

New 2010 ADA regulations: act now and find “safe harbor”

Assess your ADA compliance before the more stringent 2010 Standards become mandatory; doing so before March 15, 2012 may allow you to save both time and money.

Compliance with the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design will be mandatory as of **March 15, 2012**, unless you elect to comply with the 1991 standard and achieve compliance with it before the March deadline. The new Standards contain items that are more restrictive than the previous 1991 version, such as the following:

- The previous 1991 ADA Standards required one (1) in every eight (8) accessible parking spaces to be a van accessible space. These type spaces were to be 96 inches wide with an adjacent 96 inch wide access aisle. The new 2010 ADA Standards now require one (1) van space in every six (6) accessible parking spaces. However, as an improvement to the layout, a van accessible space is now required to be 132 inches wide when it is adjacent to a standard 60 inch wide access aisle.
- Side approach in a wheelchair in the previous ADA Standards allowed higher and lower reach ranges. The 2010 version now restricts these dimensions to 48 inches high maximum and 15 inches high minimum. This reach range affects the location of elements and controls such as electrical receptacles, light switches, manual fire alarm devices, hand dryers, paper towel dispensers, etc.
- The 1991 version allows a less restrictive clear floor space for single-use toilet rooms with a water closet and sink. These toilet rooms will be required in the 2010 ADA to be larger because the sink will no longer be allowed to be located within the 60 inch by 56 inch clear floor space around the water closet.

If the 2010 standards are more difficult to meet in your building than the older standards, consider correcting those barriers immediately and have “safe harbor” until they are altered again in the more distant future. But begin by hiring an expert to perform an assessment.

If you have questions, call Building Solutions at (214) 221-9145.