

# Disability

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The first provisions of the act went into effect Jan. 26 and required existing buildings and businesses with 25 or more employees to make good-faith efforts to remove barriers to the disabled.

## Businesses adjust

Rick Halberg, co-owner of R.I.K.'s, a restaurant in West Bloomfield, said when the establishment was remodeled three years ago, a ramp was installed from the main dining room to the rear dining room to accommodate wheelchairs. And designers worked around the ramp when the restaurant was redecorated in the spring.

"The ramp was one thing we did. We also made the bathroom large enough so people in wheelchairs could turn around easily. Our waiting staff has also been trained to treat everyone the same, but if someone with a walker needs special assistance, we'll do whatever we can to help them."

In conjunction with the public accommodation section of the law, an employment provision also takes effect on July 26. Under this section, employers may not discriminate against qualified disabled individuals in hiring, advancement, compensation or training.

Employers must also adapt the workplace for people with handicaps if necessary, for instance, by providing more accessible furniture for workers in wheelchairs who operate computers. Those companies with fewer than 15 employees are exempt.

"If in the hiring process, an employer routinely provides a written test, a person with dyslexia should be given an opportunity to take the test orally," said Jennifer Sweeney Buckley, a partner with Clark, Klein & Beaumont, a law firm with offices in Bloomfield Hills and downtown Detroit.

## Tax incentives

"People should also know there are tax credits available to help businesses comply with the law. Some businesses may also be exempt from portions of the law if compliance would cause undue hardship. Someone who is almost blind and works in a night club and needs bright light to work would more than likely be an undue hardship."

Under guidelines set out by the Internal Revenue Service, small companies can get a \$5,000 tax credit and large ones can qualify for a \$15,000 tax deduction to help defray the costs of bringing their businesses into compliance. The tax break can be applied to the cost of structural changes, consultant's fees, staff training or changes in business practices.

# Maintenance a must for asphalt drives

AP — An asphalt driveway needs regular maintenance to protect and preserve it. Cracks invariably develop and must be filled. The entire surface should be sealed every year or two.

Before you patch cracks or holes, it's important to remove loose gravel and bits of asphalt. Clear weeds and dirt from the area with a wire brush or trowel, followed by a shop vacuum or leaf blower. To remove dust, hose down the area. Then let it dry.

You can fill wide cracks and potholes with blacktop patch, a prepared asphalt sold in 60-pound bags. Fill the prepared hole about halfway with blacktop patch and compact it before filling the rest of the way.

Round the material slightly, then flatten it down hard with a tamper. You can make your own

tamper by fastening a scrap piece of plywood or particleboard to a length of two-by-two.

Use a flat shovel to cut away excess so the patch will be level with the surrounding surface. Freshly filled spots should cure for about 90 days before they are sealed. You can patch in the spring and seal in late summer.

As an asphalt driveway ages, narrow cracks develop along the edges. To repair these cracks, clean them with a wire brush and vacuum the loose material. Then fill them with an asphalt crack filler that pours from a bottle. This leaves a patch resembling tar strips on an old highway. However, you can subdue the effect by brooming a small amount of fine sand into the filler.

There are three types of sealer for a blacktop driveway.

An asphalt base sealer, the most

expensive, should be used only on new asphalt or on a surface that has been previously sealed with the same material.

Tar emulsion sealers are the least expensive and probably the most popular because they seal against gasoline, oil spills and drips.

A third kind is a tar base sealer which contains fine black aggregate to give it extra body. This is used to fill large areas of cracking and to provide traction on steep drives. A five-gallon can of sealer will cover about 350 square feet.

You can mix fine sand with standard tar base sealer to give it body. However, the surface will take on a salt-and-pepper appearance as the sealer wears.

The outside temperature should be about 60 degrees Fahrenheit when you apply sealer. The driveway must also be prepared before application. Cut away grass that grows over the edges so the sealer can cover them. Sweep the driveway clean, concentrating on ditched areas where rainwater and dirt collect. Then hose down the driveway.

Look for water beads on the surface that indicate oil or gasoline. Remove softened material from these spots and replace it with blacktop patch. You can work around the patch when you apply sealer to give the spots time to cure. If there is no softening, use strong detergent or trisodium phosphate and hot water to scrub away oil.

# Offices

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longer than tile or carpeting, but it all depends on economic factors and the length of time a firm plans to stay."

And design firms themselves are not immune. "If in the hiring process, a person with dyslexia should be given an opportunity to take the test orally," said Jennifer Sweeney Buckley, a partner with Clark, Klein & Beaumont, a law firm with offices in Bloomfield Hills and downtown Detroit.

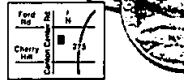
have a great deal of money in our art budget, so we improvised," said David Elston, chief operating officer and general manager.

"I suppose in a best-case scenario, we would like to have spent \$10,000 on a work of art, but we didn't have it in our budget. We simply had an artist recreate one of our recent floor plans on canvas. I think the entire work costs us \$300."

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