



COUNTY OF YOLO

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Yolo County Hosts CASp Training

(Woodland, CA) – Earlier this month, the Yolo County Planning & Public Works Department, Building Division hosted a Certified Access Specialist Program (CASp) training seminar for 68 participants throughout California. CASp is a program designed by the California, Division of the State Architects to ensure that individuals who review, inspect or advocate Universal Design requirements and standards, which govern access to buildings for persons with disabilities, are properly qualified.

Senate Bill (SB) 1608 requires that every local agency, by July 1, 2010, shall employ or retain at least one building inspector who is a Certified Access Specialist. Commencing January 1, 2014, one-half of the building inspectors and building plan reviewers for local agencies shall be Certified Access Specialists to conduct these specialized permitting, inspection and plan review services. The training seminar, hosted by Yolo County, reviewed requirements related to SB 1608, along with a general overview of accessibility requirements related to persons with disabilities. As a result, there will be more uniformity across California for enforcing disabled access regulations which will, in turn, create a safer, more accessible environment for persons with disabilities. The combination of awareness and knowledge may also help to curb the need for the hundreds of disabled access lawsuits filed each year in California, mostly against small business.

“The Yolo County Board of Supervisors has long been a strong advocate for Universal Design/accessibility issues for both individuals with disabilities and for our aging population,” said John Bencomo, Yolo County Planning & Public Works Department Director. “Over the past several years, the Board has made clear their intent to make accessibility design features available in all new residential development projects within Yolo County.”

“Hosting this disability access seminar helps increase the public and housing industry’s awareness concerning obstacles that the aged and persons with disabilities deal with on a day-to-day basis,” said Yolo County Board of Supervisors Chairwoman Helen Thomson. “Training workshops will also provide a broader awareness to local business owners regarding rights and laws related to access for our aged and disabled community members.” Thomson also thanked Mariko Yamada, a former Board member and now an Assemblywoman, for her advocacy for the Universal Design policies adopted by Yolo County.

“This seminar was one of the most informative ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) seminars I’ve attended,” said Chris Lugo, Major Construction Inspector with the Los Angeles Unified School District.

For more information on instructional workshops and seminars provided by the Yolo County Planning & Public Works Department Building Division, visit: www.yolocounty.org (go to: Government > Planning & Public Works > Building Inspection Services > Building Inspection Division Training).

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