible and potential rate increases.

Timing repairs after hail damage is important in Calgary's climate. Surface-damaged boards that aren't structurally compromised can wait until the following spring if the damage occurs late in the season, but cracked or punctured boards should be repaired immediately to prevent water infiltration and freeze-thaw damage to the substructure. Calgary's chinook cycles can drive moisture deep into cracks, leading to more extensive damage over winter.

Prevention and material choices matter for future hailstorm resistance. If you're in a particularly hail-prone area of Calgary (the western communities tend to see more severe storms), consider premium capped composite or PVC decking for superior impact resistance. Lighter colours also hide minor hail pitting better than darker boards. While no decking material is completely hail-proof, modern composites significantly outperform wood in impact resistance.

Professional assessment is recommended for any hail damage beyond minor surface pitting. Hidden fastener systems make composite board replacement more complex than wood decking, and improper removal can damage adjacent boards or the substructure. Most Calgary deck contractors offer free damage assessments and can work directly with insurance adjusters to streamline the claims process.

Need help finding a contractor experienced with composite decking repairs? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with professionals who specialize in hail damage restoration and insurance work.

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- Mike's Restoration Service
- Allure Residential & Commercial inc
- Eshine Cleaning Services
- True North Overhead Doors

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Is it worth repairing a 20-year-old pressure-treated deck in Okotoks or should I budget for a full replacement?

A 20-year-old pressure-treated deck in Okotoks is likely at or near the end of its structural lifespan, especially given Calgary area's extreme chinook cycling and UV exposure. Most pressure-treated decks in this climate last 15-25 years depending on maintenance, and at 20 years, you're probably looking at replacement rather than repair.

The key question is whether the substructure (joists, beams, posts, and footings) is still sound. Pressure-treated lumber from 2004-2005 was treated with ACQ or newer formulations that resist rot better than older CCA-treated lumber, but Calgary's chinook freeze-thaw cycles are particularly hard on fasteners and connections. After two decades of temperature swings from -25°C to +10°C in single afternoons, lag bolts loosen, joist hangers corrode, and ledger board connections often fail. If you're seeing sagging sections, bouncy areas when walking, or gaps opening between the deck and house, the substructure is compromised.

Surface issues alone might justify repair if the frame is solid. Replacing deck boards runs \$8-15 per square foot in the Calgary market, while a complete rebuild runs \$25-45 per square foot for pressure-treated construction. If your joists are on 16-inch centers (older standard), you might also consider upgrading to composite decking during board replacement — the existing frame can usually support composite if it's structurally sound. However, if you're replacing more than 60-70% of the deck boards, the economics start favoring full replacement.

Calgary's dry climate and extreme UV at 1,045 metres elevation accelerate wood degradation. Twenty-year-old pressure-treated lumber has likely experienced significant checking, splitting, and surface deterioration. Even with regular staining, the wood fibers break down over time. If the boards are severely checked, splintering, or have loose knots falling out, replacement is the safer choice — especially if you have children or pets using the deck.

Okotoks sits in a high-wind corridor that adds stress to aging deck structures. The combination of chinook winds and normal prairie winds puts additional racking forces on deck frames. Older pressure-treated lumber becomes more brittle over time, and connections that were adequate 20 years ago may not meet current Alberta Building Code standards for wind loads.

Budget \$10,000-\$18,000 for a complete 400-square-foot deck replacement with pressure-treated materials, or \$12,000-\$21,000 for composite decking. Factor in that any deck work will likely trigger permit requirements if you're over 600mm above grade, and current code may require upgrades to railing height (1,070mm minimum) and baluster spacing (100mm maximum). Your 20-year-old railings probably don't meet current safety standards.

Consider this an opportunity to upgrade to composite decking for Calgary's climate. Modern capped composite handles chinook cycling, extreme UV, and hail better than any wood product. While the upfront cost is 40-60% higher, you'll eliminate the need for staining every 2-3 years and avoid the wood shrinkage, checking, and splinter issues that plague pressure-treated lumber in Calgary's dry climate.

Have a qualified deck contractor inspect the substructure before deciding. They can assess joist condition, check ledger board attachment, verify footing stability, and determine if a partial rebuild (new decking on existing frame) makes economic sense. Calgary Deck Contractors can connect you with experienced professionals who understand how Calgary's climate affects aging deck structures and can provide honest guidance on repair versus replacement for your specific situation.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

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- Alpine Exteriors siding and roofing
- BOND CONTRACTING & CONSTRUCTION INC
- Calgary Garage Builders Ltd
- Besademolition

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Q8

What does it cost to replace the stair stringers and treads on a Calgary deck that has been damaged by ice melt salt?

Replacing salt-damaged stair stringers and treads typically costs \$800-2,500 for a standard 3-4 step deck stair in Calgary, depending on materials chosen and the extent of structural damage.

Salt damage to deck stairs is extremely common in Calgary due to our long winter season and heavy use of ice melt products. **Rock salt and calcium chloride are particularly aggressive** against pressure-treated lumber and metal fasteners, causing accelerated rot in stringers, premature failure of galvanized hardware, and surface deterioration of treads. The damage often appears as white salt residue, black staining around fasteners, soft or punky wood in stringer bearing points, and treads that feel spongy underfoot.

Material costs for replacement components run \$15-25 per linear foot for pressure-treated stringers, \$8-15 per square foot for pressure-treated treads, \$12-20 per square foot for cedar treads, or \$18-30 per square foot for composite treads. A typical 36-inch-wide stair with 4 risers requires two stringers at 8-10 feet each, plus 4 treads at roughly 3 square feet per tread. **Labour for stair replacement** runs \$400-800 for straightforward replacement, but can reach \$1,200-1,500 if the stair attachment point to the deck or landing pad needs structural repair.

Calgary's freeze-thaw cycling makes salt damage particularly severe because moisture penetrates salt-weakened wood grain, then expands when frozen during chinook temperature swings. This creates internal splitting and checking that's often worse than what's visible on the surface. When replacing salt-damaged components, it's critical to inspect the stair attachment hardware and the deck rim joist or beam where the stringers connect — salt damage rarely stops at just the visible components.

For replacement materials, consider upgrading to composite treads (\$25-35 per square foot installed) even if keeping pressure-treated stringers. Composite treads are completely impervious to salt damage, won't absorb moisture, and eliminate the annual cycle of salt exposure and wood deterioration. Cedar treads perform better than pressure-treated against salt but still require annual cleaning and sealing. **Stainless steel or galvanized carriage bolts and joist hangers** are essential for the new installation — standard zinc-plated hardware will fail quickly when exposed to salt.

Prevention for the new stairs includes switching to pet-safe ice melt products (potassium chloride or magnesium chloride are less corrosive), hosing down stairs monthly during winter to remove salt buildup, applying a high-quality penetrating sealer before the first winter, and installing removable rubber stair treads during the heaviest salt season. Many Calgary homeowners also install a small roof or overhang above their main deck stairs to reduce direct snow accumulation and the need for frequent salting.

Professional installation is recommended for stair replacement because proper stringer attachment to the deck structure is critical for safety, and the connection point often reveals additional salt damage that needs addressing. A qualified deck contractor can also assess whether the existing landing pad or footing has been compromised by salt infiltration and frost action.

Need help finding a deck contractor experienced with salt damage repair? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with professionals who understand how Calgary's winter conditions affect outdoor structures and can recommend the best materials for long-term durability.

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- Dealtwith.
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- PLATINUM Pool & Spa Services Ltd
- The Original Workshop

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Q9

How much should I expect to pay a Calgary contractor to replace a broken deck railing section about 8 feet long?

Replacing an 8-foot section of deck railing in Calgary typically costs \$400-\$1,200 depending on the railing material and complexity of the installation.

The cost breakdown varies significantly by material choice. **Wood railing replacement** (pressure-treated or cedar pickets with a wood top rail) runs \$50-80 per linear foot installed, putting your 8-foot section at \$400-640.

Aluminum railing costs \$75-120 per linear foot, so expect \$600-960 for the same section. **Glass panel railing** is the most expensive at \$100-150 per linear foot, bringing an 8-foot section to \$800-1,200. **Cable railing** falls in the middle range at \$90-140 per linear foot, or \$720-1,120 for your project.

Several factors can push costs toward the higher end of these ranges. If the railing section is on an elevated deck requiring safety equipment or scaffolding, labour costs increase. **Matching existing railing styles** often requires custom work or special-order materials, especially if your deck is more than 5-10 years old and the original railing style has been discontinued. **Alberta Building Code compliance** is critical — any railing over 600mm (24 inches) above grade must meet current code requirements for height (minimum 1,070mm or 42 inches) and baluster spacing (maximum 100mm or 4-inch gaps). If your existing railing doesn't meet current code, the contractor may need to upgrade the entire section rather than just replacing damaged components.

Calgary's extreme weather affects material choice and longevity. Wood railings look great initially but require staining every 2-3 years and are vulnerable to chinook freeze-thaw cycling that can split joints and pop fasteners. Aluminum railings handle Calgary's temperature swings better and resist hail damage — important since Calgary is often called the hailstorm capital of Canada. Glass railings offer unobstructed views but require tempered safety glass and can be damaged by large hail. Cable railings perform well in Calgary's climate but must maintain proper tension as temperatures cycle.

Get quotes from multiple contractors since pricing varies based on their material suppliers and current workload. Most contractors can complete an 8-foot railing replacement in half a day to a full day depending on the complexity.

Spring and fall are often better times for pricing since contractors aren't as busy as during peak deck building season (May through September). If you're planning other deck work like staining or board replacement, bundling the projects often reduces the per-linear-foot cost for railing work.

This is typically a professional job rather than DIY, especially on elevated decks where railings are life-safety components. Improper installation can lead to railing failure under load, and any work on elevated deck railings should meet Alberta Building Code requirements and be done by someone experienced with proper fastening techniques and load requirements.

Need help finding a deck contractor for your railing replacement? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with experienced professionals from the Calgary Construction Network who specialize in deck repairs and railing installations.

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- UR COWRY CABINETS
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My deck posts are heaving from frost in Cranston — can a contractor fix the footings without rebuilding the entire deck?

Frost heaving posts can often be repaired without rebuilding the entire deck, but it depends on how much structural damage has occurred and whether the deck frame is still square and level. If caught early, contractors can jack up the deck, excavate around the heaved footings, and install new footings at proper depth while preserving the existing frame and decking.

The repair process typically involves temporarily supporting the deck structure with adjustable steel posts or cribs, then excavating around each heaved footing. In Cranston's clay-heavy soil, frost heaving is particularly aggressive because clay holds moisture and expands significantly when frozen. Your contractor will need to dig down to at least 4 feet (1.22 metres) below grade — Calgary's minimum frost depth — and install new concrete footings, helical piles, or precast concrete piers. The existing posts can often be reused if they're still straight and structurally sound, though they may need to be cut to accommodate the new footing height.

However, frost heaving often causes secondary damage that complicates repairs. When posts lift and shift, the deck frame can rack out of square, causing joists to twist, ledger board connections to stress, and decking boards to gap unevenly. If the deck has pulled away from the house or the frame is significantly out of level, more extensive reconstruction may be needed. The ledger board connection is particularly vulnerable — if frost movement has compromised the flashing or loosened the lag bolts, water infiltration and structural integrity become serious concerns.

Calgary's chinook cycles make frost heaving worse than in cities with steady winter temperatures. The repeated freeze-thaw action pushes footings up incrementally over multiple seasons, and once heaving starts, it accelerates each winter. Cranston's newer development means many properties have disturbed soil that hasn't fully settled, making frost heaving more likely in the first 5-10 years after construction.

A qualified deck contractor can assess whether repair is feasible during a site visit. They'll check if the deck frame is still square, measure how far posts have moved, inspect joist connections, and evaluate the ledger board attachment. If the heaving is minimal (under 25mm) and the frame is still structurally sound, footing replacement typically costs \$300-600 per post plus excavation. If significant reconstruction is needed, you're looking at \$15-35 per square foot for affected sections.

The key is acting quickly before chinook cycles cause more damage. Spring is the ideal time for footing repairs in Calgary — the ground is workable, but you have the full summer season for concrete to cure before the next freeze cycle. Temporary shoring allows the deck to remain partially usable during repairs, though access will be limited.

This is definitely professional work requiring proper excavation equipment, structural knowledge, and understanding of Calgary's soil conditions. The contractor will need to coordinate with Alberta One Call for utility locates before digging, ensure new footings meet Alberta Building Code requirements, and properly backfill with drainage material to prevent future heaving.

Need help finding a deck contractor experienced with frost heaving repairs? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with professionals familiar with Cranston's soil conditions and Calgary's extreme freeze-thaw cycles.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- PLATINUM Pool & Spa Services Ltd
- Wise Abatement
- Quality count construction Ltd.
- UR COWRY CABINETS
- Calgary Garage Builders Ltd

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Q11

What is the cost to repair water-damaged deck framing on a raised deck in Signal Hill before it becomes unsafe?

Water-damaged deck framing repair in Signal Hill typically costs \$3,000-\$12,000 depending on the extent of structural damage, but this work should be assessed immediately as compromised framing can lead to deck collapse.

The cost varies dramatically based on what needs replacement. **Minor joist repair** (replacing 2-3 damaged joists) runs \$1,500-\$3,500 including materials and labour. **Major structural repair** involving multiple joists, beam replacement, or post/footing issues can reach \$8,000-\$15,000. If the ledger board connection to your house is compromised — the most critical and commonly failed structural joint — expect \$2,000-\$5,000 for proper repair including new flashing and fasteners.

Water damage in Calgary's climate is particularly aggressive due to chinook freeze-thaw cycling. When moisture penetrates untreated joist tops, beam connections, or the ledger board area, it freezes and expands during cold

snaps, then thaws during chinook warming. This cycling accelerates rot and splits wood fibres faster than in more stable climates. **Signal Hill's elevation and exposure to chinook winds** makes this cycling even more severe than in protected areas of Calgary.

Warning signs that require immediate professional assessment include visible sagging or bouncing when walking on the deck, gaps opening between the deck and house, railings that feel loose or wobbly, soft or spongy spots in the deck surface, and any visible rot or darkening around joist connections. If you can push a screwdriver into structural wood more than 6mm, the wood is compromised and needs replacement.

Typical repair breakdown for Signal Hill raised decks:

- **Joist replacement:** \$150-\$300 per joist including labour
- **Beam repair/replacement:** \$800-\$2,500 depending on span and access
- **Ledger board replacement:** \$2,000-\$5,000 including proper flashing
- **Post and footing repair:** \$500-\$1,500 per post location
- **Decking replacement over repaired framing:** \$8-\$15 per square foot

The repair must address the **root cause of water infiltration**. In Signal Hill's exposed location, this often means inadequate flashing where the deck attaches to the house, missing or failed joist tape on top of joists, or poor drainage allowing water to pool against structural members. Simply replacing rotted wood without fixing the water source guarantees the problem will return within 2-3 years.

Alberta Building Code requires that any structural repairs maintain the original design loads and connection strengths. If multiple structural members are compromised, the repair may require engineering drawings and a building permit. The work must be inspected by a Safety Codes Officer before the deck can be safely used.

Don't delay this repair. Water-damaged deck framing doesn't improve with time, and Calgary's spring thaw and summer storms will accelerate the deterioration. A deck collapse can cause serious injury and property damage, plus emergency structural repairs cost 2-3 times more than planned repairs. Get a structural assessment from an experienced deck contractor immediately — most will provide a free estimate to evaluate the damage scope.

Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with experienced structural repair specialists who understand Signal Hill's challenging exposure conditions and can properly assess your deck's safety.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Amar Homes Inc

- Durable Decks
- Mayken Hazmat Solutions LTD
- Besademolition
- G.D.K Drywall LTD.

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Q12

How do Calgary contractors repair a deck that has settled unevenly due to clay soil movement under the footings?

Uneven deck settling from clay soil movement requires lifting and releveling the deck structure, often with new footings that extend below the frost line and account for Calgary's expansive clay soils. This is a structural repair that requires professional assessment and typically involves hydraulic jacks, temporary shoring, and either footing replacement or supplemental support systems.

Calgary's clay-rich soils are notorious for expansion and contraction cycles that can shift deck footings over time. When combined with chinook freeze-thaw cycling and Calgary's deep frost penetration, clay soil movement becomes a significant structural challenge. The clay expands when wet (spring snowmelt, summer storms) and contracts during dry periods, creating ongoing pressure on footings that weren't properly designed for these soil conditions.

Professional contractors typically start with a structural assessment to determine whether the settling is ongoing or has stabilized. They'll check if the original footings reached the required 4-foot depth below grade and whether they were properly sized for the soil conditions. In many cases, older Calgary decks were built with shallow footings (2-3 feet) that are now shifting due to frost heave and clay movement. The repair approach depends on the severity of settlement and the condition of the existing structure.

For moderate settling with sound framing, contractors use hydraulic jacks and temporary shoring to lift the deck back to level. They'll install new concrete footings or helical piles that extend well below the frost line and are sized appropriately for the clay soil bearing capacity. Helical piles are increasingly popular for clay soil repairs because they can be screwed down to stable soil layers and provide immediate load-bearing capacity without waiting for concrete to cure. This method typically costs \$300-600 per footing depending on depth and soil conditions.

For severe settling or compromised framing, partial or complete deck reconstruction may be necessary. Contractors will salvage usable decking boards and railings when possible, but joists, beams, and posts that have

been stressed by uneven settling often need replacement. The new substructure is built on properly engineered footings that account for the specific clay soil conditions on the property.

Calgary's clay soils require specific footing strategies beyond just reaching the frost line. Contractors often use bell-bottom footings (wider at the base) or helical piles with larger bearing plates to distribute loads over a greater area. Some situations require engineered solutions like push piers or micro-piles that transfer loads to stable soil layers well below the active clay zone. These engineered systems typically require a structural engineer's stamp and cost \$800-1,500 per footing.

Timing is critical for clay soil repairs. The work should be done during Calgary's dry season (typically July through September) when clay soils are at their most stable and contracted state. Attempting repairs during spring snowmelt or after heavy rains can result in further soil movement during the repair process. Contractors will also install proper drainage around new footings to minimize future water infiltration and clay expansion.

Prevention measures for future clay soil movement include improving surface drainage away from the deck, installing French drains or weeping tile around the footing area, and ensuring downspouts and irrigation don't discharge near the deck structure. Some contractors recommend annual inspections for decks on clay soils to catch settlement issues before they become severe structural problems.

When to Hire a Pro: Any deck settlement repair requires professional assessment and construction. The structural loads, soil conditions, and footing requirements are beyond DIY capabilities. Additionally, if the settlement has affected the ledger board connection to the house, this becomes a critical safety issue that requires immediate professional attention. Expect costs of \$3,000-8,000 for moderate repairs with new footings, or \$8,000-15,000 for extensive reconstruction on challenging clay soil sites.

Find experienced deck repair contractors who understand Calgary's clay soil challenges through the Calgary Construction Network directory.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- UR COWRY CABINETS
- The Original Workshop
- Royland Stucco
- BOND CONTRACTING & CONSTRUCTION INC
- WestAim Construction Ltd.

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How much does it cost to reinforce a bouncy deck in Calgary that does not feel solid when you walk on it?

Reinforcing a bouncy deck in Calgary typically costs \$2,000-\$8,000 depending on the underlying structural issues, with most homeowners spending \$3,500-\$5,500 for joist reinforcement and blocking installation.

A deck that feels bouncy or unstable when you walk on it usually indicates one of several structural deficiencies: inadequate joist spacing, undersized joists for the span, missing or insufficient blocking between joists, or deteriorated structural members. The cost to fix these issues varies significantly based on the root cause and accessibility of the substructure.

Common reinforcement solutions and their Calgary costs include:

Adding blocking between joists runs \$8-15 per linear foot of blocking installed. Most bouncy decks benefit from solid blocking every 4-6 feet along the joist span, which helps prevent the joists from twisting and adds lateral stability. For a typical 12x16 deck, expect to pay \$800-\$1,500 for comprehensive blocking installation.

Installing additional joists to reduce spacing from 24" to 16" on center costs \$12-20 per linear foot of new joist. This is often necessary when the original deck was built with joists spaced too far apart for the decking material or span. A 200-square-foot deck might need 6-8 additional joists at \$600-\$1,200 total.

Sistering new joists alongside existing undersized members runs \$15-25 per linear foot. This involves bolting or screwing a new joist directly against the existing one to double the load capacity. It's more expensive than adding joists due to the precision fitting required around existing decking and connections.

Beam reinforcement or replacement ranges from \$500-\$2,000 per beam depending on size and accessibility. If the bounce is caused by an undersized or sagging beam, the entire beam may need to be replaced with a larger dimension lumber or engineered beam. This often requires temporary shoring of the deck during construction.

Calgary's extreme climate adds specific considerations to deck reinforcement projects. **Chinook freeze-thaw cycling can loosen fasteners over time**, contributing to structural movement and bounce. Any reinforcement work should use galvanized or stainless steel fasteners rated for exterior use and extreme temperature cycling. The short building season from May through October means reinforcement work should be scheduled well in advance, as structural contractors are typically booked months ahead.

Accessibility significantly affects costs. If the area under your deck is easily accessible (walkout basement, crawl space, or elevated deck), labour costs are at the lower end of the range. Decks built close to grade with limited access require more time for workers to maneuver materials and tools, increasing labour costs by 30-50%.

When to hire a professional: Any structural reinforcement work requires professional assessment and construction. A bouncy deck indicates potential safety issues, and improper reinforcement can actually make the problem worse or create new structural weaknesses. Most reinforcement projects require a building permit from the City of Calgary, especially if you're modifying the original structural design. A qualified deck contractor can assess whether the bounce is due to joist spacing, beam sizing, footing settlement, or deteriorated lumber, and recommend the most cost-effective solution.

DIY assessment you can do: Check for obvious signs like cracked or rotted joists, loose connections at the ledger board, or settlement in the footings. However, determining proper joist sizing, beam capacity, and load paths requires structural knowledge and often engineering calculations.

Need help finding a deck contractor for structural assessment and reinforcement? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with experienced professionals who understand Calgary's unique structural requirements and climate challenges.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Mike's Restoration Service
- Amar Homes Inc
- Millennium Fence and Deck
- WestAim Construction Ltd.
- Alpine Exteriors siding and roofing

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Q14

My deck was damaged by a fallen tree branch during a Calgary windstorm — will my home insurance cover the repair?

Most home insurance policies in Alberta will cover deck damage from fallen tree branches during windstorms, as this typically falls under "sudden and accidental" damage from weather events. However, coverage depends on your specific policy details, deductible amount, and the extent of the damage.

Contact your insurance provider immediately to report the claim and document the damage thoroughly.

Take photos of the damaged deck boards, railings, structural members, and the tree branch that caused the damage. If the branch is still on your deck, photograph it in place before removal. Your insurer will likely send an adjuster to assess the damage and determine coverage. Keep any receipts for emergency repairs needed to prevent further damage, such as tarping exposed areas.

Calgary's chinook winds and summer thunderstorms regularly produce sudden, powerful gusts that can snap healthy tree branches and send them into decks, fences, and roofs. Insurance companies in Alberta are familiar with wind damage claims and generally process them routinely, provided the damage was truly sudden (not from a diseased tree you knew was hazardous) and your policy includes wind coverage. Most standard homeowner policies include wind damage, but it's worth confirming with your provider.

The type and extent of deck damage affects both coverage and repair approach. Surface damage to deck boards and railings is typically straightforward to repair and claim. However, if the branch damaged structural elements like joists, beams, or posts, the repair becomes more complex and expensive. Structural damage may require engineering assessment to ensure the deck remains safe, especially if it's elevated above 600mm and was originally permitted. Your insurance adjuster should account for the need to bring repairs up to current Alberta Building Code standards.

Consider the timing of repairs given Calgary's short construction season. If the damage occurred in fall or winter, temporary weatherproofing may be necessary until repairs can be completed in spring. Emergency tarping or boarding up damaged sections prevents water infiltration that could worsen structural damage through freeze-thaw cycles. Your insurance may cover reasonable costs for emergency protection measures.

When selecting a contractor for insurance repairs, ensure they carry WCB Alberta coverage and understand insurance claim procedures. Some deck contractors specialize in insurance restoration work and can work directly with your adjuster to streamline the process. Get multiple quotes if your insurance allows, and ensure the contractor understands that repairs must match existing materials and construction methods as closely as possible.

Be aware that your deductible applies to the claim, and consider whether the repair cost significantly exceeds your deductible before proceeding. Minor deck board damage costing \$800 to repair may not be worth claiming if you carry a \$1,000 deductible. However, structural damage requiring joist replacement, new footings, or extensive railing work can easily reach \$3,000-\$8,000, making a claim worthwhile even with higher deductibles.

Document the tree's condition and ownership if relevant to your claim. If the branch came from a healthy tree on your property, it's typically covered as an "act of nature." If it came from a diseased or dead tree that you knew was hazardous, coverage might be questioned. If the tree was on a neighbor's property, their insurance might be

responsible, though this can complicate the claims process.

Need help finding a deck contractor experienced with insurance restoration work? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with professionals familiar with the insurance repair process and Alberta Building Code requirements for deck restoration.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Bracha Concrete & Coatings Inc.
- Durable Decks
- Wise Abatement
- BOND CONTRACTING & CONSTRUCTION INC
- Canadian Closet

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Q15

What is the cost to fix deck railing posts that are wobbling and loose on a deck in Cochrane?

Fixing loose and wobbling deck railing posts in Cochrane typically costs \$200-800 per post, depending on whether the issue is loose fasteners, rotted wood, or inadequate footing depth. Most railing post problems can be repaired rather than completely rebuilt, but the repair method depends on the root cause of the instability.

Diagnosing the Problem

Wobbling railing posts usually stem from one of three issues. **Loose lag bolts or through-bolts** are the simplest fix — the fasteners connecting the post to the deck frame have worked loose due to Calgary's extreme freeze-thaw cycling from chinook winds. This repair costs \$50-150 per post for new galvanized or stainless steel fasteners and labour. **Rotted post bases** are more serious — moisture infiltration at the post-to-deck connection causes the bottom 6-12 inches of the post to decay. This requires cutting out the rotted section and splicing in new lumber, costing \$200-400 per post. **Inadequate original attachment** means the posts were never properly secured to begin with — common in older DIY installations. This requires removing the post and installing proper blocking, through-bolts, or post anchors, running \$300-600 per post.

The most expensive scenario is when **posts are attached to inadequate footings or structure**. If the deck frame itself is moving because footings weren't installed to Calgary's required 4-foot frost depth, the entire footing and framing system may need upgrading. This can run \$1,500-4,000 per affected section and requires permits and engineering.

Cochrane-Specific Considerations

Cochrane sits at 1,200 metres elevation — even higher than Calgary — meaning **more intense UV exposure and greater temperature swings** during chinook events. These conditions accelerate the loosening of fasteners and the checking of wood posts. The **Bow River valley location** also means higher moisture levels than central Calgary, which can accelerate rot in untreated post bases. Many Cochrane properties have **sloped lots requiring elevated decks**, making railing stability even more critical for safety.

Repair Methods and Costs

For **loose fastener repairs** (\$50-150 per post), contractors remove the old bolts, drill new holes slightly offset from the originals, and install new galvanized lag bolts or through-bolts with washers. This is often a half-day job for 4-6 posts. **Rotted post splicing** (\$200-400 per post) involves cutting the post above the rot line, installing a pressure-treated splice block, and bolting the original post to the new base. The splice is then stained to match. **Complete post replacement** (\$300-600 per post) is necessary when rot extends too high or the original post is undersized for current Alberta Building Code requirements.

When Professional Help is Essential

Any railing work on decks over 600mm (24 inches) above grade involves life-safety components under the Alberta Building Code. **Improperly repaired railings can fail under load, causing serious falls**. Professional contractors have the experience to identify whether loose posts indicate deeper structural problems with the deck frame or footings. They also ensure repairs meet current code requirements for railing height (1,070mm minimum) and baluster spacing (100mm maximum gaps).

Timing and Prevention

Spring is the ideal time for railing repairs in Cochrane, after winter freeze-thaw damage becomes apparent but before the busy summer construction season. **Annual inspection and tightening of railing fasteners** can prevent many problems — chinook cycling works fasteners loose gradually over 2-3 years. Applying a quality exterior stain every 2-3 years protects post bases from moisture infiltration that leads to rot.

Need help finding a deck contractor in Cochrane? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with experienced professionals from the Calgary Construction Network who understand the unique challenges of building and maintaining decks in Alberta's foothills climate.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Allure Residential & Commercial inc
- Besademolition
- Radon Lab
- Makki Abatement
- The Original Workshop

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Can water damage on the underside of my deck boards in Bridgeland be treated or do I need all new decking?

Water damage on deck boards can often be treated if caught early, but the extent of damage and type of decking material determines whether repair or replacement is the better option. In Calgary's climate, particularly with chinook moisture cycling, water damage can progress quickly from surface staining to structural rot.

Surface water staining versus structural damage are two very different problems. Surface staining appears as dark spots, grey streaks, or black mildew on the underside of boards but doesn't compromise the wood's structural integrity. This type of damage often responds well to cleaning with a deck brightener or oxygen bleach solution, followed by proper drying and sealing. However, if you can push a screwdriver or awl into the wood easily, or if the wood feels soft and spongy, you're dealing with rot that requires board replacement.

Cedar and pressure-treated lumber respond differently to water damage. Cedar naturally resists rot but shows water damage more visibly through dark staining and checking. If the cedar boards are still structurally sound (firm to the touch, no soft spots), cleaning and re-staining can restore their appearance and protect against further damage. Pressure-treated lumber is more rot-resistant but can develop surface mold and mildew that creates dark staining on the underside. This often cleans off with proper deck cleaners, but check carefully for any soft spots that indicate the treatment has failed.

Calgary's chinook cycles make early intervention critical. The rapid freeze-thaw cycling from chinook winds drives moisture deep into wood grain and accelerates rot once it starts. Water damage that might take years to become serious in a more stable climate can progress to structural failure within 2-3 seasons here. If you're seeing water damage now, address it before next winter's freeze-thaw cycles make it worse.

For treatable water damage, start with a thorough cleaning using an oxygen bleach deck cleaner (avoid chlorine bleach, which can damage wood fibers). Power wash gently with a fan tip to remove surface mold and staining, then allow the deck to dry completely for 2-3 days. Once dry, apply a high-quality penetrating stain with UV blockers and water repellent properties. In Calgary's intense UV at 1,045 meters elevation, this protective coating is essential to prevent future water penetration and surface degradation.

Replace boards if you find soft spots, extensive checking, or structural weakness. Individual damaged boards can be replaced without redoing the entire deck surface, but match the existing board dimensions, species, and fastener pattern. If more than 30-40% of the deck surface shows water damage, replacement of the entire deck surface becomes more cost-effective than piecemeal repairs.

Check the underlying structure while you're assessing the decking. Water damage on deck boards often indicates drainage problems or inadequate ventilation that affects the joists and beams below. Look for proper joist spacing (typically 16" on center), adequate slope for drainage, and signs of rot in the substructure. In Bridgeland's older homes, deck-to-house connections may lack proper flashing, allowing water to penetrate behind the ledger board.

Professional assessment is wise for extensive damage or if you're unsure about structural integrity. A deck contractor can evaluate whether the damage is cosmetic or structural, recommend the most cost-effective repair approach, and identify underlying moisture problems that need addressing. This is especially important in Calgary, where improper repairs can fail quickly under chinook cycling.

Need help finding a deck professional for assessment and repair? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with experienced contractors from the Calgary Construction Network who understand how Calgary's climate affects deck materials and can provide honest guidance on repair versus replacement.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Jk Stucco
- Canadian Closet
- WestAim Construction Ltd.
- Turnbull masonry
- Premium Built Structures

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Q17

Can a Calgary deck repair company replace individual composite boards that were cracked by hail without replacing the whole surface?

Yes, individual composite deck boards can typically be replaced after hail damage without replacing the entire deck surface. Most composite decking systems are designed to allow for board replacement, though the process is more involved than replacing wood boards and requires specific techniques to avoid damaging adjacent boards.

The replacement process depends on your composite decking system. If your deck uses hidden fastener clips (like Trex Hideaway or TimberTech CONCEALoc), the damaged board must be carefully removed by accessing the clips from underneath or by cutting the board and removing it in sections. Face-screwed composite boards are easier to replace — simply remove the screws and lift out the damaged board. However, you'll need to match the exact board profile, colour, and texture, which can be challenging if your deck is several years old due to colour fading and product line changes.

Calgary's intense hailstorms are particularly hard on composite decking, especially darker colours and uncapped products. While composite is generally more hail-resistant than cedar due to its density and flexibility, large hail (quarter-size or larger) can crack or puncture composite boards, particularly along the edges or at fastener points. Capped composite products like Trex Transcend or TimberTech Legacy perform better in hail than uncapped composites, but even premium products can be damaged by severe storms.

Professional replacement ensures proper installation and warranty protection. A qualified deck repair contractor will have the right tools to remove damaged boards without affecting adjacent ones, access to current product lines for the best colour match, and knowledge of the specific fastener system used on your deck. They can also inspect the substructure for any hail damage to joists or beams that might not be immediately visible. Many composite manufacturers require professional installation to maintain warranty coverage, so DIY replacement could void your warranty on the new boards.

Timing and material matching are critical considerations. Composite decking fades over time in Calgary's intense UV, so new boards may not perfectly match the weathered colour of your existing deck. Some fading will occur naturally over 6-12 months to help blend the repair. If multiple boards need replacement or if your decking is discontinued, you might want to consider replacing the most visible section entirely for a uniform appearance.

For hail damage claims, document everything before repairs begin. Take photos of all damaged boards, get a written assessment from your contractor detailing the scope of damage, and check with your insurance company about coverage for composite deck repairs. Some policies cover hail damage to outdoor structures, while others exclude decks or have specific deductibles for outdoor property damage.

Need help finding a deck repair specialist experienced with composite systems? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with contractors who have experience repairing hail damage to composite decking throughout the Calgary area.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Besademolition

- Radon Lab
- Alpine Exteriors siding and roofing
- Wise Abatement
- PLATINUM Pool & Spa Services Ltd

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Q18

Can a Calgary contractor fix a deck that is pulling away from the house or does the whole ledger need to be replaced?

A Calgary contractor can often repair a deck pulling away from the house without full ledger replacement, but the extent of repair depends on the cause and severity of the separation. The ledger board connection is the most critical structural joint on any deck, and in Calgary's extreme freeze-thaw climate, this connection faces unique stresses that can cause failure over time.

Common causes of ledger separation include inadequate fasteners (using deck screws instead of proper lag bolts or through-bolts), missing or failed flashing allowing water infiltration and rot, frost heave from shallow footings causing the deck to shift, and chinook freeze-thaw cycling loosening connections over time. Calgary's rapid temperature swings put enormous stress on the ledger connection as the deck structure expands and contracts at different rates than the house.

Repairable situations typically involve loose but structurally sound fasteners that can be tightened or upgraded, minor gaps (less than 6mm) where the ledger has pulled slightly away but the wood is solid, and situations where the house rim joist and ledger board show no signs of rot or structural damage. A qualified contractor can often re-secure the connection with larger lag bolts, add additional fasteners, or install through-bolts that penetrate completely through the rim joist for maximum holding power.

Full replacement becomes necessary when the ledger board shows rot, splitting, or structural damage, when the house rim joist behind the ledger has been compromised by water infiltration, or when the existing fastener holes have enlarged and can no longer hold securely. Water damage is particularly common in Calgary because many older decks lack proper flashing, and chinook moisture cycles drive water into the ledger-to-house connection repeatedly.

The repair process starts with a thorough structural assessment to determine the cause of separation and extent of any damage. The contractor will check the condition of both the ledger board and the house rim joist, verify that

footings are adequate and haven't shifted, and examine the existing flashing and drainage. If repair is possible, they'll typically remove damaged fasteners, drill new holes offset from the old ones, and install properly sized galvanized lag bolts or through-bolts with washers.

Critical Calgary considerations include ensuring any repair includes proper flashing installation, as this is often missing on older decks and leads to repeated failure. The contractor must also verify that footings extend below Calgary's 4-foot frost line, as shallow footings cause ongoing movement that stresses the ledger connection. All new fasteners must be rated for exterior use and Calgary's extreme temperature cycling.

Cost expectations for ledger repairs range from \$800-\$2,500 depending on accessibility and extent of work needed. Simple re-fastening runs \$800-\$1,200, while repairs involving new flashing, partial ledger replacement, or rim joist reinforcement can reach \$1,500-\$2,500. Full ledger replacement typically costs \$2,000-\$4,000 including proper flashing and upgraded fasteners.

This is definitely professional work — never attempt DIY ledger repairs on elevated decks. Improper ledger attachment is the leading cause of deck collapses in Canada. A structural failure can cause serious injury or death. The work may also require a permit and inspection, particularly if structural modifications are needed.

Need help finding a qualified deck contractor for ledger assessment and repair? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with experienced professionals who understand Calgary's unique climate challenges and structural requirements.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Wise Abatement
- Greenstone landscaping solutions
- Mike's Restoration Service
- Canadian Closet
- New Earth Waste Services Ltd

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How much does it cost to repair a section of rotting deck boards on a 10-year-old deck in Calgary?

Repairing rotting deck boards on a 10-year-old Calgary deck typically costs \$8-15 per square foot for materials and labour, or \$200-500 for a small section of 5-10 boards. The total cost depends on the extent of the damage, board type, and whether the underlying joists need repair as well.

For a typical repair involving 20-30 square feet of rotted boards, expect to pay \$400-800 if only the deck boards need replacement. If the rot has spread to the joists underneath — common in Calgary due to chinook freeze-thaw cycling and moisture infiltration — costs can jump to \$1,200-2,500 for structural repairs including temporary shoring, joist replacement, and proper flashing installation.

Calgary's climate accelerates deck rot in predictable patterns. Chinook winds create rapid freeze-thaw cycles that crack finishes and allow moisture to penetrate end grain and board joints. The areas most prone to rot on a 10-year-old deck are typically around stairs, near the house connection, and anywhere water pools or snow accumulates. If your deck hasn't been stained regularly (every 2-3 years), the UV exposure at Calgary's elevation has likely degraded the wood's natural moisture resistance.

Material costs for replacement boards run \$3-8 per square foot depending on the species. Pressure-treated lumber is cheapest at \$3-5/sqft, cedar runs \$6-10/sqft, and if you're upgrading to composite to avoid future rot, expect \$10-15/sqft for materials. Labour adds another \$5-10/sqft for removal of old boards, inspection of substructure, and installation of new decking with proper fasteners and spacing.

The key question is whether the rot is isolated to surface boards or has spread to the structural framing. A qualified deck contractor can assess this by probing with an awl or screwdriver — soft, spongy wood indicates rot, while solid wood sounds sharp when tapped. If joists are compromised, they must be sistered (reinforced) or replaced entirely, which requires temporary support and significantly more labour.

Timing matters for deck repairs in Calgary. Plan repairs for late spring through early fall when temperatures are consistently above 10°C. If you're staining the entire deck after repairs, the new boards need 3-6 months to weather and dry before accepting stain properly. Many homeowners use this repair opportunity to upgrade to composite decking for the affected section, eliminating future rot concerns entirely.

Consider this an opportunity to address the root cause. Most deck rot in Calgary stems from inadequate drainage, missing or failed flashing, or lack of proper maintenance. While replacing boards, ensure proper ventilation underneath, check that flashing is intact where the deck meets the house, and plan a staining schedule to protect the remaining wood.

Need help finding a deck contractor to assess the damage and provide a repair estimate? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with experienced professionals who understand how Calgary's climate affects deck longevity and can recommend the most cost-effective repair approach for your specific situation.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Ardco Construction
- Bracha Concrete & Coatings Inc.
- Venkor Group Inc
- Eshine Cleaning Services
- PLATINUM Pool & Spa Services Ltd

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Q20

What is the cost to jack up and re-level a deck in Calgary where one corner has dropped three inches from frost heave?

Jacking and re-leveling a deck with 3 inches of settlement from frost heave typically costs \$2,500-\$6,000 in Calgary, depending on the deck size, access conditions, and whether new footings are required. This is a structural repair that requires professional assessment and execution.

The repair process involves temporarily supporting the deck structure, addressing the failed footing, and re-leveling the entire frame. A 3-inch drop indicates the footing has either heaved unevenly or wasn't installed to proper depth initially. In Calgary, all deck footings must extend at least 4 feet (1.22 metres) below grade to prevent frost movement. If the original footing was shallow, it will continue to move until properly replaced.

Temporary shoring and jacking costs \$800-\$1,500 depending on deck height and access. The contractor will install adjustable steel posts or hydraulic jacks to support the deck weight while the footing is repaired. This requires careful load distribution to avoid damaging the deck structure during lifting.

Footing repair or replacement adds \$500-\$1,200 per footing. If the existing footing can be extended deeper with helical piles or concrete underpinning, costs are on the lower end. Complete footing replacement requires excavation, removal of the old concrete, and installation of a new sonotube or precast pier extending below the frost

line. In Calgary's clay soils, excavation can be challenging, especially in tight spaces under existing decks.

Calgary's extreme freeze-thaw cycling from chinook winds makes proper footing depth critical. Shallow footings don't just settle once — they continue to heave and settle with every freeze-thaw cycle. A footing that's moved 3 inches will likely move again unless the root cause (insufficient depth) is corrected. This is why proper diagnosis is essential before starting repairs.

Additional structural repairs may be needed if the settlement has stressed the deck frame. Twisted joists, pulled fasteners, or gaps in the ledger board connection can add \$500-\$2,000 to the project. The longer a deck operates out of level, the more secondary damage occurs to the framing and connections.

Timing matters for this type of repair. Footing work requires excavation and concrete pouring, which is best done when ground conditions are stable (late spring through early fall). Winter repairs are possible but more expensive due to ground conditions and concrete curing requirements.

This is definitely professional-only work. Jacking a deck incorrectly can cause catastrophic structural failure, and working under a partially supported deck is extremely dangerous. The repair also requires proper assessment of why the footing failed — was it too shallow, improperly sized, or affected by drainage issues? A structural contractor can diagnose the cause and ensure the repair addresses the root problem, not just the symptoms.

Get multiple quotes and ask specifically whether the repair includes extending footings to proper depth below the frost line. A cheap fix that doesn't address footing depth will fail again within 1-3 years. Proper repairs with adequate footings should prevent future movement for decades.

Need help finding a structural deck contractor? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with professionals experienced in footing repairs and deck re-leveling projects.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Calgary Custom Concepts
- Keystone Exteriors
- WestAim Construction Ltd.
- Eshine Cleaning Services
- Durable Decks

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How do I know if my Calgary deck joists are rotted and need replacing or if they can be sistered and reinforced?

Determining whether Calgary deck joists need full replacement versus sistering depends on the extent of rot, structural integrity, and how much of each joist is affected. If more than 25% of a joist's cross-section is compromised by rot, or if the rot extends through the critical load-bearing areas, full replacement is necessary for safety.

Visual inspection is your first step. Look for soft, spongy wood that you can push a screwdriver or awl into easily, dark staining or discoloration, visible fungal growth (white, black, or green), and cracking or splitting along the grain. Pay special attention to joist ends where they sit on the beam or attach to the ledger board, areas around the ledger connection where moisture infiltration is common, and any spots where joists contact concrete footings or posts. Calgary's chinook freeze-thaw cycles accelerate rot in these vulnerable connection points, especially where moisture can penetrate and refreeze repeatedly.

The "screwdriver test" gives you a quick assessment of structural integrity. Push a screwdriver or awl into suspected areas — healthy wood will resist penetration and feel solid, while rotted wood will feel soft and punky, allowing the tool to penetrate easily. If you can push a screwdriver more than 6mm into the wood without significant resistance, that section is structurally compromised. Check multiple points along each joist, focusing on the ends, mid-span areas under heavy loads, and anywhere you see visible staining or discoloration.

Sistering is appropriate when rot is localized and the majority of the joist remains structurally sound. You can sister a joist if the rot affects less than 25% of the cross-section, the damage is limited to one area (not spread throughout the length), the joist isn't sagging or showing signs of structural failure, and the existing joist can still carry some load alongside the new sister board. Sistering involves attaching a new joist of equal or larger dimension alongside the existing one, effectively doubling the load capacity in that area. Use galvanized carriage bolts every 12-16 inches, staggered top and bottom, and ensure the sister joist extends well beyond the damaged area on both sides.

Full replacement is necessary when rot is extensive or affects critical load-bearing areas. Replace the entire joist if rot extends through more than 25% of the cross-section at any point, the joist end bearing on the beam or ledger is compromised, you find rot at multiple locations along the same joist, or the joist is visibly sagging or deflecting under load. In Calgary's climate, once rot establishes itself in pressure-treated lumber, it often spreads faster than expected due to the moisture cycling from chinook weather patterns. Don't take chances with structural members — a failed joist can cause deck collapse.

Check the ledger board connection carefully during your inspection. The ledger-to-house connection is the most vulnerable point for water infiltration and rot in Calgary decks. Look for soft spots in the ledger itself, staining on the house siding above the ledger, gaps in the flashing or caulking, and any signs that the lag bolts or through-bolts are loose or corroded. If the ledger shows signs of rot, this is a professional repair job that may require temporarily shoring the deck while the ledger is replaced and properly reflashed.

Consider the age and overall condition of your deck when making repair decisions. If your deck is over 15 years old and showing multiple problem areas, it may be more cost-effective to rebuild rather than patch individual issues. Calgary's extreme weather takes a toll on all deck components over time, and addressing joists in isolation may just delay other inevitable repairs. A structural engineer can assess the overall condition and help you decide between targeted repairs and full replacement.

This type of structural assessment and repair requires professional expertise. While you can do the initial inspection yourself, determining load capacity, proper sistering techniques, and safe temporary shoring during repairs should be handled by an experienced deck contractor. Structural work on elevated decks also typically requires a permit and inspection from a Safety Codes Officer to ensure the repairs meet Alberta Building Code requirements.

Need help finding a qualified deck contractor for structural assessment and repairs? Calgary Deck Contractors can match you with experienced professionals who understand Calgary's unique climate challenges and structural requirements.

Looking for experienced contractors? The Calgary Construction Network connects homeowners with qualified professionals:

- Allure Residential & Commercial inc
- The Original Workshop
- Royland Stucco
- Jk Stucco
- Canadian Closet

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