



(AGING IN PLACE) Universal Design Certification Launched by Seniors Housing Developer

LAS VEGAS: Though green building certification appears to be a hot, new trend in the housing industry, a California-based seniors housing provider is trying to blaze a trail for universal design certification.

Eskaton unveils its Livable Design Certification program at the 2010 International Builders' Show, with a massive marketing/education campaign to follow in the coming months. The Livable Design Certification is a service provided by Eskaton in which it and a third-party architectural firm reviews design plans and inspects construction at several points during the development of participating, universally designed homes and communities, Eskaton's Sheri Peifer and Erin Clay tell *HSR*. The certification program also helps with Eskaton's marketing campaigns.

"The program helps with everything from schematics' design to specifications for types of door handles to use to inspection of drywall placement," Clay says.

Eskaton is betting increased demand among 50+ consumers will drive housing developers to seek certification of universal design products in way similar to homebuilders seeking green building certifications (LEED, EnergyStar, etc.). It is the Eskaton model is more flexible and does not adhere to a stringent group of mandates, Peifer says.

"The program can be modified quite a bit," depending on individual accessibility needs, she tells *HSR*. "If you don't make it at least somewhat easy to participate in, builders won't do it."

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