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INNOVATORS

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think about aging*

Lifelong Housing

What is Lifelong Housing?

The Rogue Valley Council of Governments, in collaboration with AARP Oregon has developed a standard to assess the accessibility of homes. This program, called Lifelong Housing, covers new construction as well as remodeled dwellings.

Why is this needed?

With a rapidly increasing population of older adults in Southern Oregon the need for safe, accessible housing is certain to grow. According to a recent Harvard University report the five most important “universal design” features of an accessible home are: no-step entries, extra-wide hallways, accessible living spaces on the ground floor and accessible light switches and door levers. The report cites survey data showing only one percent of the housing units in America have all five of these features.

How does the program work?

Builders and remodelers can obtain a free copy of the Lifelong Housing Certification Checklist from the Rogue Valley Council of Governments Senior and Disabilities Services office in Central Point or on line at www.rvcog.org. The checklist has three levels with each level having a series of required items and a number of optional items. The levels are:

Level 1: Visitability – Is the main level of the dwelling accessible to visitors in wheelchairs. This includes no-step entrance and an accessible bathroom

Level 2: Fully Accessible – This means the central living area is accessible for lifelong living meaning a person in a wheelchair can perform all personal and housekeeping functions.

Level 3: Enhanced Accessibility – This level includes all the level 2 requirements but the home has been customized for personalized accessibility.

Who actually does the certifying of the dwelling?

An independent certifier is engaged to conduct an assessment of the dwelling to determine if it meets the standard. Once completed the certifier submits their findings to RVCOG which issues the certificate. The total cost is less than \$200.

What is the value of the certification?

The certification provides independent assurance that the dwelling will meet the accessibility needs of the resident now and in the future.