



NEWS RELEASE

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HUD grant funds free ICC/USA Fair Housing workshops

The International Code Council and United Spinal Association are offering free workshops to educate the construction industry about Fair Housing requirements. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded the partnering organizations an Education and Outreach Initiatives Grant to help ensure that more apartments and condominiums are built accessible to people with disabilities. The two organizations are collaborating on the project with the endorsement of the National Association of Homebuilders (NAHB).

“When you incorporate accessibility requirements into apartments and other multi-family residential facilities during the construction process, the cost is minimal yet the benefit to people with disabilities is enormous,” said ICC President Henry L. Green. “The International Building Code already addresses the Fair Housing requirements. By working with the United Spinal Association and NAHB, we can educate builders about accessibility and significantly improve housing opportunities for the thousands of people with disabilities across the nation.”

The program will educate homebuilders, contractors, realtors, design professionals and code enforcement officials, disability and fair housing advocates, and state and local governments of the regulations and requirements of the Fair Housing Act, the Fair Housing Act Accessibility Guidelines, and the ICC/ANSI A117.1 Standard on Accessible and Useable Buildings and Facilities.

“Access to housing is critical to access to jobs and living independently,” said United Spinal Association Executive Director Gerard Kelly. “Education about building codes is a key element in removing some of the unnecessary challenges faced daily by people with disabilities.”

The grant will also be used to encourage the adoption and enforcement of model building codes that are consistent with the Fair Housing Act, and the construction of multifamily dwellings that meet those regulations.

A HUD-commissioned study found that if builders comply with the Fair Housing Act during construction, multifamily dwelling-unit costs rise only about one-half of one percent. However, remodeling a building that has already been constructed can cost a great deal more.

(MORE)

ICC/USA HUD Grant /Add One

For more information and to download a brochure about the program, including dates and locations of the free workshops, visit www.iccsafe.org/safety/fairhousing.

Enacted in 1968 and amended in 1988, the Fair Housing Act applies to apartments and condominiums and requires that public and common areas are accessible to persons with disabilities. Guidelines address many aspects of construction, including widths of doors and hallways; location of light switches, thermostats and environmental controls; reinforcement of bathroom walls for installation of grab bars, and kitchens and bathrooms that are usable by people in wheelchairs.

The International Code Council, a membership association dedicated to building safety and fire prevention, develops the codes used to construct residential and commercial buildings, including homes and schools. Most U.S. cities, counties and states that adopt codes choose the International Codes developed by the International Code Council. To learn more about the International Code Council, please visit www.iccsafe.org.

United Spinal Association was founded in 1946 by veterans with spinal cord injuries to help enable members, as well as others with disabilities, to lead full and productive lives. The Association participated in drafting the Americans with Disabilities Act and other civil rights laws, and continues to promote their enforcement. United Spinal's Accessibility Services program is devoted exclusively to making our built environment accessible to people with disabilities; it is the cutting edge of United Spinal Association's commitment to guaranteeing the civil rights of all citizens to fully participate in our culture and our society. United Spinal actively participates in developing accessibility requirements at the local, state and federal level. For more information, please visit www.accessibility-services.com.

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