

Plumbing

One of the first things you must consider when thinking about plumbing your home is the size of your hot water heater. To make a proper selection you will need to consider the number of bathrooms in your home and the amount of water needed. There are now some tankless water heaters available in our market, so be sure you talk to your builder about what is best for your home. (Be aware that some plumbers do not use tankless water heaters.)

You will also need to determine whether a water softener is necessary since it requires a 3rd water line. Water is softened to keep out the calcium. While outside water should not be softened, the water for the kitchen sink and the water line at the refrigerator are the only areas typically not softened inside the home.

Hosebibs on the outside of the house are another decision. Will you want to have one in front and one in the back or are side locations more preferable? Would you like more than two? Have you considered having one installed in your garage? It may be hard to imagine your outdoor watering needs in the early planning stages of your home, but experience at your present home, and your anticipated fondness of, or lack of interest in gardening or car washing can help you make this decision.

When most people think about plumbing, they immediately think of the kitchen and bathrooms in a home. However, there are other areas that must be considered to get the look and functionality that homeowners desire. Plumbing is also needed for heated flooring. Tim Barber, of Horner Plumbing points out that when in-floor heating is set in a basement level, the main sewer may need to be set lower in elevation to accommodate foam or similar insulation

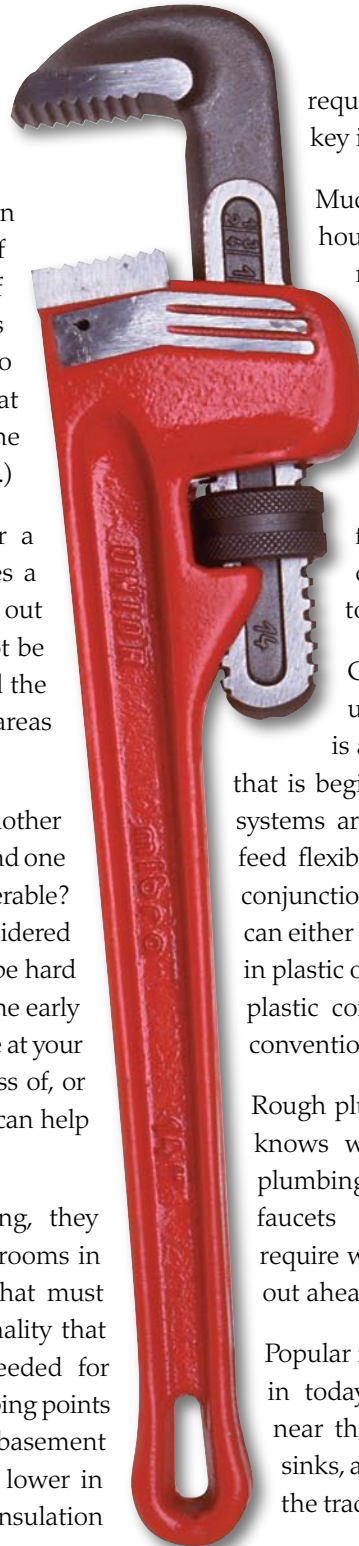
requirements. Planning for all plumbing elements is key in the design of a home or remodeling project.

Much of your plumbing happens right after the house has been framed so these considerations must be addressed early in the process. Your builder or remodeler and their plumbers have a wealth of knowledge on the type of plumbing and plumbing products that they will recommend for your home. In fact, your builder will make most of your plumbing decisions for you. No, they won't pick your fixtures and faucets, but they will make the decision regarding what type of piping is used to make those fixtures and faucets functional.

Copper and CPVC (plastic) piping are most often used in new home construction. However, there is a new method for residential water distribution that is beginning to gain acceptance. Manifold plumbing systems are control centers for hot and cold water that feed flexible supply lines to individual fixtures. Used in conjunction with a main line in copper, these flexible lines can either be plastic or an aluminum tube that is laminated in plastic on both the interior and exterior. This aluminum-plastic composite water piping can also be used with conventional plumbing systems.¹

Rough plumbing cannot be started unless your plumber knows what they will be installing on the finished plumbing side of things. That means all fixtures, faucets and appliances that require water should be picked out ahead of time.

Popular finish plumbing features in today's kitchen are pot fillers near the stovetop, vegetable and bar sinks, and a multitude of options to replace the traditional sink. Granite composite sinks with




one medium sized basin and one large basin reflect the latest design trends, while apron front sinks in which the front cabinet area is cut out capture the farmhouse look of a bygone era. When planning for the kitchen, make sure you are going to run water to the refrigerator line right away.

In the bath, it's all about luxury. Custom showering requires the installation of shower heads, body jets, hand held showers, steam, ceiling heads, and thermostatic controls. Air tubs in which the body is massaged in 5 - 100% intervals are gaining in popularity. These tubs provide more of a massage feeling by using smaller jets in greater numbers. Bidets are making their way into master suites for comfort and hygiene. Vessel sinks and living finishes are also being incorporated into the bath. In keeping with the popularity of natural products, living finishes on faucets are commanding more attention. The material used on these faucets will deepen in color. It is meant to patina with time and use. Copper sinks are also designed to do this.

“Research, design, and layout are critical. Rough piping and the finished product need to work together. It is imperative for the function, usability, and design of the home.”

Tara Gosey, Horner Plumbing

Planning for your plumbing doesn't have to be complicated. Work with your builder or remodeler to find products that will best suit your lifestyle. Remember, there is no standard as to what you can or cannot do in the kitchen and bath. While it's always good to think about resale, it's also important to have rooms that function for you. 

¹ www.toolbase.org Plastic Plumbing Manifold, Aluminum-Plastic Composite Water Piping

