

Disney Segway Ban Case Thrown Out *Ban Likely to be Challenged Again*

A federal judge in Florida has thrown out a lawsuit challenging Disney World's ban on the use of Segways by park visitors and rejected a proposed settlement between the parties in the case. The case, *Ault, et al v. Walt Disney World Company*, was brought by three individuals who claimed that the theme park's policy against Segways violates Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The plaintiffs reached a settlement with Disney, which the court preliminarily approved in January 2009. Under the proposed settlement, Disney's Segway ban would have remained in place, with Disney making a certain number of its own electronic stand-up vehicles (ESV) available at its parks.

According to the court, nearly 100 individuals and disability advocacy groups submitted objections to the settlement, including the US Department of Justice and the Attorneys General of 23 states.

In a "friend of the court" brief, DOJ urged the court to reject the settlement because approval by the court would undermine DOJ's ADA rulemaking efforts which address the use of Segways and other electronic personal assistive mobility devices; because of due process concerns; and because the terms of the agreement were "fundamentally unfair to absent class members."

See **Disney**, page 9



A resting spot on a trail at the Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk along the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore at Lake Michigan.

Outdoor Areas Guidelines Draw One Step Closer to Completion

By Jennifer Skulski, National Center on Accessibility

Accessibility guidelines for outdoor developed areas managed by federal agencies are one step closer to becoming standards. On Oct. 19, the U.S. Access Board released the Draft Final Accessibility Guidelines for Federal Outdoor Sites covered by the Architectural Barriers Act. Public comment was sought through December from interested parties on the revised document.

The development of accessibility guidelines for outdoor developed areas have undergone more than 10 years of rulemaking including regulatory negotiation in 1999. Several changes can be noted in the Draft Final Guidelines from the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking issued in 2007. The most significant change is the provision for trails. Previously, if a trail met a condition for de-

See **Outdoor Area Guidelines**, page 7

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by John P. S. Salmen

No One Knows It All

When I was a kid, my father taught me to be what he called a “keen observer of human nature” – to watch, listen and try to understand how and why people behave as they do. Those early lessons laid the foundations for my practice of universal design. The more I learn, the more I realize how much there is, and how little of it

I know. UD is like the horizon, it expands and recedes as we move toward it. There are always new frontiers, always more opportunities to learn about how we can support people to realize their potential. We can start by learning the wide spectrum of physical attributes (and disabling conditions) of the human body, then go beyond to understand social, cultural and geographic/climatic influences that affect the ability of humans to adapt. But we can't stop there, for now we must also consider our evolving technological innovations.

This realization has led us at UniversalDesign.com to the conclusion that nobody can possibly know it all. This is actually a reassuring thing. In a way, we are all in this together learning

about ourselves and how we can assist each other. We find we are both teachers and students working as a team to find solutions that work for everyone. But we are, more importantly, part of an exciting, evolving, movement aimed at freeing human potential through the way we design our world.

In that spirit, we at UniversalDesign.com are establishing the “Student of Universal Design” campaign to facilitate the exchange of ideas and the chance to connect with other “students of UD.”

Watch UniversalDesign.com for an announcement about specific features and opportunities. Begin your journey as a Student of Universal Design, and open yourself to learning (and sharing) new ways to make our world more enabling to all of those who live here.



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Where Are They Now?

Welcome to the first in what will be a continuing column, “Where Are They Now?”... where we catch up with people who have been involved in accessibility, Americans with Disabilities Act and universal design and have made career changes. In this issue we talked to former Department of Justice official **Irene Bowen**

who has been working as a consultant since retiring from the federal government a year ago.

Irene Bowen, ADA-One Consulting
www.ada-one.com

“I’m thoroughly enjoying my work as a consultant [which she began in January 2009] and my part-time job -- I’m a recovering attorney working with an architectural firm!

As I had always thought, most people want

to comply with the ADA, the Barriers Act, and Section 504, or even go “beyond” them, but they sometimes just don’t know what’s required or how to make it work. I’m applying what I know from years of Federal government rulemaking and enforcement to new and challenging questions. It’s satisfying to master the details of something (like a pending regulation or new accessibility guidelines) but then find a way to boil it down to the important points in a way that’s interesting and helpful. I think that’s the best way to guide and engage



Irene Bowen



Research on How Cross Slope Affects Wheelchair Travel Announced

While researchers agree that cross slopes make wheelchair travel more difficult, they disagree on how to measure those effects. To address the issue, the US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board) is funding a project to review existing research and survey



The black arrow represents the cross slope.

people who use wheelchairs to find out about the impact of slope, surface and weather conditions on wheelchair travel.

The Access Board explains that cross slopes, the surface slopes that run perpendicular to the direction of travel, are key to usability for people who use wheelchairs.

The project is being conducted by the Human Engineering Research Laboratory (HERL) at the University of Pittsburgh. To date, researchers have developed a protocol to measure the effects of cross slope using a cross sectional group of test subjects. The protocol will be used in a follow-on human factors study to be undertaken at HERL facilities with additional support from the Veterans Administration and Paralyzed Veterans of America.

According to the Access Board, in its preliminary project, researchers found that while studies show that cross slopes make wheelchair travel more difficult, there was little consensus on methods or protocols for measuring these effects. Further, they determined that the measures used in most studies, such as energy consumption and perceived effort, cannot fully assess the complex effects of cross slope. Few studies were found that investigated wheelchair propulsion in outdoor environments over a range of surfaces. Results from the project survey confirmed that terrain features interact in complex ways and that

the effects are more pronounced among certain populations. Findings suggest that older adults, women, and people with progressive conditions, such as multiple sclerosis, or upper extremity impairment are most likely to experience difficulty negotiating cross slopes.

Testing is currently underway in the human factors study on a range of cross slopes, running slopes, and surface conditions, including those that are smooth, irregular, and slippery. Data is being collected using devices developed by HERL to measure work, energy, distance-per-stroke, and pushrim forces. Results of this research, including the preliminary study, will be posted at www.access-board.gov once published. For more information, contact Lois Thibault, Research Coordinator, at thibault@access-board.gov.

Las Vegas Hotel Case Dismissed

A federal lawsuit against a Las Vegas hotel for Americans with Disabilities Act violations filed by a person who uses a wheelchair was dismissed based on the court’s determination that the plaintiff had no intention of returning to the hotel and therefore lacked standing. The decision regarding *Norkunas v. Wynn Las Vegas* was issued by a three-judge panel of the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals.

911 Call Center to Accept Text Messages

People in an Iowa county can now text emergency calls to 911. In August, the Black Hawk County Consolidated Public Safety Communications Center became the first emergency call center in the nation to accept text messages from cell phones.

This service will particularly benefit people with hearing or speech disabilities -- enabling them to report an accident or other emergency quickly using their cell phones without having to locate a TTY to report an incident.

“Increasingly, text is becoming the way people communicate and public safety must be able to support 911 text messaging,” said Chief Thomas Jennings, chairman, Black Hawk 911 Board. “We are excited to have the opportunity to participate in a solution to enable 911 texting for the speech and hearing impaired community as well as set the stage for adoption by the larger texting population.”



“Increasingly, text is becoming the way people communicate and public safety must be able to support 911 text messaging.”

Thomas Jennings,
Chairman, Black
Hawk 911 Board



Flexible House Makes Living Easy for Young Family

Designing Beyond the Here and Now

The features a young family wants in a house are vastly different than what aging empty nesters are looking for in a house... or are they? An award winning house in Seattle is proof that one design can serve the needs of a wide spectrum of people.

“By designing flexibility into homes from the beginning, it is possible to reduce one’s need to move to a new home and also prevent an elderly person’s premature move to an institution,” says Seattle architect Emory Baldwin, designer of the home that won an AIA award in 2009.

“I set out to design my home to be a demonstration of Universal Design and show that it can be done in an aesthetically appealing way that is marketable to the mainstream public. The decision to include sustainable features was in part to show the connection between social sustainability -- Universal Design -- and environmental sustainability -- ‘green’ building materials and features -- and that they are both part of the broader concept of sustainability. One example

of this connection is that by building it right the first time, there is much less need down the road for costly and wasteful remodeling,” says Baldwin.

Among the design features that make Baldwin’s three-bedroom, three-story house flexible are:

- No steps into the house, level thresholds throughout and doors that are 3’ wide with lever handles. These facilitate the movement of furniture and appliances into and out of the house, allow freedom of movement for people using wheelchairs and mobility devices; and provide seamless stroller access.

- Stacking closets on each floor which are sized and wired for a future el-

evator provide ample storage space and a top floor reading nook;

- Tread lights on each section of the stairs enhance visibility when the light switch can’t be reached;

- Curbless showers with controls that are offset so a parent or a caregiver can easily operate them without getting wet;

- Smooth wood flooring on the main level of the house to enhance wheeled movement and reduce tripping hazards;

- A kitchen with wide clearance between the island and the counter;

- A wall oven with the door and controls at an accessible height;

- An induction cooktop, that allows pots to be slid from burner to burner, with a nearby pull out spray for filling pots while they are on the stove.

- A daylight basement which can be a home office, mother-in-law

apartment or room for rent.

The house, in Seattle’s Green Lake neighborhood, was designed to meet residents’ needs as they age but Baldwin, who resides there with his wife and two young daughters, has found the universal design features make the house “easy to live in.” For example, the wider doors and hallways, which can accommodate wheelchairs and other mobility devices, are “very comfortable,” says Baldwin. “I like how we can store our girls’ tricycles and bicycles in the bonus storage of the stacking closets, on the main floor level, rather than having them clogging our entry way -- which is the case of many friends who have young children. I also like the fact that we can bring our daughters through our front door in the stroller and jogger without waking them up. In our old house, we would have to carry the stroller up the steps, which would usually wake them up and eliminate any chance of our having time to get chores done while they slept.”

Another feature the family enjoys is the reading nook, which is in the uppermost part of the stacking closets – the space that is elevator-ready.

See **Baldwin House**, page 8

“By designing flexibility into homes from the beginning, it is possible to reduce one’s need to move to a new home and also prevent an elderly person’s premature move to an institution.”

Emory Baldwin, AIA



The rear of the house features a stepless entrance. Photo by Dale Lang, Northwest Photography



One of the home’s roll in showers.

IRELAND

24-Hour Design Challenge

An urban navigation system won the **Judges Award** in the Centre for Universal Design Excellence first ever 24-Hour Design Award Challenge.

The design contest consisted of five teams working with an “expert user,” called a “design partner,” to develop a product or service that addresses a challenge commonly faced by the design partner on the streets of Dublin. Participants on the teams were architects, landscape architects, engineers, product designers, interaction designers and students.

The winner, “What a Load of Bollards,” is an intuitive navigation system that can be added to the top of any curbside bollard in a city. The bollard head is replaced by an information dial with tactile high-



Bollard navigation system

contrast colored direction arrows and speech output.

The design team addressed the need for increased contrast of materials and color on the streetscape and greater awareness of potential hazards to aid safe passage; notification of obstructive street furniture; and minimizing

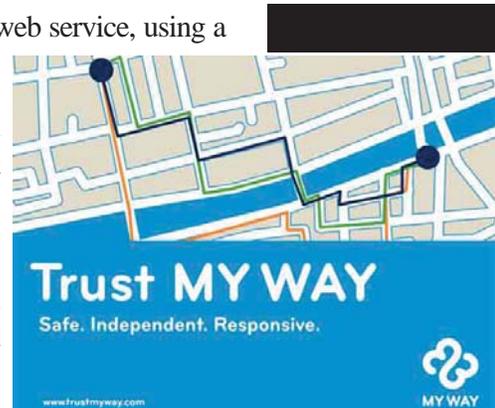
the feeling of panic when a person is lost or disoriented. The bollard head features:

- A photo-luminescent/reflective high-contrast stripe that is color-coded to guide users to an information node at key intersections. The stripe reduces possible injuries to both pedestrians and vehicles.
- An information dial with a tactile high contrast colored direction arrow. Twisting the dial directs the arrow toward city landmarks. The dial can be gripped and easily twisted by people with poor hand dexterity.
- A central push button operates an audio message to users who are blind.
- An integrated magnifying glass enlarges the text /image to 18 to 32 points for visually impaired people.

•Cast aluminum housing is encased in tactile rubber covered with a quartz glass magnifying window. The internal illumination is by a long life LED.

The **People’s Choice Award** was presented to the design team that created My Way, a personal mapping system.

Users can access an online web service, using a portable device, which allows them to navigate the built environment by the chosen route appropriate to their needs. It incorporates a service and portable device that is accessible to multiple users, such as pedestrians, cyclists, tourists, people with mobility impairments and stroller pushers. It incorporates an online web service where users can input their parameters and special needs. It allows for documentation and review of user routes. The system can store and compare paths previously travelled and allows users to rate a path. For more information, contact: www.universaldesign.ie



People’s Choice Award winner, MY WAY

INDIA

Hotel Rating System Includes Accessibility Requirements

The India Ministry of Tourism has revised its hotel rating system to include accessibility requirements. Hotels must meet these voluntary standards in facilities and services to achieve “star” ratings. Most of the accessibility requirements outlined in the new system are expected to be in place by Sept. 1, 2010.

The ratings system now includes requirements that have:

- An accessible entrance and designated parking;
- Ramps and anti-slip floors in all public areas;
- At least one accessible restaurant in the 5-Star and 5-Star Deluxe hotels;

See **World Update**, page 11

“World Update” is compiled by Elaine Ostroff, Hon. AIA, founding director of the Institute for Human Centered Design, and Denise Hofstedt, Editor of UDN. If you have information about international universal design efforts that you would like to have published in Universal Design Newsletter, write to us at: 6 Grant Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912; or contact publisher@universaldesign.com

Project Civil Access Picking Up Speed?

More local governments have settled Project Civil Access (PCA) issues with the Department of Justice (DOJ) in the last six months than in all of 2007 and 2008 combined. The current pace of settlements – 15 since mid-July – is approaching the 2004 pace when 42 cases were reported settled. The sudden increase has sparked a renewed awareness of the program.

According to a DOJ spokesman Alejandro Miyar of the Office of Public Affairs, PCA is an effort by the Civil Rights Division of the DOJ to improve access to local government programs and services by enforcing Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

“The division selects locations for PCA reviews based on several factors, with significant consideration given to the number of persons with disabilities who reside in or are likely to visit a community,” says Miyar. “The division initiates some PCA reviews in response to one or more administrative complaints alleging that individuals with disabilities have experienced either a denial of access or difficulty accessing key government programs, services, or facilities such as city hall or another administrative facility, the courthouse, polling places, or local detention facilities. The division also selects jurisdictions in all parts of the United States, including rural, urban, and suburban communities. Initially, the PCA initiative focused on small communities, but the division later began including larger cities and counties. Today, the division includes communities of various sizes in the PCA initiative.”

The Anatomy of a Compliance Review

During a PCA compliance review, DOJ typically surveys a municipality’s newly constructed facilities and most other facilities housing government programs, services, or activities, according to Miyar. “Since PCA involves a comprehensive review of access for persons with disabilities to a large number of government programs, services, activities, and facilities, it is not uncommon for the division to identify a significant number of access issues that must be addressed. However, the number and type of access issues identified varies significantly.”

Settlement

Once access issues have been identified, DOJ staff work with public officials to determine a timetable for resolving each issue. “Key factors considered in negotiating these time periods are the cost and difficulty of required modifications and available funding,” says Miyar. “Unless significant modifications to facilities have already been planned for and budgeted, cities and counties typically need more time to complete complex modifications involving significant costs than they do to complete simple, inexpensive modifications or routine maintenance of accessible features.”



Earlier this year, Fayette County, PA reached a PCA settlement with DOJ. According to Warren Hughes, County Manager/Acting Chief Clerk for the county, the lesson learned from the experience was that “Even the best architects, engineers and contractors don’t know everything. Two of our buildings that had violations were less than two years old and had [Pennsylvania State License and Inspection Code] approved plans for construction.”

He noted that for the most part the county buildings were in good shape but lacked many of the exact specifications needed to comply with the DOJ’s interpretations of the ADA regulations. “The DOJ staff was helpful and willing to help in any way they could,” says Hughes. “They put us in touch with knowledgeable people and provided the county with written procedures and recommendations. In many cases, it was to bring the area into exact code and or enhance the accessibility. After studying the regulations it was apparent we need to make some changes.”

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Alejandro Miyar,
DOJ Office of
Public Affairs



Outdoor Areas Guidelines, from page 1

parture from the technical provisions, such as compliance would not be feasible due to the terrain, the trail would be required to be accessible up to the point of departure but not beyond that point. The Draft Final guidelines permit the trail to have a conditional exception at that segment of trail affected by the terrain; then beyond the segment, it would be required to comply with the technical provisions once again. This change likely could have positive effects in new trail construction. Especially where a section of the trail may be challenging or require some assistance, but the remainder of the trail is built accessible providing an exceptional recreation experience to a scenic vista, meadow, bird sanctuary, or even a waterfall.

In addition, there are new requirements for trailhead signage to provide users with more objective information on the trail conditions. The provisions require new signs provided at trailheads on newly constructed or altered trails to include information on the length of the trail or trail segment; surface type; typical and minimum trail path width; and typical and maximum running slope and cross slope. Communicating the trail conditions will give users the ability to make informed decisions on which trails and trail segments are appropriate in relation to their own individual ability.

While the revision provides greater access on trails and clarification of language for designers, the requirements for outdoor constructed features such as picnic tables, fire rings, grills, fireplaces, wood stoves, trash and recycling receptacles, water hydrants, utility and sewage hookups, outdoor rinsing showers, benches, telescopes, and peri-

scopes are less stringent than the 2007 Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. Scoping requirements for accessible picnic tables and grills are reduced from 50% to 20%. Benches will now only be required to have adjacent clear floor space for companion wheelchair seating, but no longer be required to have a back support and at least one arm rests. At least 20% of each type of outdoor constructed feature provided within a viewing area will be required to be accessible. There are technical provisions for outdoor rinsing showers and new requirements for routes over beach dunes. Lastly, and for the first time ever in Access Board rulemaking, the Draft



The accessibility guidelines are for outdoor developed areas managed by federal agencies.

Guidelines distinguish between the use of various surface materials including asphalt, concrete, boards and other surfaces.

Designers who work on outdoor settings are encouraged to become familiar with the new Draft Guidelines and continue to follow the rulemaking process including the expected issuance of the guidelines as a Final Rule (www.access-board.gov). More importantly, designers are encouraged to look for opportunities to design beyond the minimum requirements using the principles of universal design. More frequent resting intervals along trails where people can stop, sit down at a bench, catch their breath or simply enjoy the view are examples where universal design can positively affect the overall recreation experience. Design of picnic areas in numbers greater than the accessible minimum enables people more choices to gather and recreate. 

The National Center on Accessibility has a collection of examples of universal design applied to outdoor recreation environments available at www.ncaonline.org.

The Draft Final guidelines permit the trail to have a conditional exception at that segment of trail affected by the terrain, then beyond the segment it would be required to comply with the technical provisions once again.

UNIVERSAL
Accessibility and the Americans with Disabilities Act
DESIGN

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Baldwin House, from page 4

“Rather than a closed-in closet, we opened up parts of the wall and left the top open so that you can see out in all directions yet the space feels cozy,” he says.

Baldwin became interested in universal design as an architectural student in 1992 when he took a class in which he helped design a vacation home for family with a daughter who was paralyzed. “The challenge of designing spaces to be both beautiful and accessible intrigued me, and I realized that I felt better about helping people through design, as opposed to just making pretty buildings,” says Baldwin.

The reaction to the house has been positive, he says. People have called it “welcoming” and “alive.” “Nobody thinks of it as being an accessible house,” he says. “They see it as just a very nice and well-designed house.”

Including universal design features in a house doesn’t cost significantly more money, says Baldwin. The additional features added approximately .5% to the cost of his home. “Some people might argue that the induction cooktop,

curbless showers, and slightly roomier bathrooms are extra costs associated with universal design. I tend to think they are just part of the cost of a custom home though, since most people who are building custom homes would want those or similar features,” he says.

Baldwin is confident that universal design is catching on, “I think that once a few more universally designed houses are built and publicized, the notions of UD’s benefits will be more prevalent in builders’ and consumers’ minds. I am already noticing an increasing awareness of universal design and aging-in-place issues in the design and construction industries. I predict that the average consumer is going to start asking more and more for features that accommodate a wider range of people, especially as the Baby Boomer population gets a little older,” he says.

To see more images and features of Emory Baldwin’s Green Lake house, visit “Newsletter Extras” at www.UniversalDesign.com and www.UniversalDesignCaseStudies.org 

The additional features added approximately .5% to the cost of his home.

Emory Baldwin, AIA

Where Are They Now?, from page 2

clients, participants at a conference, or an audience at a presentation.

The biggest adjustment to going from the Federal government to consulting...? No ‘peeps.’ Those of us working in an individual office don’t have cohorts just down the hall, for a chat or for tossing around an idea -- and there’s no one standing by to recover a lost document, un-jam the copier, or proofread work. But now I see my professional environment as one much broader than the four physical walls of my office: it embraces my professional colleagues in the organizations I work with (especially the National Association of ADA Coordinators and the Association for Higher Education and Disabilities or AHEAD), my clients, other consultants (the best mentors!), the people I worked

with at DOJ and other agencies, and the others I’ve met in a number of settings. So the ‘peeps’ and the connections are there, whether it’s a ‘virtual’ presence through email and listservs, or person-to-person through phone calls and conferences.

This is an exciting time to be a consultant in the disability rights arena. It’s probably reasonable to think that by the latter half of 2010 we’ll have final revised DOJ rules for Title II and Title III of the ADA, with new accessibility standards. Those rules will renew interest in the ADA and point us in a new direction with physical and communication access. But as consultants we’ll have to be sure we give accurate and unbiased information based on a thorough understanding of the new publications – we have to be ready to give good guidance on how to go about understanding the maze of regulations and guidelines, and how to apply them in a time of reduced resources.” 

If you know someone you would like to see featured in this column, contact UDN at publisher@universalDesign.com

Lids Off™ Jar Opener Deluxe

Black & Decker has introduced a new device to assist people in opening jars. With the Lids Off Jar Opener Deluxe, the user simply depresses the handle to open almost any size jar in one simple operation. Its compact design makes the jar opener easy to store; and its black and stainless-steel exterior complements any kitchen décor. According to the manufacturer, no hand strength or strenuous twisting required.



Jar opener

Load ‘N Go Power Hatch Assist

The Load ‘N Go Power Hatch Assist is a power car door opener and closer. This unit automatically opens and closes rear hatch doors. It mounts to existing door hardware and comes with a hidden magnetic switch and latch release. It can be used on selected vehicles from Daimler Chrysler/Dodge, General Motors, Ford/Lincoln, as



Hatch opener

well as the Honda Odyssey, Kia Sedona, Mazda MPV, Nissan Quest, Toyota Sienna and Volkswagen Eurovan. The unit comes with a radio remote control hatch operator with two keychain transmitters.

Talking Thermostat

The Talking Thermostat, model VIP 1000, is a voice output thermostat designed for use by individuals who are blind or have low vision. This programmable thermostat has voice output to guide the user through set-up and temperature options.

It also includes a display with oversized LCD (liquid crystal display) characters. Verbal guidance is provided for every step of the programming



Talking Thermostat

process. Dirty filter and low battery warnings and temperature and settings reports are provided verbally and displayed. Programming instructions can be entered before wall mounting. Any programmed temperature can be overridden, with the system being automatically reset. A five-minute delay prevents short cycling damage. The thermostat is designed for 24-volt central air conditioning and heating systems.

It comes with a set of instructions available in large print, audio cassette, or on a floppy disk that can be used with a computer text-to-speech program.

Disney, from page 1

The judge found that the particular named plaintiffs can and sometimes do use wheelchairs and scooters, that for them the use of Segways was a preference, and that use of Segways was not necessary for access to the park. He found that they therefore lacked standing to challenge the Segway ban under the provision of the ADA that formed the basis for the lawsuit: that public accommodations make “reasonable modifications” that are “necessary” for a disabled individual to be afforded access.

US District Court Judge Gregory A. Presnell said in his opinion that “the Court’s power to recognize new devices under the ADA... is not without limit and must comport with the statutory and regulatory framework.”

In dicta (the part of the opinion that is not binding), he recognized the ADA’s concerns

with protecting against stigma and noted the possibility that another provision of the ADA might protect “equal treatment and human dignity” and provide the relief sought.

Both Disney and a disability advocacy group have claimed victory in the case. “This is a victory for disability rights and we are heartened by the court’s findings,” said Jerry Kerr, President of Disability Rights Advocates for Technology (DRAFT).

“But Disney’s policy on Segways still stands. We call on the Walt Disney Company to voluntarily change its policy and recognize the rights of disabled people to use the assistive device which best meets their needs.”

While the judge dismissed the case against Disney, observers believe that the policy will be challenged again.

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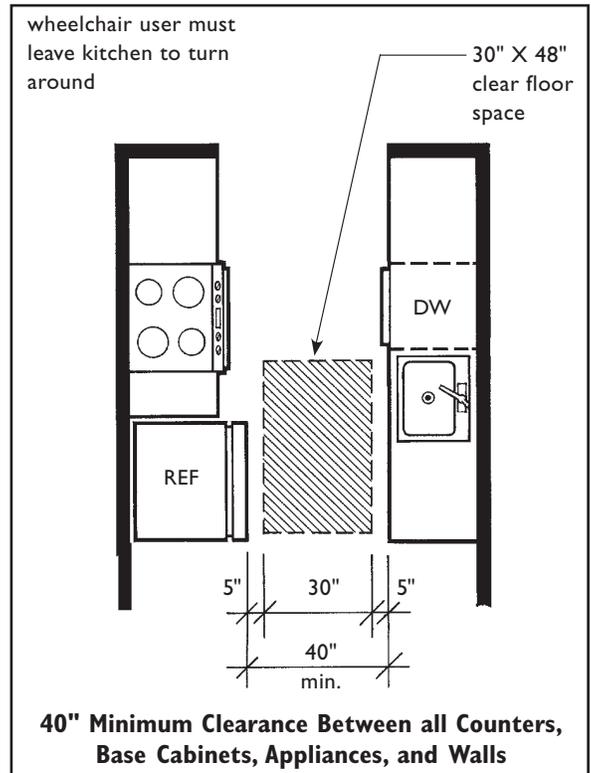


The FHA in the Kitchen

Welcome to *Universal Design Newsletter Aha! Moments*. Students of Universal Design know that “no one knows it all.” Those in the field occasionally come across technical accessibility criteria anomalies that evoke an **Aha! Moment**. This column seeks to identify those surprising criteria and present opinions as to their intent. We welcome your discoveries as well. If you have comments or other examples of strange things you have found in the technical standards that made you scratch your head or otherwise change your mind -- send them to us at publisher@universaldesign.com.

In the Fair Housing Act, it is required that kitchens, including galley-types, have a 40-inch minimum clear width between all counters, base cabinets, walls, and appliances. Be particularly mindful of the refrigerator especially if the original kitchen design assumed a shallow-depth refrigerator only to be replaced later by a standard depth one. Also, some refrigerators have ice makers that may have an external in-line filter. This means the refrigerator may require extra clearance at the rear thereby pushing the unit out from the wall and possibly encroaching the 40-inch wide minimum clearance.

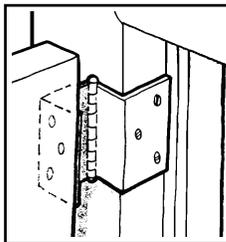
Be particularly mindful of the refrigerator especially if the original kitchen design assumed a shallow-depth refrigerator only to be replaced later by a standard depth one.



FHA Manual

DESIGN TIP

PROBLEM: Some existing doors may be a little too narrow to meet the 32" clear width dimension required by accessibility codes or the actual dimensions of a person's wheelchair.



Swingclear hinge

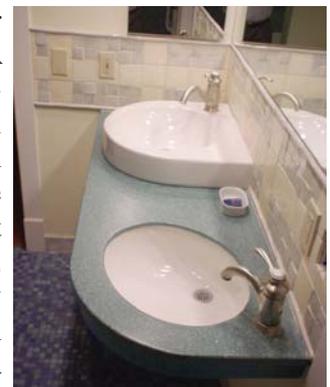
TIP: Replace the existing standard hinges with swingclear hinges that will increase the clear opening of the doorway to the maximum width available between the door stops on the frame.

PROBLEM: Some existing doorways, may have inadequate clear floor area, free of the door swing to allow a person with a walker or a wheelchair to easily open the door.

TIP: Replace the swinging door with a pocket door that slides into the wall.

PROBLEM: How can lavatories accommodate both short and tall people?

TIP: In the “Home for the Next 50 Years” kitchen and bath designer Jane Langmuir, AIA has developed designs that provide dual height lavatories in the bathrooms. In one bath, a design concept of John P. S. Salmen, AIA provides a shallow lavatory/counter with a high utility sink in a single concrete counter.



Dual height lavatory

In a second bath, a lavatory is undermounted in a low solid phenolic countertop with an adjacent surface mounted lavatory on top of the counter for tall users. The designs make handwashing easy for a variety of users including standing adults or small children.

Access Board and Regional ADA Centers Conduct Webinar Series

Free webinars and audio conference are now being offered by the US Transportation & Barriers Compliance Board (Access Board). In the coming year, the Access Board will conduct a series of webinars and audio conferences on accessibility topics in cooperation with the national network of regional ADA Centers.

“The Board is eager to use the web to expand its training services and to reach a wider audience,” said Peggy Greenwell, the Access Board’s training coordinator. “Webinars and audio conferences provide an exceptionally cost-effective and convenient alternative to on-site training.”

Questions or requested webinar subjects should be directed to Peggy Greenwell at training@access-board.gov, 202-272-0017 (v), or 202-272-0082 (TTY). [ADA Centers](#)

Web-Based Screen Reader

A web-based screen reader, designed to convert website text to audio output has been developed by a graduate student at the University of Washington.

WebAnywhere is free online and requires no special software to be installed and, therefore, enables people who want audio access to the web to gain it from any computer that has a sound card, according to its developer. “WebAnywhere will run on any machine, even heavily locked-down public terminals, regardless of what operating system it is running and regardless of what browsers are installed,” according to the

website. “WebAnywhere does not seek to replace existing screen readers - it has some big limitations, namely that it will not provide access to desktop applications like word processors or spreadsheets.”

Visit www.wa.cs.washington.edu to access WebAnywhere directly.

New Accessible Transit Online Course

A new continuing education course on accessible transit facilities and the revised Americans with Disabilities Act/Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Guidelines (2004 ADAAG) is being offered by the Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access (the IDEa Center).

The course will introduce participants to the minimum requirements for accessibility at transportation facilities covered under the US Department of Transportation regulations. Using the recently revised 2004 ADAAG, the course, entitled “Accessible Transit Facility Design & The Revised ADA-ABA Accessibility Guidelines” provides an overview of the accessibility requirements that affect transportation facilities that fall under US DOT jurisdiction. It contains podcasts, readings, quizzes, an exercise and online discussions. Registration is available until Jan. 12, 2010. The course will begin Jan. 18, 2010.

AIA members will receive 15 Learning Hours (1.5 CEUs). For more information about the course, visit www.ap.buffalo.edu/idea. If you have any questions, contact Jordana Maisel (jlmaisel@buffalo.edu or 716.829.3485 x329). 

“WebAnywhere will run on any machine, even heavily locked-down public terminals, regardless of what operating system it is running and regardless of what browsers are installed.”

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- At least one accessible guest room with a one-meter door, “suitable low height furniture, low peep hole, cupboard to have sliding doors with low clothes hangers, etc. Room to have audible and visible (blinking light) alarm system.”

- The guest bathroom with a one-meter sliding door as well as “suitable fixtures like low wash basin, low height toilet, grab bars, etc. No bath is required.”

- A unisex public restroom with a low height urinal (24” maximum) with grab bars. Minimum

door width of one-meter. One, two and three Star hotels are to introduce this feature by the September deadline.

According to Scott Rains, Rolling Rains Report, AccessAbility, a New Delhi consulting firm founded by Shivani Gupta participated in the development of the new system.

The guidelines took a year to develop and were issued July 23, 2009. For more information, visit: www.incredibleindia.org/newsite/pdf/Guidelines_for_classification_of_Hotels.pdf 

Jan. 11-13, 2010: US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board Meeting, Washington, DC. Contact: www.access-board.gov/about/meetings.htm

Jan. 19-22, 2010: International Builders Show, Las Vegas, NV. This mega trade show will feature universal design sessions for home builders, developers, dealers, and distributors. **John P. S. Salmen** will be speaking on a panel discussing universal and green design in single family and multi-family homes. Contact: www.BuildersShow.com

Feb. 4-5, 2010: Keeping Up and Keeping It Legal: How to Manage Physical Access Issues on Campus..., New Orleans, LA. Organized by Association on Higher Education and Disability Management Institute (AHEAD) and geared toward disability service, resource, and ADA professionals in higher education. Contact: www.ahead.org or 704.947.7779

March 8-10, 2010: US Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board Meeting, Washington, DC. Contact: www.access-board.gov/about/meetings.htm

March 8-12, 2010: A Universal Approach to Interpretive Planning, Programs and Design, San Antonio, TX. National Center on Accessibility Course that focuses on methods and techniques for developing programs and exhibits that benefit people of all abilities. Contact: www.ncaonline.org

April 19-22, 2010: National Association of ADA Coordinators National Conference, Miami, FL. Training for architects, engineers, ADA coordinators, attorneys on access, services and design. Contact: www.jan.wvu.edu/NAADAC or 888.679.7227 ext. 1

June 2010: The 12th International Conference on Mobility and Transport for Elderly and Disabled Persons (TRANSED 2010), Hong Kong. The theme will be "Sustainable Transport and Travel for All." The conference is hosted by the Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation. Contact: www.globalride-sf.org/newsletters/0806.pdf

April 28-29, 2010: 21st Century Trails, Bradford Woods, Martinsville, IN. This National Center on Accessibility course will focus on creating the accessible recreational experience for people with disabilities and their companions through the planning, design, construction and maintenance processes. Contact: www.ncaonline.org

Oct. 9-12, 2010: Universal Design Summit 4: Creating Universal Homes & Communities, St. Louis, MO. The goal of this national conference is to bring about community integration, participation and enhancement of the independence of all people. Contact: www.UDInstitute.org

Oct. 30-Nov. 3, 2010: The 3rd International Conference for Universal Design, Hamamatsu City. This conference will be hosted by the International Association for Universal Design (IAUD). Contact: www.iaud.net/en/event/090731.html

Events to be placed in the UDN Calendar must be submitted to the editor one month before the publication date.

Universal Design Newsletter

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