

## Aging in Place

### Appliances:

- microwave oven in wall or on counter;
- refrigerator and freezer side by side;
- side-swing or wall oven;
- controls that are easy to read;
- raised washing machine and dryer;
- front-loading washing machines;
- raised dishwasher with push-button controls;
- stoves having electric cooktops with level burners for safely transferring between the burners; front controls and downdraft feature to pull heat away from user; light to indicate when surface is hot; and
- replace old stoves with induction cooktops to help prevent burns.

### Bathroom:

- fold-down seat installed in the shower;
- adjustable showerheads with 6-foot hose;
- light in shower stall;
- wall support, and provision for adjustable and/or varied-height counters and removable base cabinets;
- contrasting color edge border at countertops;
- at least one wheelchair-maneuverable bath on main level;
- bracing in walls around tub, shower, shower seat and toilet for installation of grab bars;
- if stand-up shower is used in main bath, it is curbless and wide;
- low bathtub;
- toilet higher than standard toilet, or height-adjustable;
- design of the toilet paper holder allows rolls to be changed with one hand;
- wall-hung sink with knee space and panel to protect user from pipes; and
- slip-resistant flooring in bathroom and shower.

### Counters:

- base cabinet with roll-out trays;
- pull-down shelving;
- wall support, and provision for adjustable and/or varied-height counters and removable base cabinets;
- upper wall cabinetry lower than conventional height;
- accented stripes on edge of countertops to provide visual orientation to the workspace;
- counter space for dish landing adjacent to or opposite all appliances;
- glass-front cabinet doors; and
- open shelving for easy access to frequently used items.

**Exterior:**

- low-maintenance exterior (vinyl, brick, etc); and
- low-maintenance shrubs and plants.

**Entry:**

- sensor light at exterior no-step entry focusing on the front-door lock;
- non-slip flooring in foyer;
- accessible path of travel to the home;
- at least one no-step entry with a cover;
- entry door sidelight or high/low peep hole viewer; sidelight should provide both privacy and safety;
- doorbell in accessible location; and
- a surface on which to place packages while opening door.

**Electrical, Lighting, Safety and Security:**

- install new smoke and CO detectors
- install automated lighting, an emergency alert system, or a video-monitoring system
- easy-to-see and read thermostats
- light switches by each entrance to halls and rooms
- light receptacles with at least two bulbs in vital places (exits, bathroom)
- light switches, thermostats and other environmental controls placed in accessible locations no higher than 48 inches from floor
- move electrical cords out of the flow of traffic
- replace standard light switches with rocker or touch-light switches
- pre-programmed thermostats.

**Faucets:**

- thermostatic or anti-scald controls;
- lever handles or pedal-controlled; and
- pressure-balanced faucets.

**Flooring:**

- if carpeted, use low-density with firm pad;
- smooth, non-glare, slip-resistant surfaces, interior and exterior; and
- color and texture contrast to indicate change in surface levels.

**Hallways:**

- wide;
- well-lit; and
- fasten down rugs and floor runners, and remove any that are not necessary.

**Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning:**

- install energy-efficient units;
- HVAC should be designed so filters are easily accessible; and
- windows that can be opened for cross-ventilation and fresh air.

**Miscellaneous:**

- 30-inch by 48-inch clear space at appliances, or 60-inch diameter clear space for turns;
- multi-level work areas to accommodate cooks of different heights;
- loop handles for easy grip and pull;
- pull-out spray faucet;
- levered handles;
- in multi-story homes, laundry chute or laundry facilities in master bedroom;
- open under-counter seated work areas; and
- placement of task lighting in appropriate work areas.

**Overall Floor Plan:**

- main living on a single story, including full bath;
- 5-foot by 5-foot clear turn space in living area, kitchen, a bedroom and a bathroom; and
- no steps between rooms on a single level.

**Reduced Maintenance and Convenience Features:**

- easy-to-clean surfaces;
- built-in recycling system;
- video phones;
- central vacuum;
- built-in pet feeding system; and
- intercom system.

**Stairways, Lifts and Elevators:**

- adequate hand rails on both sides of stairway;
- residential elevator or lift; and
- increased visibility of stairs through contrast strip on top and bottom stairs, and color contrast between treads and risers on stairs with use of lighting.

**Storage:**

- lighting in closets;
- adjustable closet rods and shelves; and
- easy-open doors that do not obstruct access.

**Windows:**

- plenty of windows for natural light;
- low-maintenance exterior and interior finishes;
- lowered windows, or taller windows with lower sill height; and
- easy-to-operate hardware.