

# New Transitional Home

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All of the electrical plugs are higher on the walls, while the light switches are placed lower than usual. "This design is in fact very convenient for anyone," says Dan Hogue, the organization's new Executive Director. He notes that several cities, including Fremont, Sacramento, Albuquerque, and Winnipeg, encourage Universal Design standards for all types of new developments.

Other elements of Universal Design found in the Lafayette home include wide doorways and hallways (a three-foot minimum width), no step entries, and lever door handles. "This kind of design just gives a more open feel to the house," adds Hogue, "it is one of the things we will all learn from people with disabilities."

The main bathroom also underwent practical and aesthetic improvements. The space that was once two small bathrooms is now a large area that includes a separate toilet and shower. "Beyond the grab bars, what is needed in a bathroom for people with a disability is a five-foot radius in which to maneuver a wheelchair," explains Kilgore. The shower room closes with a door and there is no lip to be negotiated in order to access the shower itself. The walls are completely tiled since there is no shower curtain, and all of the shower heads and faucets are placed at a good height for anyone to reach whether seated or standing.

"This house is a model of our strategy for the future," explains Hogue, "we want to provide solutions that help young adults with learning or developmental disabilities to evolve toward independence. This house where low income young adults can live will be a step for them, like we took when we left our parents' homes to go to college. Here they



*Unassuming on the outside, the interior of the home has been designed to be usable by everyone.*

*Photo Doug Kohen*

will learn the skills they will need to be independent, they will be integrated into the community and no different than anyone else on the block."

The house includes a room and bathroom for a staff person. "Depending on the needs of our tenants, the staff person will be there full- or part-time," explains Kilgore.

The organization does not know if it will be able to develop more such homes. "We are very thankful that Bonnie (Peacock) was able to secure this grant for us," says Hogue, "in this economy, our sources of funding are under a lot of stress."

Las Trampas will hold a ribbon cutting ceremony in January of 2012; adults with disabilities between the age of 18 and 24 who want to transition to a more independent life are welcomed to contact the Lafayette non-profit.

For more information email [ltiexec@pacbell.net](mailto:ltiexec@pacbell.net) or call Dan Hogue at 284-1462.

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## WINTER TREE TIPS

Winter brings cold and rainy weather. "While many trees will be dormant in the winter, exposure to the tough conditions can cause them major stress," says Darren Edwards, Certified Arborist with Advance Tree Service. "Minimize that stress by helping your trees through the cold months. If you take care of your trees in the winter, you will be rewarded in the spring."

Winter can be a good time for pruning most trees, while they are dormant, and pines should only be pruned in the winter months. Removal of large, dead, broken, poorly positioned limbs and corrective pruning can minimize winter storm damage, and maximize optimal spring growth.

So don't wait until it's too late, call your local Arborist at Advance Tree Service and Landscaping to help you with your winter pruning.

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