

The population of the United States is getting older. With the advancements in the medical field as well as people being more health conscious people are living longer. Also the baby boomers are reaching their elder years. As people age they are finding that they need to make adjustments to their homes to be more comfortable as well as safer. Many people are finding it necessary to purchase medical equipment in an effort to remain in their home.

My father-in-law had a stroke a few years ago. After his hospital stay he was able to return home, however due to weakness on his left side he needed to be in a wheel chair during rehabilitation. He could stand to transfer from the bed to the chair and from the chair to the toilet, but that was in the hospital. The greatest issue the family faced was getting him into the house. They live in a rambler, so once he was in the house he did not have any steps to contend with. My brother in law decided that he would make a wheel chair ramp over the steps in the entrance from the garage to the house. The garage is attached to the house. He thought that this would be a good place to put the ramp so that if it was raining, snowing or was cold outside my father-in-law would stay warm and dry. However he did not realize the amount of room that is needed for a wheel chair ramp.

When he started his construction project he thought that he could secure plywood over the steps and be done. My father in-law is a big man so the wheel chair ramp needed to be sturdy and safe. The part of the construction that most people fail to consider is that the pitch cannot be too steep. To be safe the wheel chair ramp cannot be at too great of an incline because it is too hard to push someone up, and to control wheeling them down. By the time my brother in law completed the wheel chair ramp at a safe incline, he had taken up one side of the two stall garage.

A great alternative to building an elaborate wheel chair ramp is to purchase a portable ramp. The portable ramps telescope out in three sections. They can hold five hundred pounds and yet they fold down into a flat carrying case that can be taken along in a vehicle. The portable wheel chair ramps weight about seventy pounds and can be put down and folded up in a matter of minutes. By using the portable model the person in the wheelchair can access most one level homes.