

# AGING-IN-PLACE REMODELING APPEALS TO 50+ HOMEOWNERS

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Homeowners who want to make their house their home for a lifetime, regardless of their age or functional abilities, have a friend in the National Association of Homebuilders Remodelers (NAHBR). NAHBR, in collaboration with other NAHB entities, and with AARP, has developed the Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist (CAPS) program. It addresses the needs of the growing number of homeowners choosing to make specialized modifications to their existing homes for long-term living rather than moving.

CAPS professionals, most of whom are remodelers like Bill Owens, CGR, CAPS, president of Owens Construction in Columbus, Ohio, are trained to build aesthetically pleasing, barrier-free living environments. "The market is there," Owens says, "as NAHB estimates that aging-in-place remodeling will capture at least ten percent of the \$200 billion-plus annual home improvement industry."

Owens also points out that as the average age of our nation's housing stock increases each year, more attention will be paid to remodeling existing homes to accommodate the baby boomers looking to remain in their homes.

Adding living quarters to a lower level, along with bathroom and kitchen modifications are among the most popular upgrades when seniors modify their homes for the long-term. As a part of those projects, older adults often pay particular attention to providing more natural light in those much-used rooms.

According to the Center of Design For An Aging Society in Portland, Oregon, older people need more light (about three to five times more than younger people) for both vision and for maintaining health.

One source of both natural light and ventilation often chosen when upgrading is skylights. Joe Patrick, senior product manager with VELUX America, cites studies conducted in Denmark that shows skylights admit 30 percent more light than vertical windows in dormers. "Skylights also offer much more privacy than vertical windows without taking up valuable wall space that can be used for decorating or storage," Patrick says, "a real benefit as seniors modify their living spaces."

For many older homeowners, cataracts make the need for more light a necessity, not a luxury. And those with glaucoma are particularly sensitive to glare. Balanced natural lighting from above through skylights and from the sides through windows, combined with artificial lighting when needed, can add to both comfort and safety. And better lighting isn't the only advantage.

"From an economic standpoint," Patrick points out, "ENERGY STAR® qualified vertical skylights admit natural light from above and reduce energy costs while transforming living areas into bright, safer spaces. And they provide a dose of the medicine that daylight and fresh air offer," he says. "It's also a way to stretch fixed-income dollars," Patrick says.

one-time purchase that pays benefits over time by reducing the need for artificial lighting and cutting energy costs.â€•

For free information on the benefits of natural light and skylight selection, or for free house plans incorporating skylights, call 1-800-283-2831 or visit [veluxusa.com](http://veluxusa.com). For government information on window and skylight energy efficiency visit [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov), and for independent agency information visit [nfr.org](http://nfr.org) or [efficientwindows.org](http://efficientwindows.org).

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