

Buying Direct Off The Internet – Don't Let This Happen To You!

The following is a true story. It is an example of what can happen when an individual or business buys directly off the internet. Don't let this happen to you!

"I don't know if you can help me or not". According to Brian Lake, Accessibility Specialist here at AWA, that's how the conversation began. As the story unfolded, Brian soon realized that there was nothing he could do to help this customer. Here's their story.



A local congregation, like many throughout NH, set out to make their church wheelchair accessible. They spend hours of time and resources fundraising for their accessibility project. To save money, the church decides to buy a vertical platform lift from a company who will sell directly to them over the internet. They buy the lift and start the shaft-way construction. The local building inspector gets involved in the project and asks them who is going to install the lift. The project manager for the church is beside himself when he learns that the vertical platform lift will have to be installed by a company who holds a commercial lift

license. He also did not know that the lift will have to be inspected by the state elevator inspector, who will be looking to make sure it meets the ASME/ANSI A18.1 (public safety code). The congregation thought that because they were a church, they would not be considered a commercial business. At this stage the project manager isn't even sure if the lift they purchased off the internet will meet any of the ASME/ANSI A18.1 codes or whether it can be modified after the fact to do so. Unfortunately, AWA is not a dealer for the product they bought so there was nothing we could to help them, outside quoting a whole new lift. In end, the decision to buy off the internet would probably end up costing the church more money than if they had gone to a professional accessibility company during the planning stages of their project.

When Brian hung up the phone, he felt really bad for the church and wished there was more he could do. He felt strongly that he needed to share this story with others in the hopes that he could prevent someone else from making the same mistake.