



Inspections

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Your House A to Z

Jack L. Werner Ph.D.



A to Z Inspections: Leading the way to help you stay in your own home as you get older

By Jack L. Werner, Ph.D.

Fully credentialed as Certified Aging in Place Specialists (CAPS) and holding the Universal Design and Build (UD & B) designation, Handymen R Us and A to Z Inspections are eager to help older or disabled folks stay in their own homes.

Where did these designations and the curriculum come from? The NAHB worked with AARP (American Association of Retired Persons), AIA (American Institute of Architects), and many other groups, from designers to occupational therapists, to determine the needs and develop the curriculum. The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) provides the training and confers the designations.

The Certified Aging in Place Specialist (CAPS) designation focuses on retrofitting and remodeling existing quarters for safety, pleasure, and accessibility. Universal Design & Build (UD&B) refers to new construction with an idea of building places that are accessible and easily convertible from day one.

Professionals holding these designations are qualified to offer comprehensive diagnosis and proposed solutions. The combination of so many professions has created the ability to diagnose everything needed so that you or your loved one can remain safely and pleasurably in their own home—planning for the needs of your body and your home, along with community support.

What is an “aging in place” analysis? It combines three components: health/physical—often an occupational therapist is brought into the planning; comprehensive home inspection-- including clutter and weatherization; community resources-- such as transportation, cleaning, cooking, therapy, medical.

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The City Sentinel

Who are the end users? One group are the “planners”—these are the people who want to plan for their aging years before an emergency. We’re getting older. We want to stay in our homes and communities. Let’s plan. Another group of users are people with progressive conditions, such as arthritis or stroke, or who have suffered traumatic injury from accident or military injuries. Forty-two percent (42%) over 65 have a physical disability that limits activities of daily living. According to the International Center for Disability Information, 62% of people over 45 have a household member who has difficulty walking, bathing, or getting out of a chair or bed.

The consensus is that 75% of the population who go to assisted living could avoid it or significantly delay it by planning and acting ahead of time with professionals with the CAPS and/or UD & B designations.

What resources are available? A to Z Inspections, 405/412-7861, atozinspections@yahoo.com; Vic Vickers at Handymen R Us (CAPS and UD7B certified), 405/670-1733, www.handymanokc.com; Oklahoma State Home Builders (OSHB) at 405/843-5579, www.oshba.org; Areawide Aging Agency, 405/943-4344, www.area-wideaging.org (Get the Survival Kit for Seniors), AARP, 405/715-4475; Senior Journal, 405/558-9878.

Several websites have helpful information. At www.jchs.harvard.edu/research you can download the publication Aging in Place, Coordinating Housing and Health Care Provision for America’s Growing Elderly Population. Other helpful sites are www.designbasics.com, www.iccsafe.org, www.universaldesignonline.com, www.aarp.org/families/home_design, www.architecturaldesigns.com, www.b4ubuild.com, www.easylivinghome.org.

Finding and reaching needed professionals and services can be difficult and in many cases beyond a clients ability. Many folks will know the lingo. Professionals will have the certifications.

Do a little research on your own. Perhaps you will want to obtain the CAPS and UD&B designations and become a concierge of these services. Or you can call me at 412-7861. I’ll be glad to discuss you situation or professional interest, answer questions, and help you find resources.



Jack L. Werner, Ph.D., is the owner of A to Z Inspections. He was the first designated Master Inspector by ORCIA (Oklahoma Residential and Commercial Inspection Association). Werner holds a degree in construction from OSU and teaches Certified Aging in Place Specialist (CAPS) and Universal Design & Build for the National Association of Home Builders. He was honored by the Oklahoma Professional Women in Building division of the Oklahoma State Home Builders Association as 2011 member of the year for his contributions to the organization. He can be reached at 405/412-7861.

