



Extruded Ceiling Track System

Balancing Act: Customized, Life-Changing Housing



# ALuminum Extrusion

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I N N O V A T I O N S T A K I N G S H A P E

## EXTRUDED CEILING TRACK SYSTEM GIVES A LIFT TO THE DISABLED



*This gloss white painted aluminum extrusion forms the ceiling track for the SureHands Lift System manufactured by Handi-Move International.*

motors last easily for over 10 years and so must the entire system. The extruded ceiling track systems have been and will always be the backbone of our organization. This ceiling track lift system can assist a disabled person to a new level of independence, so the importance of reliability is critical."

*Extruded aluminum's formability allows the ceiling track lift system to adapt to many configurations and provides reliable transfers in comfort, giving new independence to people with disabilities.*

Extruded aluminum ceiling tracks have anchored the Handi-Move Corporation's HM50 series ceiling lift systems since 1989, providing long-term durability and lightweight strength. Handi-Move International, Belgium created its innovative motorized lift systems for the disabled, appointing SureHands® Lift & Care Systems of Pine Island, New York, as their exclusive U.S. distributor 20 years ago. Aluminum extrusions play a major role in the lift system's reliability. This breakthrough consumer healthcare product line has made its mark, having recently been featured on the exciting ABC television show *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*.

Handi-Move design engineers consult closely with their aluminum extrusion supplier to develop custom lift and care systems based on specific patient and caretaker needs, according to Handi-Move's manager of purchasing and logistics, Frank Peeters. "Long-term durability is an essential factor," says Peeters. "Our ceiling track



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*Extruded aluminum ceiling track is corrosion-free and ideal for moisture-intensive environments like baths and swimming pools.*

products and service to new levels. Each new installation challenges us to develop a unique solution, always keeping the user's quality of life as our first priority."

"The biggest driving force among SureHands employees and representatives is the ability to make a difference in people's lives," agrees SureHands president Tom Herceg, "SureHands Lift & Care Systems allow many people with disabilities and their caregivers to enjoy a much higher quality of life. It's very satisfying to have a business where profit is not the sole barometer for success." Herceg notes, "Handi-Move understands the need to make innovative, reliable products where the user's interests are most important. Reliability and safety are critical since these systems lift and suspend people during transfer at least once per day, every day."

Peeters adds, "Although form follows function, in private homes it's very important to install the system as discreetly as possible, which is why we paint the extruded ceiling rails a high-gloss white." In addition to ease of mounting and aesthetically pleasing design, the light-weight strength and durability of aluminum extrusions are ideal for bathroom and swimming pool installations where water and moisture make rust-proof aluminum alloy the obvious choice over steel.

Safety and strength are designed into the ceiling by requiring supports every 3.2 feet and securing each support with two bolts or threaded rod. Straight track, 45- and 90-degree curves are available. Additional switches and turntables allow switching of tracks for greater accessibility and may even be mounted in false ceilings. As Handi-Move develops new products, many will feature extruded aluminum as a key component.

## On Track To A Better Life

Handi-Move works with its distributor SureHands Lift & Care Systems to instruct and assist new representatives and dealers throughout the U.S. "SureHands works closely with Handi-Move to develop new innovations and improve existing products," says Peeters, who finds his work most rewarding. "Nothing beats the feeling you get from a patient or caregiver who tells you how the patient's quality of life has improved due to one of our systems. It gives us that extra edge to try to continuously improve our



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*This customized SureHands HM2500RC motorized lift system operates by wireless remote control.*

new home for the January 2005 episode of the popular ABC-TV reality show *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*.

The contractor's crews, the show's design team, and hundreds of community volunteers, including assistance from Habitat for Humanity, built the now ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant *Extreme Makeover* home in a miraculous seven days. Coogan notes, "Everyone I call on comments on Rodney's lift system from the show. It was an extraordinary project to be involved in."

The lift system supports up to 353 pounds. The HM2500 uses pneumatic pendant controls, and the HM2500RC uses wireless infrared remote controls. Both versions are powered laterally as well as vertically, allowing for some people to be self-lifting and transferring. A caregiver can also maneuver these systems manually along the extruded track.

The lift system, anchored by extruded aluminum ceiling tracks, empowers the disabled by greatly expanding accessibility and mobility, changing lives and giving new hope and opportunities to those with special needs. Peeters stresses, "Quick and exceptional service is another staple of our organizations." Architects, designers, installers, patients, and caregivers all have input in customizing system requirements to suit an individual's needs. Extruded aluminum ceiling tracks ensure that each system is as versatile and practical as possible.

## The Extreme Makeover Home

SureHands representative Craig Coogan of Lift and Transfer Specialists participated on-site in the ceiling track wireless lift system's installation during the building of Rodney Anderson's



*Craig Coogan of Lift & Transfer Specialists lends a helping hand, installing the SureHands lift system on the popular TV show *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*.*



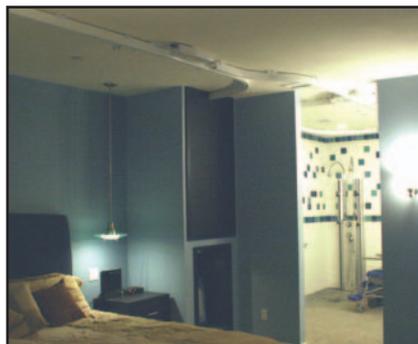
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Rodney Anderson (seated), his new wife Monique (front left), and family pose proudly with Ty Pennington in front of their family's new home. © 2005, photo courtesy of ABC, Inc./Ron Tom. Used with permission.



Supported by the strength of extruded aluminum, the ceiling track lift system gives Rodney Anderson newfound mobility, transferring him from bed to bathroom to wheelchair with ease.



SureHands president Tom Herceg (right) takes a quick break with Extreme Makeover: Home Edition's Ty Pennington during installation of Rodney Anderson's new lift system.

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The multidirectional extruded aluminum ceiling tracks connecting the bedroom to the bathroom allow Anderson a new extended mobility with little or no assistance. A hideaway closet stores the system when not in use and is operated via remote control.

The SureHands system not only made the home ADA-compliant, but gave Anderson—paralyzed from the waist down in a drive-by shooting—the chance to live independently with his new wife and improve his daily quality of life by utilizing a versatile system that acts as another pair of hands. As Anderson puts it, "The SureHands lift system has given me the freedom and independence to make my life as normal as possible, like it was before my accident."

Herceg personally assisted in Anderson's lift system installation for Extreme Makeover. "Our partnerships with organizations like Habitat for Humanity are successful because we share the mission of assisting those with special needs. The people at Habitat are wonderful examples of philanthropic and humanitarian ideals in action—working together has been a pleasure. It proves that a home can be both beautiful and accessible at the same time." The Handi-Move SureHands lift system is also used in professional workplaces and long-term care facilities, as well as in private homes.

Aluminum Extruders Council President Rand Baldwin comments, "The entire industry should be very proud of the significant role aluminum extrusions play in health-care products like this lift system. It's both gratifying and humbling to realize how the aluminum extrusion industry's people and products are truly helping to make a better life for so many disabled people."



For more information on aluminum extruders, request your free copy of the AEC Buyers' Guide at [mail@aec.org](mailto:mail@aec.org).

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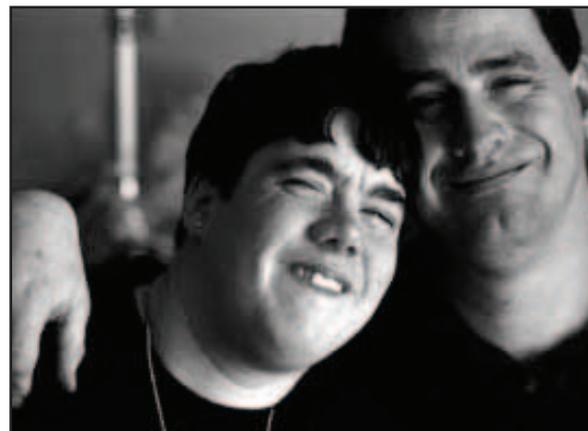
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I N N O V A T I O N S T A K I N G S H A P E

## BALANCING ACT: CUSTOMIZED, LIFE-CHANGING HOUSING MAKES COUPLE'S DREAM FOR A HOME COME TRUE



Habitat for Humanity and Courage Center teamed up with The Robinhood Corporation to make Scott and Lisa's dream home a reality.



Lisa Baron and Scott Dehn haven't let disabilities stop them from becoming proud homeowners. © Photo courtesy of Richard Anderson, St. Paul, Minnesota.

For the first 10 years of their married life, Scott Dehn and Lisa Baron lived in subsidized housing. Privacy was something that simply did not exist for the Minneapolis couple.

Both Scott and Lisa have battled cerebral palsy since childhood. Confined to wheelchairs, independence has been just a dream for most of their 37 years. Lisa relies on an electric wheelchair. Scott uses his arms to navigate. And until recently, even the sim-

plest daily tasks were very difficult for Lisa. Getting out of bed was once a "very difficult transfer," says Scott. That task put him on call mornings, evenings, and especially in the middle of the night, to prevent a fall. "I was always worried about her falling," says Scott.

Today, thanks to a collaborative effort between several Minneapolis agencies and an innovative assistive technology, Scott and Lisa are just two of the many people with disabilities that have been granted their dream: the freedom to live in their

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*Many volunteers pitched in to build this home filled with assistive technologies.*

*Scott and Lisa's finished home is a triumph of teamwork, giving them new independence and mobility to pursue their dreams.*



Courage Center, which provides services to children and individuals with disabilities, and the Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity. The groups joined forces and formed a new organization called Possibility Build: a partnership for building stronger communities. Lisa and Scott owe their new home to the joint efforts of this collaboration along with Northwestern Mutual, the company that contributed \$50,000 to building their model home.

Today the couple brims with gratitude and speaks enthusiastically about their home, which is filled with innovative assistive technology. The SureHands ceiling-mounted track system assists Lisa in transferring to and from her wheelchair. For example, if Lisa is in bed and her wheelchair is in the kitchen, the track system physically transports her to the wheelchair.

*The SureHands Lift System is customized to fit Lisa's needs, securely without fear of falling.*

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own home, independently. A number of lifestyle-enhancing tools—especially the SureHands' Handi-Move motorized lift system, allow them to accomplish everyday tasks on their own.

Hearing about the couple's dream to live independently, Dan Augustine, owner of Robinhood Corporation, a Minneapolis-based company that supplies innovative accessibility technologies including the SureHands system, helped launch a pilot effort to build a home for Scott and Lisa and, hopefully, to use that model to inspire the construction of many more.

"Lisa and Scott and their fierce determination touched me immediately," says Augustine. "I realized how much I take my own mobility for granted and really wanted to help them achieve independence in their own home, which should be a place of comfort and safety."

Augustine rolled up his own sleeves to help with the construction, teaming up with The





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*The extruded aluminum ceiling track guides Lisa's lift, transferring her easily throughout her new home.*

"This has made a huge difference for me," says Lisa. "Especially when Scott is away on business traveling."

Other mobility devices include two wheelchair-charging stations, conveniently located at the backdoor and bedside, to ensure their power chairs are always ready to roll. Environmental and security controls include keyless entry locks, power windows and window blinds, automatic door openers and locks, remote-controlled lighting, and motion-sensor outdoor security lights and surveillance system.

Scott, who works for St. Paul Traveler's Insurance Companies, is currently studying for his MBA. Lisa works in the Minneapolis Public Schools as an after school activities assistant. She plans to go back to school to get her master's degree in social work.

The couple met in college and enjoys many activities together including hand cycling and spending time with their nieces and nephews.

"Overall, the house has improved our independence," says Scott. "Like anyone who builds a new home, there are always things we would have done differently if we had to do it again. However, we are very happy that we have been able to fulfill a dream that we thought would never come true—owning our own house."

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