e-ACCESS

Your accessible route to fire and life safety information for people with disabilities.

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Inside this Issue

1 "What's On Second?"

3 A Wind Of Change-Disability and the Fire Service.

4 Eighth ANSI-HSSP Plenary, October 21, 2009

5 Communication! — Access for People with Visual Impairments

8 enABLED in Emergencies Conference Sept. 29-30, 2009

8 DLC hosts 30th Anniversary fundraiser, awards ceremony, and silent auction

9 JUST ASK!!!

12 DLC Continues Emergency Preparedness Project

“What’s on Second!”

By Allan B. Fraser, CBI, CPCA, Sr. Building Code Specialist, NFPA

I hope you enjoyed the “Who’s on First?” article in the last issue. I was re-reading it after it went out and I realized that there might be more to the story. It got me thinking about whether or not I knew what the word *evacuation* really means. I remembered reading a humorous, but thought provoking short story by James Thurber during my freshman year in college entitled “The Meaning of Words” and how it affected me at the time and apparently, still.

It’s ironic and synergistic that some forty years later I would be reminded of Thurber now that I do so much work related to people with disabilities. I did some research on Thurber hoping to get some material for this article. I found that not only was he was one of the outstanding American humorists of the twentieth century, known for his distinctively funny cartoons and short stories but as a young boy, he had lost sight in one of his eyes while playing "William Tell" with his brothers. It was an accident which eventually caused him to go completely blind later in life. Due to his eye injury, Thurber never completed a compulsory ROTC course and did not graduate from Ohio State, though he received a degree posthumously.

Though hampered by failing eyesight, Thurber wrote nearly forty books, including collections of essays, short stories, fables, and children's stories. He won a Tony Award for his popular Broadway play, *A Thurber Carnival*, in which he often starred as himself.

“Evacuation” might well be a word that Thurber would want analyze. It’s been used much more recently with all the natural disasters and terrorist attacks that have occurred around the world. But do we really know what it means? We all remember pictures of people being evacuated from New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina and first responders evacuating people from buildings on 9/11, but what does the word “evacuation” mean? Where does it come from? And what does it really mean to develop an evacuation plan?

From The Meriam-Webster Online Dictionary:

Main Entry: **evac·u·ate,** *transitive verb*

1 : to remove the contents of **:** empty
2 : to discharge from the body as waste **:** void
3 : to remove something (as gas or water) from especially by pumping
4 : a : to remove especially from a military zone or dangerous area

b : to withdraw from military occupation of

c : vacate <were ordered to *evacuate* the building>

The definition doesn't really fit our application until we get to 4, c and still it's not really quite right. So let's look at the definition of "vacate".

Main Entry: **va·cate,** *transitive verb*

1 : to make legally void **:** annul
2: a : to deprive of an incumbent or occupant
b : to give up the incumbency or occupancy of

Now we've got the right word for what we're talking about. We want people to prepare a plan **to give up the occupancy of** the building they're in, in the event of an emergency. We want people to prepare a plan to **vacate** the building they're in, in the event of an emergency.

Please understand that it's not my intent for everyone to stop using the term "emergency evacuation". I simply want us to change our mindset about "emergency evacuation". By definition "evacuation" is "to remove people from a dangerous area" which is certainly what Federal, State and Local governments need to plan for, but that's only half of what's needed.

The other half is what each one of us needs to do. We each need to create our own individual plan to "vacate" our home. In other words we need to plan for "giving up our occupancy".

It's like planning for a vacation, but much more serious in nature and much less frequent so we tend not to do it.

For each of us to vacate (give up our occupancy) we are essentially planning to relocate somewhere else for some period of time. We'd never go on vacation without our medications, ways of contacting friends and family so they know we're on vacation and taking credit cards, checks or cash for planned and unplanned expenses, plus more mundane things like clothes, games, etc. We should certainly do no less if we have to "evacuate", "vacate" or "give up our occupancy" in an emergency.

While we're at it, let's look at the definition of "vacation".

Main Entry: **va·ca·tion,**

1 : a respite or a time of respite from something **:** intermission

2 a : a scheduled period during which activity (as of a court or school) is suspended **b :** a period of exemption from work granted to an employee

3 : a period spent away from home or business in travel or recreation

4 : an act or an instance of vacating

"Evacuation" and "vacation" are virtually the same action, but action for very different reasons. One is for fun, the other is for survival. When we think about it, shouldn't we put at least the same amount of time and effort into planning for an evacuation as for a vacation? Each one of us must decide how we answer that question for our self and then act on it. Government simply can't do that for us!

Bill Scott, president of Abilities Unlimited and chair of NFPA's Disability Access Review and Advisory Committee (DARAC): "All people, regardless of circumstances, have some obligation to be prepared to take action during an emergency and to assume some responsibility for their own safety."

Think about the amount of time we spend getting ready for our vacations. Would we have that much time in an emergency? Obviously we don't and therefore that makes pre-planning for the possibility of an emergency evacuation even that much more important.

Confucius once said about learning, "If you read it, you will forget it. If you see it, you will remember it. But if you do it, you will understand it.

Let's all follow the advice of Confucius. Build an evacuation kit. Make an evacuation plan for yourself and your family. Don't let the next disaster catch you unprepared!

A Wind of Change – Disability and Fire Service

By Dr John Stolworthy, D.Sc FIFPO

It is pleasing to note that a dramatic change has taken place regarding people's general attitude toward disabled persons and their abilities, particularly in the field of fire fighting and fire safety.

We now find that a disablement will not be a great barrier to carrying out the employment or position you wish to hold. Both in the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as many other countries throughout the world, common sense has prevailed and a disability no longer prevents entry into employment or profession. Once in employment, safeguards are now in place to ensure that any disabling condition does not mean cessation of employment and reasonable steps must be taken to allow continuation of such employment.

We now have firefighters in the UK/ with prosthetic limbs doing very well in operational posts. There is a more positive outlook on all disability problems with a view to ensure the career of choice can be pursued and developed.

Today we have a multitude of adaptations and appliances to assist any disablement, and with the co- operation and help of the employer and Social Services there are not many obstacles that are insurmountable.

Of course none of this is possible without the positive attitude of the person with the disability toward their ability and the person(s) employing them. Any disabling condition should not be the end of the world, but the beginning of a new phase of your life.

I was a Fire Safety Officer with many years experience in both the local authority and industry. Some of the highlights of my career include receiving a medal from his Holiness the late, Pope John Paul II and a commendation for the removal of an incendiary explosive device which was destroyed under controlled conditions, taking a large piece of concrete with it. Once you have fire service in your blood it is hard to remove.

I contracted Multiple Sclerosis. I carried on as long as I could but eventually took early retirement. I am very privileged to belong to a professional institute that values the input of experience and they allowed me to remain in the voluntary post of Director or Education and Training.

Click for a copy of Dr. Stolworthy's "Fire Precautions and Disability".

Dr. John Stolworthy, D.Sc, FIFPO
Director of Education and Training
The Institute of Fire Prevention Officers
Incorporating the Institute of Fire Safety Officers.

Aims and Objectives of the Institute of Fire Prevention Officers (IFPO)

- To promote the advancement of fire safety education generally.
- To maintain high professional standards amongst members.
- To direct anyone with a need for fire safety information to those members with the skills and knowledge to satisfy that need.

- To bring together those members seeking a fire safety solution with those members or companies providing the means to satisfy that solution.
- To provide a forum for the purposes of reception and exchange, provision and dissemination of information.
- To encourage appraisal, evaluation, research and study in the field of fire safety
- To advise, inform and educate members in all aspects of the fire safety industry.
- To represent the interests of members on bodies and committees dealing with statutory controls, regulations, standards and codes of practice
- To forge links amongst advisors, specifiers, manufacturers and contractors for the better understanding of fire safety products and their correct applications
- To promote international liaison amongst fire safety professionals.

ANSI News and Publications

Eighth ANSI-HSSP Plenary was held October 21, 2009

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Homeland Security Standards Panel (HSSP) held its eighth annual plenary session on **October 21, 2009**, at the Marriott Renaissance Downtown in Washington, DC. This year's meeting had over 125 people registered and focused on homeland security standards and their business application in the private sector.

The ANSI-HSSP plenary provided a unique opportunity for the homeland security, emergency preparedness, and business continuity communities – including public sector, private sector, and standards developing organizations – to come together to discuss current issues and challenges, strategic approaches, recent successes, and future outlooks.

Allan B. Fraser, Staff Liaison to NFPA's Disability Access Review and Advisory Committee (DARAC) delivered a **presentation** on the Feb. 2009 Workshop on "Emergency Preparedness for Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs" jointly sponsored by the ANSI-HSSP and NFPA's DARAC.

Other speakers included Glenn Hedman, Chair of RESNA (The Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America) Standards Committee on Emergency Stair Travel Devices for Individuals with Disabilities. Mr. Hedman delivered a **presentation** on the RESNA standards committee on emergency stair travel devices used by individuals with disabilities.

All the presentations from the Plenary are posted on the plenary web page .

Communication! Communication! Communication! — Access for People with Visual Impairments

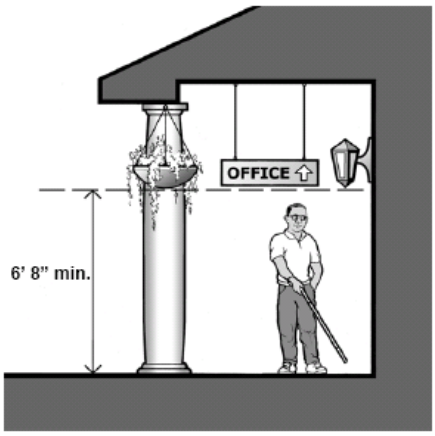
By Billie Louise (Beezy) Bentzen, Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist, Ph.D., Accessible Design for the Blind.

Accessibility for people with visual impairments, including those who have low vision as well as those who are totally blind, is mostly a matter of having the right information at the right time. This means having choices and the ability to make the right choice the first time; it means *not* having to engage in time-consuming deductive reasoning from imprecise clues and *not* having to frequently ask for information or assistance en route. It means being able to travel independently and with confidence.

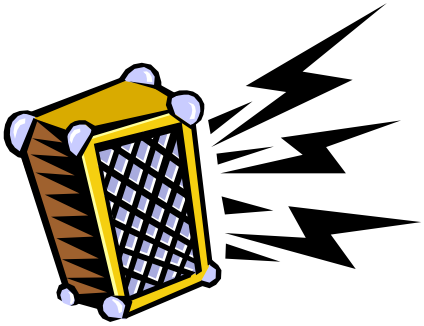
The ICC/ANSI A117.1 2003 standard for making buildings and facilities accessible to and usable by people who have visual impairments includes technical specifications for visual, Braille and tactile signs, but these are required only for rooms and spaces, including exits. There is no standard requiring that typically overhead wayfinding information be accessible--signs such as "Information Desk," "Restrooms," "Trains to Shady Grove," "X-ray →," "Macy's," "This way to Convention Center," and "Rooms 200-216 to the right, rooms 217-225 to the left." However, accessible signs of this nature can make a huge difference in the ability of people with very limited or no vision to use buildings and facilities.

The author heard comments like these from people with visual impairments who participated in wayfinding research in a complex transit station in which accessible information was provided by remote infrared audible signs (RIAS), a technology that transmits location-specific information to users via a hand-held receiver.

"I never knew there was an ATM down here. Now I don't have to go out of my way to get money on my way home from work." "Now I can know whether to turn left or right to get to the escalator after I get off the train; I don't have to just hope my first guess is right." "When I have this information, the most tiring part of my work day doesn't have to be getting there." "Now *I* can show my son around."



Braille and raised print cannot be used to make wayfinding signs that are normally mounted above head-height, or in unpredictable places, accessible to people who can't read print. In order to read Braille or raised print signs, the reader has to find and touch them. This is reasonable when the sign is within easy reach and in a predictable location, such as on the wall at the latch side of a door, but it is not reasonable to expect people who are blind to search with their hands to find signs in unpredictable places such as the name of a transit station that could be mounted on one of any number of supporting structures on a platform, a sign identifying Toys in a department store, or a sign identifying Gate A16 on an airport concourse.



An obvious solution is to make wayfinding information audible. The sound may come either directly from a public loudspeaker or from a personal receiver. In some devices requiring a receiver, the information is also legible using a refreshable Braille display integrated into an accessible PDA that is worn over the shoulder.

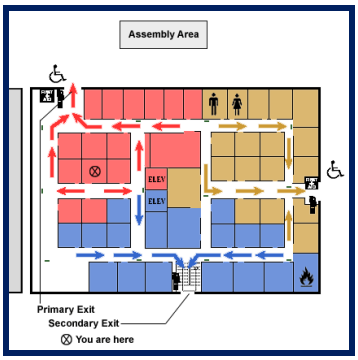
Some audible sign systems are proximity actuated, that is, when someone comes into their vicinity (or activated with a small transmitter), they provide information over a public loudspeaker. A problem with this approach is that, since these signs are actuated when approached from any direction, they cannot usually use directions such as "Straight ahead," "Left" or "Right," because these terms would usually be ambiguous. These signs can seldom indicate a very precise location. They may also be objectionable to some people who do not need audible wayfinding information.

In contrast, audible signs that have an activation "push-button" on the speaker unit can satisfactorily reference directions (if it can be assumed the user is directly facing the unit when the button on the unit is pressed). However push-button activated signs, like tactile signs, have the weakness that they first must be located before they can be used.

Remote infrared audible signage is audible only to users, it can indicate a precise location, it is directional, and it can provide real-time information such as next-stop announcements or the waiting time for the next train. RIAS receivers are provided by some properties that have installed RIAS transmitters, and by some agencies serving the needs of people who are visually impaired. RIAS is the only system for making wayfinding information accessible for which there is a technical standard (ICC/ANSI A117.1 2003).

Other approaches to providing wayfinding information for people with visual impairments include tactile and audible maps or route directions, and accessible GPS devices. Tactile and audible maps, route directions, and accessible GPS all work optimally when there are accessible signs labeling landmarks and destinations to assure travelers with visual impairments that they are actually turning at the correct location or that they have really arrived at their destination.

Stationary tactile maps mounted in public places are widely used in some other countries, and they are increasingly used in the U.S. to provide wayfinding information in public buildings, medical facilities, campuses and transit stations; they may be part of an accessible information kiosk that provides wayfinding information in audible as well as tactile format. Stationary tactile maps are a good example of universal design, because they are normally legible to travelers with unimpaired vision as well as to those who are blind or who have low vision. Portable tactile maps are also available, and their production is increasingly automated and relatively inexpensive. They have the advantages that they can be studied at home, and also carried along on trips, making their use more private and obviating users' need to find a public stationary maps.



Some facilities such as universities and hotels in the U.S. are now providing wayfinding information in the form of verbal directions based on location-specific geographic information systems customized for the wayfinding needs of travelers who are visually impaired. These text-based maps designed for auditory and braille output are available as MP3 downloads, podcasts, RSS audio text feeds, and by using an interactive voice response service accessed via telephone.

The messages are displayed on the inner face of the rail.

Accessible GPS is now an option for some people who are visually impaired, but it is typically quite expensive, it is hard for some people to learn to use, and it does not function indoors or in “urban canyons.” While accuracy is continually improving, presently available GPS may get users to the right block, but not necessarily to the right entrance on the block, or even on the correct side of the street. However, despite the currently somewhat low accuracy of accessible GPS-based wayfinding systems, the ability to plan routes to points of interest and to identify one’s own location makes this technology very exciting for those people who are able to afford it and use it.

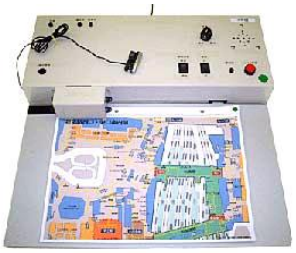
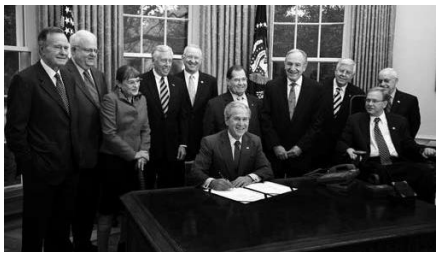


Photo of a "Talking Tactile Map" being tried in Japan

Providing accessible wayfinding information makes it possible for people who are visually impaired to travel, use buildings and facilities independently with the ease and confidence of people with unimpaired vision. Numerous systems for providing wayfinding information to people who are visually impaired are now marketed in the U.S., and development of accessible wayfinding technologies continues, with the goals that it be usable indoors and outdoors, be easy to use, be inexpensive

for users as well as properties, be easy to update with new information, be capable of providing real-time information and that it provide good accuracy.

No one questions the need for wayfinding information for people with unimpaired vision.



President George W. Bush signs the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act Thursday, Sept. 25, 2008

People with visual impairments have a civil right under the Americans with Disabilities Act to accessible wayfinding information. The lack of technical specifications or specific regulatory language does not mean that provision of wayfinding information that is accessible to people who cannot use print signs can be ignored. There is no excuse for failing to provide accessible wayfinding information in new construction and wherever public wayfinding systems are being upgraded.

Billie Louise (Beezy) Bentzen is an orientation and mobility specialist who has taught people who are visually impaired to travel independently for more than 30 years. She has researched ways to improve environmental access for people who are visually impaired including such means as large print, tactile, and electronic signs, audible signs, tactile maps, accessible pedestrian signals, visual contrast, and detectable warnings.

enABLED in Emergencies Conference

The ***enABLED in Emergencies Conference*** brought together emergency management experts, responders, advocates, service-providers and policy makers from the public and private sector, to discuss the latest issues in responding to people with disabilities or special needs during emergencies. The conference merged practical technical assistance principals with real world examples for dealing with vulnerable populations when a disaster strikes.

Lt. General (Ret.) Russell Honore speaking at conference

This two-day conference was hosted by enableUS and the National Organization on Disability's Emergency Preparedness Initiative to examine some of the greatest challenges that emergency managers face when responding to special needs populations.

George Heake speaking at conference

Through networking breaks between each phase, attendees had opportunities to interact with speakers and other attendees to learn and share personal experiences of emergency management for the disabled, including best practices and challenges faced.

All of the Conference presentations are available for download by clicking here.

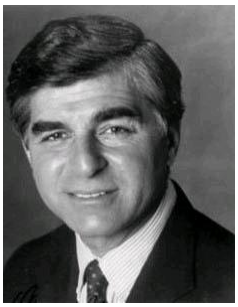
DISABILITY LAW CENTER, INC.

DLC hosts 30th Anniversary fundraiser, awards ceremony, and silent auction

For 30 years, the Disability Law Center has been protecting the rights of citizens with disabilities by advocating for equal rights for all people with disabilities in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This year DLC hosted its 30th Anniversary fundraiser, awards ceremony, and silent auction on Wednesday, October 7, 2009 at The Charles Hotel in Harvard Square in Cambridge.

This year, the DLC honored several outstanding community leaders who have significantly improved the quality of life for people with disabilities in Massachusetts:

- **Michael S. Dukakis,** Former Massachusetts Governor



- **Fred Fay,** Advocate and Disability Rights Leader
- **Oswald Mondejar,** Vice President of Human Resources, Partners Continuing Care

DLC's fundraising goal for this year is $100,000. These are unusually challenging times and DLC and its clients need help now more than ever.

NFPA was proud to sponsor a table at the event for NFPA staff, officials, and advisors who had a opportunity to chat with former Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis.

Front row left, Kevin McGuire, former NFPA Disability Access Review and Advisory Committee (DARAC) member, and right, Mike Collins, Executive Director of the National Council on Disability and Chair, NFPA Fire Safety for People with Disabilities Task Force. Back row: Randy Tucker, Executive Vice President, The RJA Group, Inc. and NFPA Board member, NFPA staff members Lisa Braxton, Allan Fraser, Sharon Gamache, and Robert Solomon.

JUST ASK!!!

By Nancy J. Trench, Assistant Director, Fire Protection Publications, Oklahoma State University

Nancy Trench (left) receiving the second annual Dr. Anne W. Phillips Award for Leadership in Fire Safety Education from Meri-K Appy, president of the Home Safety Council.

Enter the work place of any occupational safety and health professional and you will see written materials that are part of the employee training program. Fire departments, medical facilities, public health organizations, government entities such as emergency management, nongovernmental organizations such as the American Red Cross, insurance providers, and many other agencies and organizations all use brochures or other printed materials to supplement their fire and life safety education programs for people at home and in their work place. A sole brochure may inappropriately be "the program".

Workplace Safety
for People with Disabilities

Plan Ahead

Emergency Plan - Learn about the safety plan in your workplace, and what you will be expected to do in the event of a fire or other emergency in your work area.

Planning Team - Ask to be on the planning team. *Involving employees with disabilities in emergency planning is essential*

Assistance - Help identify what kind of assistance you need to alert you and help you leave the area or get you to a safe area within or outside the building during a fire or similar emergency if

- *you cannot see or understand emergency instructions,*
- *hear the alarms, or*
- *use the stairs without assistance*

Suggested Evacuation Aids

Deaf/Hard of Hearing - Visual/strobe light alarms, text pagers that vibrate, running text on a computer monitor.

Blind or Low Vision - Map out alternative paths of escape, then walk through those routes.

Mobility Impaired - Help review and select evacuation chairs and select and train fellow staff members — buddies — to assist you should the elevators be taken out of service. Make sure arrangements are made to have wheelchairs available after evacuation.

After effective evacuation aides are chosen, employers along with employees with disabilities, should decide who will implement the emergency plan, commit it to writing, and make it a part of the standard operating procedures. Share the plan with all employees for feedback. Practice the evacuation plan to make sure it works, and modify it as needed.

Written materials are frequently used to promote work place safety. In fact, as you prepare the emergency evacuation plan training for the occupants in your facility you may be planning to purchase or design a brochure or other handouts. These materials should be designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities. These materials need to be accessible.

The basic concept for effective communication with people with disabilities, whether written, electronic, or spoken is to insure that information concerning emergency planning, escape in an emergency, and other injury prevention and control measures are available to each person in their preferred alternative format. So the key question is, “How do you know which specific alternative format is accessible?” ASK! The most fail-safe method is to ask the person with a disability about their preferred format. Ask the person with a disability how to make program materials for them.

Common formats would be information in large print, audio recordings on CD or cassette tapes, video on DVD presented in American Sign Language (ASL), or open or closed captioning, tactically prepared in Braille, or in text only files for a computer screen reader. Once the emergency management or other information is transferred to the accessible format, ask a person in the target group to proof read and offer suggestions for making the material more understandable. These are lessons learned at Oklahoma State University (OSU) in designing and delivering *Fire Safety Solutions for People With Disabilities.*

Fire Safety Solutions for People with Disabilities

How to Implement a Home Fire Safety & Smoke Alarm Installation Program

A Model Program from Oklahoma that Saves Lives

People who are deaf and use ASL prefer vocabulary that has an ASL sign. For example there is no ASL sign for *hazard* or *risk*, but there is for *danger*. So *danger* should be used instead. Other words that need a synonym for best communication using ASL is *house* should be *home* and *drowsy* should be *sleepy*.

Large print materials are our most requested accessible format. Large print is more than using a larger font size. According to the American Printing House for the Blind (APH), matte paper not glossy paper, single column instead of multiple columns, and spacing between lines of at least 1.25 spaces are all part of optimal readability. APH also recommends a specific font, the APHont that can be downloaded from their website. You will be asked to verify that APHont will be utilized by, or for, persons with visual impairments to obtain the free download. To find the American Printing House for the Blind large print guidelines:

- Go to the APH web site, www.aph.org
- Click on Research & Development
- Scroll down to Large Print: Guidelines for Optimal Readability
- Double click to open the document
- To download free APHont go to: http://www.aph.org/products/aphont_orderform.html

Web Accessibility - Any material that is presented electronically must also be accessible. Web accessibility means that people with disabilities can use the Web**.** More specifically, Web accessibility means that people with disabilities can perceive, understand, navigate, and interact with the Web, and that they can contribute to the Web.

Web accessibility encompasses all disabilities that affect access to the Web, including visual, auditory, physical, speech, cognitive, and neurological disabilities. The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) has a Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI). You can find their Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 requirements (success criteria) and techniques at http://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG20/quickref/.

There are applicable federal and state laws or policies regarding Web accessibility. In 1998, Congress amended the Rehabilitation Act, Section 508, to require Federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities. Go to www.section508.gov to learn more about Section 508 and other relevant laws. In Canada the Web accessibility regulations are enacted through the Canadian Human Rights Act of 1997.

All building owners, occupants and AHJ's should involve people with disabilities in their emergency planning, fire prevention and other public education projects. People with disabilities live, work, study, worship and play in residential, commercial, educational, business and industrial occupancies. Success depends on involving the target audience in the program design and delivery methods from the very beginning.

Fire Protection Publications at OSU has produced a home fire safety DVD for adults who use ASL. Multiple copies of *Fire Safety for You at Home Presented in American Sign Language* are available free. You pay shipping only. The DVD is item number 37500. Call 800-654-4055 to order.

A common mistake is not using ***People First Language*** in all programs, materials, and electronic mediums. Using People First Language is crucial. People First Language puts the person before the disability, and it describes what a person has, not who a person is. Is a person “myopic” or do they wear glasses? Is a person “cancerous” or do they have cancer? Is a person “freckled” or do they have freckles? Is a person “handicapped/disabled” or do they have a disability?

Good luck as you plan and prepare materials that meet the specific needs of people with disabilities.

Remember to **ASK!** What do you need to know? What format best meets your needs? Will you help me?

Nancy Trench *has more than 25 years experience as a fire and life safety educator. In her current role as Assistant Director at Fire Protection Publications at Oklahoma State University, Trench leads several research projects including, but not limited to, exploring topics ranging from effective methods and materials used to teach fire safety to young children to the factors that impact the safety of the nation's firefighters and a National Review of Fire Safety for People With Disabilities. Nancy has extensive experience in training and managing training systems for public sector emergency responders. Her academic background is in Fire Protection and Safety Engineering Technology at Oklahoma State University. Nancy is a former member of the NFPA Board of Directors and the National Fire Academy Board of Visitors.*

DLC Continues Emergency Preparedness Project

For the last several years, the Western Massachusetts Individuals Requiring Additional Assistance Preparedness Project (Western Massachusetts IRAA Preparedness Project), lead by DLC's Attorney Nancy Jane Botta, has focused on issues surrounding emergency preparedness and the disability community.

In May 2009, Attorney Botta facilitated four emergency preparedness training conferences in Western Massachusetts (one in each county) for community-based organizations serving individuals with disabilities. The conferences were focused on training agency administrators, policy-makers, and staff, on the importance of personal preparedness, agency preparedness and developing a working agency emergency plan, interfacing with first responders in a broad-scale community emergency, and practicing plans with a tabletop exercise to help define individual and agency roles in an emergency.

The four conferences were very well attended and DLC will be organizing an additional four conferences in Western Massachusetts in the later part of the year. For additional information, please contact Attorney Botta at (413) 584-6337 or nbotta@dlc-ma.org.

Do you have a story to tell or information to share?

Our readers are people with disabilities, and their relatives, caregivers, and friends.

Our goals are to:

- Provide specialized information about fire and life safety for people with disabilities directly to those with disabilities and to those who assist them to help reduce or eliminate fire deaths and injuries, as well as those resulting from other emergencies, and
- Provide a forum for the collection and dissemination of information for people with disabilities in support of DARAC's mission.
- Provide personal stories about events, ideas or solutions from our readers that can guide others in similar circumstances.

Content for future editions will include:

- NFPA-related news
  - DARAC news
  - NFPA codes- and standards-related information
  - Fire safety tips
  - Emergency evacuation information
- Articles relating to the safety of people with disabilities from:
  - NFPA staff
  - DARAC members
  - Other national advocates
  - General news
  - Our readers
- Other standards-developing organizations' news
  - U.S. Access Board
  - ANSI/ICC A117, *Standard for Accessible Buildings and Facilities*
  - RESNA
  - U.S. Department of Justice
  - Other

We'd love to hear your stories and opinions! If you'd like to contribute an article or information consistent with the outline above, please e-mail them to Allan B. Fraser, senior building code specialist and *e-Access* coordinator at *afraser@nfpa.org*.

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