

The Direct Burial Wood Pole Advantage

Wood poles can be the low cost way to mount lighting for your backyard basketball court, volleyball court, pickleball court or bocce pit. Ground contact rated pressure treated lumber is durable and can be purchased at most lumber stores including Menards, Lowes, and local lumber supply houses.

Wood poles are simple and cost effective. Installation is by direct burial. The pole is placed into an augured hole lined with gravel then back filled with native soils, stone dust or cement. Wood poles and direct burial provides the following benefits.

- Monetary – Lower cost materials and no need for expensive footings
- Time Savings – Faster installation than poles that require cement bases
- Simple – No reliance form work or cement pouring schedules
- Appearance – No exposed base plates or anchors bolts

The preferred mounting height for sports court luminaires mounted on wood poles is about 17' high. 17' minimizes expense and optimizes lighting performance. Starting with a 20' long pole, 3 feet is direct buried and 17 feet remains above the surface. Additional support can be added by creating a mound of rock and dirt about 7" to one foot above the ground surface, if desired. Naturally soil conditions matter, so consulting a local structural engineer is recommended.

17' high poles can be easily acquired. Use a 6" x 6" x 20' post or beam like those used for building decks. For instance Menards typically has 6" x 6" x 20' posts/beams priced under \$100.00. Another way to create a strong 20' length pole is to take three 2" x 6" x 20" boards. Glue and screw or nail them together. The 3 board laminated design is extremely strong and also resists warping. Lowes usually has 2" x 6" x 20' boards prices at \$20.00 each.

Mounting the luminaire to a wood pole is easy too. Access Fixtures 90 degree mount bolts to the post. Drill holes in the post. Place bolts through the mount and holes in the post. Then put washers on the back, nuts and tighten. A slip fitter goes over the upright part of the 90-degree mount and enables the luminaire to move up/down and side-to-side so the light is directed exactly where it is needed.



Wiring on a direct burial pole is similar to other poles. Power is typically run underground and brought up out of the ground via conduit. For direct burial post type poles, the conduit can be run up the backside of the post and into a 4" exterior grade electrical box. The wires from the luminaire can be run into the electrical box and the connection made there. Access Fixtures recommends and regulation may require that a licensed electrician perform the electrical work.