**Accessibility Seminar: for, A.L. Blair Ltd.**

1 in 7 people in Ontario has a disability

The goal of this Act is to make our services are fully accessible to people with disabilities by 2025.

Disabilities are not always visible, there are many different types and many definitions attached to the visible and non –visible. That being said I have included the Words with Dignity Page that clearly gives us the correct identifying words when speaking to and or referring to our customers that may be disabled.

The key to complying too the Act is in reality simple common courtesy and respect for the individual who wants our products and who we serve. Treat all our customers with respect and take the time to ask the question ‘How can I help you?”

**Physically Disabled:**

When speaking to a person in a wheelchair sit so that you are at that person’s eye level whenever possible. Do not lean on their chair it is considered an invasion of personal space.

Do not ask how that person became disabled, if they want you to know they will tell you.

**Hearing Disabled:**

People will have a number of different ways of communication, from sign language to writing on a pad of paper. The majority will have the ability of reading lips so make sure that you are facing the person, maintain eye contact and do not look down or sideways. Speak clearly and naturally at a moderate pace. Do not exaggerate lip movements or yell. Avoid standing in front of a light source like a window, the glare makes it hard to read lips. Do not chew gum, smoke or put your hands in front of your face for the same reasons. In the event that a sign language interpreter is present, speak directly to the person and not the interpreter.

**Vision Impaired:**

Introduce yourself, speak directly to the individual, speak in a normal tone, and do not shout. It is ok to use such words as look or see. Be clear and concise when giving directions i.e. 2 steps behind you. A guide dog is trained as a working animal and should not be petted or spoken to without the permission of the handler. A general rule is that the dog is working while in harness.

**Mentally Disabled:**

Treat with respect and consideration, be confident, calm and reassuring, if our customer appears upset or confused, ask them to tell you the best way to help. If there are distracting surrounding noises then ask to move to a more quiet and calm location so they can regain their composure. Ask them to repeat any key points in the conversation so you know that they have understood what you are saying.