

WVATS

West Virginia Assistive Technology System Newsletter

UNIVERSAL DESIGN

**Register Now to Attend
Universal Design
Today Conference**

May 15-17, 2017

Universal Design

-Page 1

Powerful Tools

-Page 3

Farm and Garden

-Page 5

Universal Design

“Universal Design” (UD) is defined as “the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design”.



Here are some examples of universal design elements for homes and products:

- A wide door with sensors that trigger it to open when someone approaches
- A door lever (instead of a knob) that can be opened using light pressure
- An accessible pathway and no step entry into a single level home
- A double-cut key that can easily be inserted into a keyhole either way
- A switch or app that controls your environment, e.g., turning on/off or dimming the lights
- A keyless dashboard button or remote control that starts a car
- Large kitchen and laundry appliances with front controls and access doors
- A touch lamp that can be operated without a switch
- An automated bank machine that has visual, audible and tactile access options
- A moving sidewalk in an airport
- An “undo” option in word processing software that lets you fix mistakes by going back a number of steps
- Scissors made for people who are right-handed or left handed
- Height adjustable tables, desks and chairs

Assistive technology (AT) and universal design are different concepts that can blend together. Assistive technology is for an individual’s use, while universal design is for all people’s use. Ron Mace, who created the term “Universal Design”, explained the difference this way: “Assistive technology to me is really personal use devices—those things focused on the individual—things that compensate or help one function with a disability”. He said, “An example of assistive technology is my wheelchair. I need it as an individual. It is not a consumer product. It’s for me.” On the other hand, he said, “Universal design broadly defines the user... Its focus is not specifically on people with disabilities, but all people”.



There are 7 Principles of Universal Design that can be applied to designing accessible facilities, ensuring effective communication and making safer, user-friendly products and services. For more information, visit the Center for Universal Design at www.ncsu.edu/ncsu/design/cud/index.htm.

Universal Design Today Conference

“Design to attract. Design to empower. Design for All”. “Universal Design Today” is a cutting edge national conference coming to West Virginia on May 15-17, 2017, at the Charleston Civic Center.

Conference planners are inviting West Virginia residents, housing stakeholders, community planners and others to join in the discussion about the benefits and opportunities universal design holds for how we live and learn in the 21st century.

“UD is widely acknowledged by top educators, designers, technologists, product developers and business leaders as the best approach to create a world that is more user friendly and attractive to everyone.”

-Richard Duncan, RL
Mace Universal Design Institute

The conference will feature keynote speakers, breakout sessions and interactive workshops in partnership with national and state organizations like AARP West Virginia, Habitat for Humanity, CAST, the Ron Mace Universal Design Institute and others. There will be four tracts: housing, education, community design and product design.

During the event, the local community will transform into a design laboratory. Tours of sites in the Charleston area will focus on helping people understand the economic and social benefits of UD. Participants will have the opportunity to delve into the city of Charleston, WV, visiting schools, residential areas and public space community projects that have been universally designed.

A variety of sponsorship and registration packages are available. To learn more about how you can take part, call: **800-841-8436** or **619-865-5132** or visit **universaldesign.today**.

Fair Housing & Advertising

Most people look for available housing in their local newspaper, housing property magazine or an online website. No matter where you are looking, you should be looking for the official HUD logo as part of the ad.



Almost everyone is familiar with the HUD Equal Housing Opportunity logo. What many people may not know is that the use of the logo, or the statement *“Equal Housing Opportunity”* is required by the Fair Housing Act. The slogan is the acceptable version. In any case, the ad must contain one or the other.

The Fair Housing Act also is very clear on the words used in the ads. Ads cannot contain any words that might be considered to exclude people in a protected class. This includes references to race, religion, color, sex, familial status, national origin or disability. For instance, ads cannot contain words like “black,” “white,” “Christian,” “Hispanic,” “single,” “women only” or “no children. An ad can say that a property is accessible.

Ads also should not mention a location that might imply the property is only open to one specific group. Phrases like “near the Catholic elementary school” or “across the street from the synagogue” cannot be used.

If you have any questions or need additional information, contact the West Virginia Fair Housing Action Network (WV-FHAN) at **844-212-3464**, or visit the website at **www.wvfairhousing.org**.



Kwikset SmartCode Door Lever

With the Kwikset SmartCode Door Lever, you can unlock your door with a personalized access code or a key. Lock it by touching the center button or set it to lock automatically after 30 seconds. This item has a lever instead of a knob for easier access. The SmartCode keypad is backlit for better visibility. Some models have environmental control options using Home Connect Technology, that allows remote locking features.

For more information, visit www.lowes.com, www.kwikset.com or call 800-327-LOCK (5625).

Amazon Echo featuring Alexa

The Amazon Echo is a smart speaker with hands-free voice control and voice output. The Amazon Echo can instantly provide information, news, sports scores, weather and music. Alexa also reads audiobooks. You can use Echo to control lights, switches, thermostats and fans with compatible smart home plug devices from companies like Philips Hue, Nest and Ecobee. This product line also includes Echo Dot (hands-free) and Echo Tap (touch activated), each of which has a different combination of common and unique features.

To learn more, visit amazon.com.

Electrolux Front Load Washer and Dryer

The Electrolux front load washer and dryer have front controls to make them easier to reach. Each appliance sits on a pedestal base to make it easier for a person who is standing or sitting to reach the door and controls more easily. The pedestals have drawers for laundry detergent storage. This washer and dryer combination has round doors that open away from each other so you can transfer clothes from the washer to the dryer easily.

To learn more, call 877-435-3287 or visit www.electroluxappliances.com.





Philips Hue Wireless Lighting System

The Philips Hue wireless lighting system provides a way to control and personalize your lights. The system begins with a starter kit that works with up to 50 lights, switches, luminaires and other accessories. The system uses energy-efficient LED lights that can be controlled with a smart phone app. The app has a schedule function to set lights to turn on or off at a pre-set time or for away-from-home control options.

To learn more, visit www2.meethue.com/en-us.

Nest Thermostat

The Nest thermostat can adjust the temperature on its own based on preferred heating and cooling settings. It can also be controlled from any location using a smartphone, tablet or laptop. The Nest app works with iOS 8 or later devices and Android 4.1 or later devices. The thermostat has a large display that automatically turns on when someone walks into the room. To save energy, the Nest will turn itself off when no one is home.

For more information, visit www.nest.com or call 855-469-6378.



Delta Touch20 Faucet

Delta Faucet has designed a series of residential hands-free faucets called Delta Touch20. This line includes bathroom and kitchen faucets. Users can activate the faucets by touching anywhere on the spout or handle rather than gripping a knob. This faucet series makes it easier for people to switch the faucet on and off while preparing food or activate it with dirty, sticky hands. The touch feature can also be helpful for people with grip, reach, dexterity or strength limitations.

For more information, call 800-345-DELTA (3358) or visit www.deltafaucet.com.



Universal Design

Ideas for the Farm

Universal Design (UD) concepts can be used on the farm to offer a safer environment and make agricultural tasks easier for everyone to perform. UD ideas can be applied to different aspects of the farm, like pathways, vehicles, garage, tool sheds, livestock facilities, feedlots and garden areas. Here are some ideas for making an agricultural environment easier for everyone to access:

- Make wide accessible pathways for pedestrians and vehicles
- Make step-free entrances or add ramps with appropriate rise
- Add more general lighting and task lighting in key areas
- Use remote-control operated overhead doors
- Install non-slip surfaces in areas that frequently get wet
- Use rear vision cameras on heavy equipment, eg, trucks, tractors and harvesters
- Use bump gates so you do not have to get out of the vehicle
- Add mirrors along common paths of travel for better visibility
- Use multi-height or adjustable workbenches
- Place anti-fatigue mats in key work areas
- Provide stand/lean stools for doing tasks that require long periods of standing
- Mount switches and outlets on the front of workbenches so they are easier to reach
- Use pneumatic or battery operated power tools
- Build raised garden beds
- Buy new hand tools, long handled tools and equipment with ergonomic design and safety features
- Use a grass or gravel core grid for ground stability (see picture above)
- Adapt necessary tools and equipment with ergonomic adaptations and approved safety features
- Use large “D” or “L” style handles on barn doors and gates
- Store items on variable height shelves
- Use visual and tactile labeling
- Use mobile tool storage and utility carts
- Install lever or hands-free faucets on sinks
- Position sinks at an accessible height so person can sit or stand while using them
- Use garden kneelers, stools and kneepads for working at ground level
- Add drip irrigation to raised garden beds for easier watering
- Grow plants in a high tunnel for a longer growing season and better control over weather conditions

Swift-Hitch

The Swift-Hitch is a wireless camera system that comes with a handheld display unit and a mountable camera. This system was originally designed to help drivers back up trailers, and may also be used as an inspection camera. The display unit can be operated with one hand, and has a 2.5 inch full color LCD display screen. The camera has a transmission distance of 300 feet and a night vision viewing range of 15 feet. It has a magnetic camera base for quick mounting on the back of your truck. The camera and the display use built-in, rechargeable lithium-ion batteries.



To learn more, visit www.swifthitch.com or call 617-600-8282.

Radius Pro Tool Ergonomic Garden Set



The Radius Pro Tool Ergonomic Set comes with five ergonomic long handled tools for a broad spectrum of gardening needs. The set includes a shovel, digging fork, transplanter, weeder and edger. Each item has a stainless steel tool head

and fiberglass shaft. The digging tools have flat ledges on the tool head to help with leverage when you step down it. Each tool has an "O" shaped handle that is easier to grip from a variety of angles. The handle is covered with a thermoplastic grip for better shock absorption and longer tool lifespan.

For more information, visit www.radiusgarden.com or call 734-222-8044.

National Small Farm Conference

In September, staff representing the Green Thumbs, Healthy Joints (GTHJs) and WV AgrAbility programs attended the National Small Conference in Virginia. Carmen Fullmer and Inetta Fluharty shared an information booth with program resources.



Fluharty presented a session on apps that can be useful in agriculture, and shared personal experiences as a West Virginia farmer. Fullmer gave a poster presentation about the Green Thumbs, Healthy Joints program during two one-hour sessions. Conference attendees went on a variety of agri-business tours, e.g., a winery, a marine science laboratory and an aqua farm for clams and oysters.

Green Thumbs, Healthy Joints Winter Review

This winter, Green Thumbs, Healthy Joints (GTHJs) program is reviewing information from accessible gardening projects from the 2016 growing season. For example, the Homestead Farm Center shared that they established a new 50-foot square fenced garden. A local eighth grade class helped construct raised garden beds. The facility also installed a "smooth crushed limestone sand footing around the beds [which] made it easy for our participants with mobility issues to walk in the garden". They added, "The participants were able to harvest lettuce, tomatoes, green beans and cucumbers during the program and used them to prepare a healthy lunch."

GTHJs is also reviewing project applications received for the upcoming growing season, and will make its selections soon. GTHJs is excited about 2017, which will mark of 10 years of growing together through accessible gardening.

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All printed materials are available in braille, electronic format, CD and large print. WVU is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution.

The Center for Excellence in Disabilities (CED) is designated as the State's lead agency for assistive technology services.

WVU CED/WVATS/1/2017

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People with Disabilities Work: Employment Advocacy Programs

Do you have a disability? Do you want to work? Is there a barrier that prevents you from working? Are you unable to find the necessary training? Do you need a workplace accommodation? Are you experiencing workplace discrimination?

The **Client Assistance Program (CAP)** helps people receive services from the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (WVDRS) or a Center for Independent Living (CIL). CAP can also provide information about employment rights.

The **Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS)**

assists individuals who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits break down the barriers to employment.



WVA wants to help:

- If you are having trouble getting services from the WVDRS, a CIL or an Employment Network (EN) providing services under the Ticket to Work.
- If you want to appeal a denial of services from the WVDRS, a CIL, or an EN.
- If you think your services have been delayed, interrupted or stopped without cause.
- If you are having difficulty getting a transition plan from school to work.
- If you have been denied employment opportunities.

Please call WVA at **800-950-5250** if you have any questions about transitioning from school to work, gaining employment or returning to work.