

# suburban life

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Since its founding three decades ago, **Total Access Elevators & Lifts** has become one of the region's most trusted providers of elevators and other accessibility products for luxury homes and businesses.

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# Reaching New Heights

SINCE ITS FOUNDING THREE DECADES AGO, **Total Access Elevators & Lifts** HAS BECOME ONE OF THE REGION'S MOST TRUSTED PROVIDERS OF ACCESSIBILITY PRODUCTS FOR HOMES AND BUSINESSES.

**W**hen close friends Ted O'Neill and Curt Lampe first started a joint business venture over 30 years ago, they had no way of knowing they had a tiger by the tail. Their enterprise, Total Access Elevators & Lifts, has since become one of the region's foremost providers of elevators and other accessibility products for residential and commercial clients.

What began as a two-man operation is now a \$10 million-plus organization with more than 30 employees and a long list of projects covering Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland. Lampe attributes the company's success to a strong work ethic, the determination to succeed, and the willingness to ensure each customer's satisfaction.

"I remember the first time somebody asked if we do wheelchair lifts," Lampe says with a laugh. "We said, 'No, but we will.' From there, as we got asked for other products, we would just add them into our mix. Now we do all accessibility equipment and products in people's homes so they don't have to move, and accessibility products for businesses, schools, universities, and churches to make sure the buildings are handicap accessible."

While remaining true to their focus on stairlifts and wheelchair lifts from their early years, Total Access also specializes in dumbwaiters, overhead lifts, power door operators, and pool lifts. The part of the business that has skyrocketed involves elevators of all types, particularly in luxury vacation homes at the Jersey Shore.

"The residential elevator is almost like an appliance now," Lampe says. "If you're building a house and you're not putting an elevator in, you're going to install one in a year or two. We find that a lot of people down at the beach decide to pass on an elevator, and end up calling us a month after closing to put one in because they didn't realize it was going to be so hard with all of the steps. A lot of people are also having trouble selling their homes if they don't have an elevator, so they'll call us to help them sell the home easier."

Total Access offers a range of different elevator types, including hydraulic, winding drum,

and air-driven units. The team will help a customer decide which is best for them based on factors like height, space, and price point.

"The most popular would probably be the inline gear-driven unit, and that's the one with the least serviceability needed on the unit," Lampe says. "It's quiet, it doesn't have hydraulic lines running to a machine room, and it's also great for the beach homes because everything is housed above the rail system in the shaftway, so there's no way it's going to get wet."

In new home construction, Total Access will do site visits with the builders, architects, carpenters, and electricians to ensure a smooth elevator installation when the time comes. The company can also add elevators to existing homes, sometimes in as few as three or four days.

This option is especially beneficial to seniors who prefer to age in place rather than downsize or move into an assisted-living facility. Elevators and other accessibility products are also ideal for people who are struggling to climb stairs because of injury, illness, or disability.

"The price that you would pay for a residential elevator, allowing you to use your whole house, would be cheaper than moving," Lampe says. "It's a new lease on life. Now you're comfortable because you know you don't have to move and pack up 30 years of stuff. We often get calls from people saying, 'Wow, I should have gotten this done years ago. It's like having a new home.'"

Total Access provides in-home tutorials of any equipment it installs, and is proud to stay connected to customers through ongoing maintenance packages. Clients appreciate the familiarity with their staff of salespeople and technicians, most of whom have been with the company for many years.

As for O'Neill and Lampe, running a business certainly comes with challenges, but their partnership has stood the test of time.

"It's a perfect business marriage because [O'Neill] takes care of the technicians and the installers, and I run the inside of the business with sales, HR, and all the duties that go along with what a general manager does every day," Lampe says. "He was down at my beach house with his wife last weekend, so we're still good friends. Not a lot of people have what we have." ■



## Total Access Elevators & Lifts

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