

Canada: Vancouver shows doorknobs the door

November 21 2013

The city of Vancouver has banned doorknobs in new construction, a city official said Thursday.

Wrist-twisting doorknobs will be replaced with levers to make it easier on seniors and those with disabilities, city spokeswoman Viviana Zanocco told AFP.

The new rules are included in an amended building code, which takes effect March 1, 2014. It will not apply retroactively to older buildings.

"This is very progressive of Vancouver," Howard Gerry, a design professor at Toronto's OCAD University, told the daily Toronto Star.

"It makes good sense, even for private houses. Think about an aging population or an individual carrying groceries or small children. Levers make access easier."

Others such as antique doorknob sellers, however, were flying off the handle over the measure.

"I can understand if you have a public building where everybody wants to have free access and that is a problem," Allen Joslyn, the president of the Antique Door Knob Collectors of America, told the Vancouver Sun.

"But to say that when I build my private home and nobody is disabled that I have to put levers on, strikes me as overreach."

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Citation: Canada: Vancouver shows doorknobs the door (2013, November 21) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-11-canada-vancouver-doorknobs-door.html>

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