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Board to Issue Proposed Guidelines for Accessible Public Rights-of-Way

The Board plans to release for public comment proposed guidelines for public rights-of-way later this summer. These guidelines will address access to sidewalks, street crossings, and other components of pedestrian networks for people with disabilities, including those with vision impairments. Through this rulemaking, the Board seeks to establish design criteria for pedestrian access routes, curb ramps and blended transitions, pedestrian signals, on-street parking, street furniture, and other elements that take into account constraints unique to public streets and sidewalks, including space limitations and terrain.

The guidelines are currently under review by the Office of Budget and Management. If cleared on schedule, the Board anticipates publishing its proposed rule in late July or August. At that time, the Board plans to release the guidelines at a public event and press conference at the Board's conference space. In addition, the Board will conduct a webinar to review the rule and will hold public hearings in Washington, D.C. and Dallas. The guidelines will be available for comment for several months and will be posted to regulations.gov for review and comment. To receive email updates on this rulemaking and further details on planned outreach activities, [sign up](#) to the Board's rights-of-way subscription list.

Board to Travel to Dallas in September

The Board will head to Dallas to hold public meetings and dialogues on various topics related to accessibility on September 12. The agenda for the day includes a public hearing on the proposed rights-of-way guidelines and panel discussions on ADA requirements and state access codes, access to self-service machines, and other subjects. Details on these events, which are currently being finalized, will be posted on the Board's website and included in the next newsletter. For further information, contact Kathy Johnson at johnson@access-board.gov, (202) 272-0041 (voice), or (202) 272-0065 (TTY).



President Obama Appoints New Members to the U.S. Access Board

President Barack Obama has appointed Mathew McCollough, M.P.A. of Washington, D.C. and Deborah A. Ryan of Boston to the U.S. Access Board.

McCollough is executive director of the District of Columbia (DC) Developmental Disabilities Council which promotes independence and equal opportunity for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. He previously served as communications manager for the DC Office of Disability Rights where he coordinated and publicized District government efforts to improve accessibility and compliance with laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act. Before



joining the DC government, McCollough was employed by the Association of University Centers on Disabilities as a grants manager and contracted by the U.S. Department of Justice as an information specialist.



Ryan is head of Deborah A. Ryan & Associates, an accessibility consulting firm that specializes in compliance with design requirements issued under Massachusetts law and federal laws such as the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and the Fair Housing Act. As a consultant, she is active in accessibility surveys, plan reviews, technical assistance, training, and guidance on complaint resolution. Before creating her firm in 2002, Ryan served for over 25 years at the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB), including 15 years as its executive director. The MAAB develops and enforces state requirements for accessible buildings and facilities. Ryan previously served on the U.S. Access Board's Public Right-of-Way Access Advisory Committee.

The new appointees succeed Board members J.R. Harding II, Ed.D., of Tallahassee, Florida and John C. Wyvill of Lincoln, Nebraska.

DOJ Publishes its 2010 ADA Standards and Related Guidance

The Department of Justice's new ADA standards (2010), which are available on [DOJ's website](http://www.ada.gov) at www.ada.gov, are now also available in print. Copies can be ordered through DOJ's ADA hotline at (800) 514-0301 or (800) 514-0383 (TTY). In addition, DOJ has issued guidance on the standards that includes explanatory information from its implementing regulations. The 2010 standards, which can be used at this time, will become mandatory March 15, 2012. This effective date applies to the physical start of construction/alteration or, where a building permit is required, to the date of the permit application. DOJ's published standards include further details on how this effective date applies and other information on using the standards.



Access Board Webinars and Training

The next scheduled webinars in the Board's free monthly series will cover accessible hospitals and other health care facilities (July 7), health clubs and fitness facilities (August 4), and Section 508 requirements for electronic and information technology (September 1). The webinars, which are scheduled from 2:30 - 4:00 (ET), are made available in cooperation with the national network of ADA Centers. The Board also plans to conduct a webinar on its proposed guidelines for public rights-of-way which will be scheduled based on the publication date. For more information, including registration instructions, visit www.accessibilityonline.org. Archived copies of previous webinars can be accessed on this site.

The Board regularly provides training on accessible design to various audiences at different conferences and events across the country. Most training pertains to design criteria for facilities, transportation vehicles, and information technology. Training sessions, which are targeted to the needs and interests of each audience, attract designers and architects, code officials, advocacy groups, transportation operators, the information technology industry, and other professionals in assorted fields. Upcoming events are noted on the Board's [training calendar](#). Requests for Board training should be directed to Peggy Greenwell, the Board's Training Coordinator at training@access-board.gov, (202) 272-0017 (voice), or (202) 272-0075 (TTY).

First Year Findings on the Accessibility of Playground Surfaces Published

Do playground surfaces remain accessible for people with disabilities over time? A research team at the National Center on Accessibility (NCA) at Indiana University is attempting to answer that question. First year findings from a longitudinal study on the installation and maintenance of accessible playground surfaces reveal there is no perfect playground surface. The NCA study, which is being funded by the U.S. Access Board, is examining the performance of various types of surfacing materials at 25 newly constructed playgrounds, including poured-in-place rubber, engineered wood fiber, rubber tiles, and hybrid surface systems.

Even within 12 months of installation, each type of surface studied was found to have accessibility, safety, or maintenance issues. Poured-in-place rubber installed at one site was not resilient enough to meet ASTM standards for impact attenuation. Surface tiles installed at another site had puncture holes, buckling, and separating seams that created openings and changes in level on accessible routes. Other study findings from the first year of testing, which are outlined in an [NCA report](#), "A Longitudinal Study of Playground Surfaces to Evaluate Accessibility - Year One Findings," include:

- playground sites with loose fill engineered wood fiber were found to have the greatest number of deficiencies affecting the accessible route to play components, including a lack of firmness and stability;
- rubber tile and poured-in-place rubber surfaces were found to have the highest level of firmness and stability;
- besides firmness and stability issues, many surfaces had noncompliant slopes, cross slopes and changes in level; and
- in some instances, surface materials were not installed according to manufacturers' recommendations to achieve an accessible surface.

The study was undertaken to collect information helpful to the public in choosing surfacing materials most suitable for playgrounds based on performance, installation, and maintenance considerations. NCA researchers continue to monitor and test surfacing materials at project sites to assess results over a total period of 3 years. The project is due to be completed next year.

For more information, contact Jennifer Skulski, CPSI, Principal Investigator, at jskulski@indiana.edu or (812)-856-4422, or Peggy Greenwell, Accessibility Specialist, U S Access Board, at greenwell@access-board.gov or (202) 272-0017 (v), (202) 272-0075 (TTY).

WHO and World Bank Issue Report on Disability

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank recently issued a global study on disability and its prevalence worldwide. According to the "[World Report on Disability](#)," approximately 15% of the world's population is estimated to have some type of disability. In addition to population studies, the report also discusses barriers to people with disabilities in education, employment, and other areas and provides case studies on how they can be overcome as well as specific policy and practice recommendations. Released at the United Nations on June 9, the report summarizes data compiled by more than 350 researchers around the world over a four year period.



Access Currents is a free newsletter issued by the Access Board every other month by mail and e-mail. Send questions or comments to news@access-board.gov or call (800) 872-2253 ext. 0026 (voice) or (800) 993-2822 (TTY). Mailing address: 1331 F Street, N.W., Suite 1000; Washington, D.C. 20004-1111.

