



BATHROOM NEWS



← EDUCATE yourself to do it right the first time. THAT'S \$ WISE →

STARTING A BATHROOM PROJECT

---STARTING OUT---

Every project begins with a desire to change something, in this case your bathroom. Sometimes we have a general idea of what we want, but in any case it's a good idea to get lots of ideas, some you may not have thought of possibly from children, relatives, friends or contractors. One thing is for certain, don't buy anything or pick up a hammer until you have a good plan.

---YOUR PLAN---

The best plans are very complete with pictures, lists and with at least a sketches or drawings. Also, your plan should consider how-to-do it books along with a thorough review of your skills in the various areas involved. Be sure to research of all the latest materials available.

Every once in a while you will find a good deal on say, a faucet that you like only to find out later it is a model that is out of date or the style or finish ends up not fitting into your final project plan. All this to say, don't buy anything until you are sure of all the aspects of the project. Let your plan guide you in all your purchases.

---THE BATHING AREA---

This is the area with the most potential for problems. Historically, ceramic tile has been the primary surround wall material. However, in recent years other materials have become available. Here's a history. First came "marlite" which is fiber board with a nice glossy coating that looked as if it would stand up to water and cleaning. Not so! Then came fiberglass which looks great, but has a down side. It has pores, admittedly not very visible,

but still there and ready to collect "grunge". That causes you to scrub leading to a loss of shine, then even more cleaning problems and tacky look.

Plastic wall systems entered the picture which were very inexpensive, looked great, were easy to install and were very appealing. Don't be fooled, they fell out of favor because the seams grew mold and leaked water into the wall.

Solid Surface, often times referred to as Corian originally developed by Dupont, solved many of the problems, plus it looks great and is very durable. However, it is more expensive and the shower pans, until recently, had to be made of plastic, which deteriorated and didn't complement the quality look of the solid surface wall material.

Cultured Marble is another entry, but it is very heavy and has pores. One interesting feature though is you can get a matching tub or shower pan and walls all of the same material which provides a really great look.

ACRYLIC This is the Champion of all the materials, entering the scene about 25 years ago. Its main features are it has no pores to gather grunge, can be permanently bonded with a special silicone adhesive, retains it shiny surface indefinitely and won't grow mold. One manufacturer, in the tub liner business, (Luxury Bath Systems) has *Microban® impregnated permanently in their materials causing them to resist bacteria and microbes, the cause of colds and many other health problems.

In conclusion, it pays to become familiar with all the possible materials that could be used in your bathroom, especially in the bathing area, before you spend any money. Each company that installs bathrooms has their pet materials, so it's good to become knowledgeable and ask why they use what they are

recommending.

---THE REST OF YOUR BATH---

We're not done yet, you have several more items to think about. Like, the vanity, plumbing fixtures, toilet, mirrors (medicine cabinet), the minor fixtures and flooring.

---VANITY or PEDISTAL SINK---

The vanity has three basic components, the top, faucet and cabinet. The top is normally either a solid surface, granite, marble or cultured marble. Each have their characteristics which in bathroom applications boil down to design, looks and your personal taste. Most contractors carry a selection and have displays to help you decide.

---FAUCETS---

Look for quality (brand names) and what you personally like. With good brand names you will get up to date technology, a good warranty. Those who install plumbing fixtures also are aware of hidden qualities and features that could be a deciding factor in your choice. Ask questions.

--- VANITY CABINETS ---

Quality is important here in two respects: longevity and looks. The longevity will come in the drawer guides and the finish. A painted finish may look good at first, but may be more subject to chipping.

--- TOILETS ---

Today the big to-do is will it flush properly with the government restriction on water usage. Most well known brand toilets have been properly engineered to function properly. There are other features that you may want to consider besides looks. There are two basic styles: round bowl and

CONTUNUED NEXT PAGE

*MICROBAN® is a registered trademark of Microban Products Company.

BATH CREATIONS

6165 Lakeshore (M-25)
Lakeport, MI 48059

YOUR LOCAL
BATHROOM
REMODELING
EXPERTS

BATH CREATIONS is a franchise of Luxury Bath Systems with over 200 locations throughout the US and Canada. We are “The Bathroom Experts” who can handle all your bathroom renovation needs. Locally, we have completed over 900 bathroom projects. We have a complete customer list for your inspection.

www.bathroomcreations.com

TO:



BATHROOM NEWS continued



← EDUCATE yourself to do it right the first time. THAT'S \$ WISE →

CONTINUED FROM OTHE SIDE

elongated. Make sure your bathroom has the room for the elongated version that is 3” longer. A few manufacturers have a two flush system, using less water. Another item is the exposed trap system as opposed to the concealed version, providing less detail on the outside making it easier to clean. Seats that lower slowly so they won't “bang” in the middle of the night if you drop the seat. Tall (comfort height) toilets are about 3” higher than the standard ones, making it easier for you to get up and down. Check out all the features making sure you will be satisfied. Once you use your new toilet and don't like it, used toilets are not something you can return.

-MIRRORS/MEDICINE CABINETS-

These come down to personal needs and looks. Beveled glass medicine cabinets as opposed to wood framed cabinets are not as “heavy” looking giving the smaller bathroom a more spacious look. A flat plate mirror leaves no storage room for the little things, resulting in a cluttered counter top.

---FLOORING---

Ceramic tile, vinyl and carpet seem to be most popular. Wood being

subjected to finish deterioration and could warp. Ceramic tile is cold to the touch and the grout lines require more cleaning. Vinyl is used the most for several reasons. Its easy to clean, the newer designs look so much like ceramic tile you can barely tell the difference and it's less costly. Carpet is good if you don't “miss the toilet” and you like the soft plush feel on your feet, but does require more cleaning.

---MINOR FIXTURES---

Towel bars, robe hooks, toilet paper holders are usually the finishing touches. Care should be taken in matching finishes and styles with plumbing fixtures.

---DOING-IT-YOURSELF?---

A bathroom project entails many different “trades”; plumbing, flooring, electrical, cabinetry, tiling and a good eye for design to make it all come together and look professionally finished. Depending on your skill level it may be that some things should be done by a professional. From experience, the one area I find most troublesome is the bathing area, be it a tub or shower. Even though you may be able to do it and make it look very nice there could be future problems. The main one is how long before it grows mold where the tub meets the wall? Or if it's a fiberglass unit how quickly will

the shine wear off and become hard to keep clean? Professionals can advise you on these things, and I don't mean the people who sell these products, I'm talking about the installers. Over time they learn first hand what works and what doesn't, not the “store clerk”. Anything that happens after the sale is usually blamed on the installers, so make sure you are dealing with a reliable company.

IF YOU'R DOING IT YOUR SELF

Evaluate which of the components of your project you feel capable of doing before you start. Make sure you have all the necessary tools or can rent or borrow them.

Line up the project components you can do and coordinate with the any contractors so you won't tie up your bathroom with frustrating delays.

Remember the old saying: “**If mama ain't happy, nobody's going to be happy.**” Which brings me to the next point, don't hesitate to call a professional for advice or actual help if you feel your getting in over your head.

--- NOW ---

Make a list of all the bold headings and write down your choices for each as you explore materials, colors, contractors, etc..

YOU'LL BE VERY HAPPY YOU TOOK THIS ONE LAST STEP.