

Enabling Gardening

Paths and Surfaces Considerations

- **Provide good traction at all times** water pools can promote slipping, algae's growth, ice
- **Paths, ramps, and other grades should not exceed 5%** which means 1' grade height change requires 20' of a path
- **Handrails may be necessary** to act as a barrier and/or support
- **Proper width of paths 36"** bare minimum width for turning a wheel chair around
- **Provide direct routes through the garden** for visual impair and if a person becomes disoriented
- **Paths should have a sharp textural contrast at the edge** concrete to grass and raised edges for visually impaired or to prevent wheelchairs or strollers from rolling off the path
- **Reduce a glare and heat absorption** glare from concrete and heat from blacktop is uncomfortable for everyone
- **Provide a large paved area** to place clustered plant containers
- **The paths and paved areas must be smooth, level, and firm** wood chips and other mulch surfaces are inappropriate because of wheelchairs and canes sink into the soft material

Garden Structure Considerations

- **Consideration the best structure type** for the needs of the individual
- **Material considerations** are hardwood landscape timbers, flue tiles and drainage pipes, whiskey barrels, redwood and cedar boards, cinder and concrete blocks, brick and other masonry, or plastic materials. Do not pressure treated wood because of chemical residues washed into the soils
- **Use screws** instead of nails because swelling and shrinking of the wood will loosen nails
- **Round or sand all rough edges** to avoid slivers
- **Less watering** required with larger structure types
- **Stability of the structure** because of leaning on the structure and weight of the soils
- **Consider height and reach of structure** 18 to 30 inches is normal reach distance, 18 inches is a comfortable height for sitting on the edge, 24 inches is best for seating in a chair or having a bench next to the bed, 36 inches is best for the standing gardener who cannot bend

Garden Soil Considerations

- **Two essential characteristics needed** is easy work ability and moisture retention can be obtained by proper bed preparation of adding organic matter. For smaller containers, hanging baskets and the other container a commercial soil less mix is recommended.