

LIGHT SWITCH

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The Highs & the Lows

As you consider the rising rates for water and sewer, it would be wise to take steps to conserve water in your home. There are hundreds of ways you can adjust your daily habits and save water, such as turning off the faucet while you shave or while you wash your hair. However, if you are like most people, you will often forget to follow this course of action when you are in a hurry. To ensure that your bathroom or kitchen will be as water efficient as possible, it is advisable to install high-efficiency faucets, showerheads and toilets.

High-efficiency plumbing products earned a bad reputation back in 1992 with the federal mandate to install water-saving toilets. The early 1.6 gallons per flush (gpf) gravity-fed models placed a smaller water

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The Aquia one-piece dual flush HET by TOTO provides 1.6 gpf for bulk waste or 0.9 for liquid.



Photo: Courtesy of TOTO (www.totousa.com)

Mud Can Be a Good Thing!



DESIGN
FOREST GLEN
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BUILD

Are you getting a little tired of all the snow and sleet? Are you weary from shuffling snow boots, coats, backpacks, and sports equipment (hockey anyone?!) out of the way? Does the thought of the coming thaw and muddy paws cause you to dread the spring? We completely understand! The challenge of keeping life organized and your house clean can be daunting—especially when we drag the great outdoors inside our homes every time we open the door.

While a move to a warmer, drier climate may cross your mind, keep in mind that a few tweaks around your house can make all the difference. For example, a mudroom can save you from considerable cleaning and also rescue your sanity. The reality is, aside from the bathrooms, a mudroom is the most used area in your home—four seasons a year. It's the launch pad for your family. It's the place where you can store everything you might need on your way out, and everything has a place to go when you come home again.

Let **Forest Glen** help. We would be happy to evaluate your space and find creative ways to improve your home. Imagine how a simple room—one that even includes the name “mud”—can organize your home and make your life just a little bit easier! That way, you can spend less time cleaning and shuffling the stuff of life, and more time stopping to smell those flowers that are finally starting to bloom!

LIGHT SWITCH



Design Pro LED discs positioned inside and under the glass front cabinets.

Lighting effects on the cover photo:

Design Pro LED Modular installed under the shelves.



If you are planning to remodel your kitchen, now is a good time to consider making the switch to LED (Light Emitting Diode) lighting. LEDs are far more energy-efficient than incandescent lamps, and even though LEDs cost more up front, they will save you money in the long run. As LEDs continue to become more affordable, they are even providing energy and cost savings over compact fluorescents (CFLs).

LEDs offer many advantages over other lighting systems. They last much longer, which makes them ideal for hard to reach areas in your kitchen. For example, you do not want to be constantly replacing the light bulbs in your recessed ceiling fixtures. LEDs are also more durable than incandescent bulbs, holding up well to jarring and bumping. No mercury is used in the manufacturing of LEDs, as it is for CFLs.

LEDs provide light, but not heat. Unlike incandescent bulbs, they are cool to the touch no matter how long they have been left on. If a room has 20 high hat light fixtures, each fitted with a 75 watt incandescent bulb, the ceiling lights alone will add 1500 additional watts of heat to the room. That puts a great strain on

your HVAC system to keep the room cool in the summer. This is compounded in the kitchen where heat is continually added to the room during the cooking process. Changing to LEDs can help reduce your air conditioning bill.

The way you compare brightness levels from one LED bulb to the next is by lumens. Lumens is the measure of brightness perceived by the human eye. The higher the lumens, the brighter the bulb. A significant LED development this past year is that the light-impact of LEDs is going steadily upwards—decreasing the amount of LEDs needed to light a space. This serves to lower energy costs even further.

With LEDs you have the choice of color between “cool white light” and “warm” light, each lending a different ambience to the room. Certain LEDs are dimmable and completely compatible with lighting control systems.

LEDs are used today inside refrigerators, for illumination under range hoods, for drawer lights, and under wall cabinets. LEDs open up a wider variety of places where lighting may be installed, such as under base cabinets so that at night there is a toe light that glows and spreads out onto the floor. LEDs are perfect for providing a soft glow to translucent surfaces, such as glass countertops.

It is important to realize that low-end LED products sold at large hardware chains may cost less, but they will not have the same light output as the incandescent lamp previously installed in the same fixture. To insure your satisfaction, be sure to purchase high-performance LEDs.



Kichler's Design Pro LED Linear utilized above the cabinets, on the toekicks, and under the counter edges.

Comfy Cozy

If you want to create an eat-in kitchen, but space is limited, consider installing a banquette. A banquette is a long bench that runs along a wall, similar to a restaurant booth. It usually has an upholstered seat. With this arrangement, you can expect to seat more people at your table than with typical dining

chairs. It is also more conducive to conversation than stools set in a straight line at an island countertop. It goes a long way toward creating a cozy, intimate dining experience.

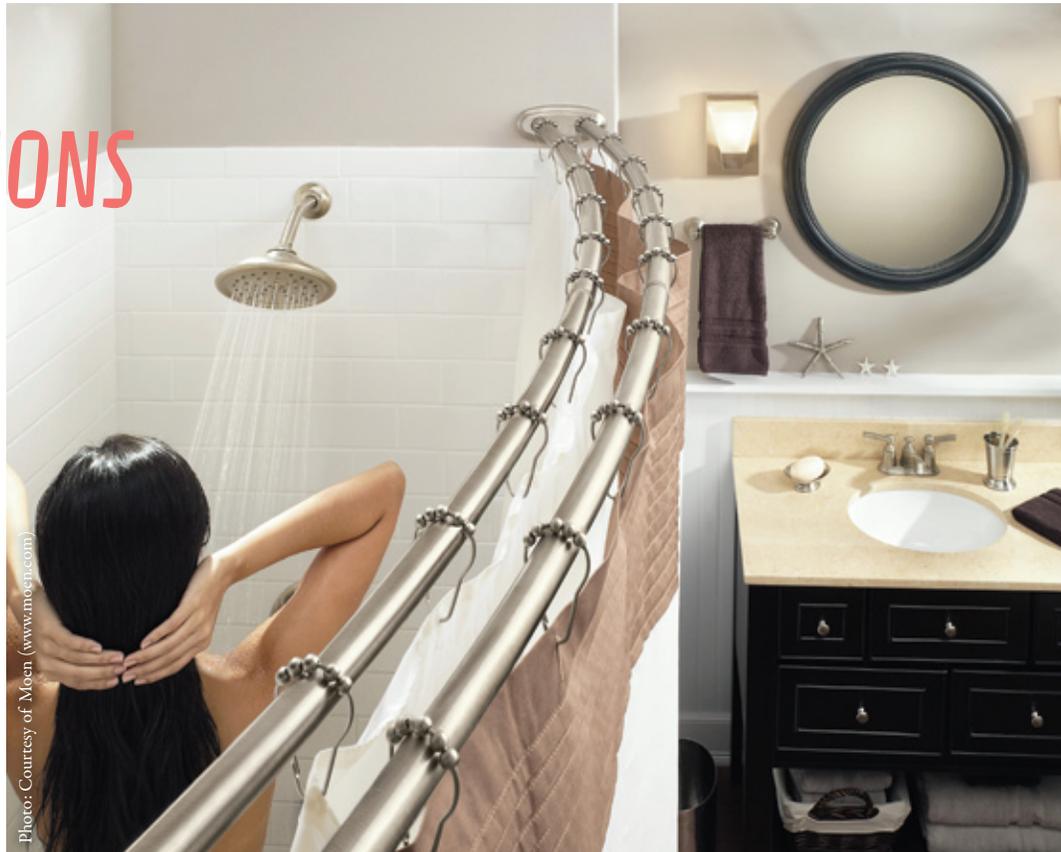
A banquette may be designed in a variety of configurations, depending on the space you have available in your kitchen. It can fit discretely into a back corner or become the centerpiece of your kitchen as part of the island. Semi-circular banquettes are quite popular, in



Space CONSIDERATIONS

Your bathroom may be small, but it can live large—without adding square footage to the room. Make use of space-saving new products, as well as some time-tested design techniques that increase the perception of space. Your tiny bathroom can have the look and feel of a spacious spa-like bath.

- **Choose light, solid colors.** Busy patterns overwhelm a small room, and dark tones visually move the walls in closer. Use solid colors in pastels, light neutrals, and soft creams to open up the space. Keep prints to a minimum.
- **Extend the ceiling.** Paint the ceiling the same color as the walls to create the optical illusion of a taller bathroom. Add to the effect by installing crown molding of the same color.
- **Minimize the shower door.** Clear glass shower doors or shower screens expand your view, making the room seem larger. Select a sliding shower door since it does not require clearance.
- **Maximize the shower enclosure.** If you use a shower curtain, install a curved shower rod. It can add up to seven inches of elbow room while you are showering.



- **Downsize the vanity.** Save space by installing a petite furniture-style vanity, a wall-mounted sink or a pedestal sink. Place a mirrored cabinet above if you need more storage.
- **Upgrade the toilet.** New compact models take up less room and are more efficient than older toilets. Some compacts even offer the comfort of elongated seats.
- **Lighten up the room.** Light makes a room appear larger. Add a window, skylight or tubular skylight to bring in natural light. Layer the lighting in the room, including diffused ambient lighting to brighten up dark corners.
- **Reflect light with mirrors.** Mirrors enhance and reflect the light in the room, opening up the space visually.

addition to the more usual rectangular shape. Taking the amount of padding into account, the seats should be no more than 20 inches from the floor and no more than 20 inches deep.

Wherever it is placed, a banquette is a real space-saver. You need three feet of space to comfortably push your chair back when seated at a traditional kitchen table. With a banquette, no chair adjustment space is required on the sides with fixed benches. A space of 200 square feet can accommodate

4-6 people. The seats can also function as storage units when you incorporate cupboards or drawers underneath.

The style of your banquette should coordinate with the rest of your home's decor, whether rustic, modern or traditional. Be sure to select upholstery fabrics that are easy-care, such as vinyl or a polyester/cotton blend with a stain-resistant finish.



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Delta's new Linden faucet flows at a rate of 1.5 gallons per minute.



Photo: Courtesy of Delta (www.deltafaucet.com)

The Highs & the Lows

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tank on a standard 3.5 gpf toilet. With less water, gravity alone was not enough to complete the job, so a toilet often required a double or triple flush. After that experience, many homeowners have become hesitant to purchase water-saving plumbing products.

Much has changed since 1992, however. Manufacturers have been steadily improving the performance of water-conserving faucets, showerheads, and toilets through new technology and enhanced design. In addition, consumers seeking top-performing products now have the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) WaterSense label to help them identify which products meet EPA criteria for reliable performance and water efficiency.

Consider the following three product categories:

1. High Efficiency Toilet (HET)

A standard toilet today flushes with 1.6 gpf—an amount that was considered water-saving in 1992. Today's HETs provide

20 percent water savings over the 1992 models, flushing at only 1.28 gpf. A dual flush toilet can save up to 30 percent more water since it allows liquid wastes to be flushed using only one gallon of water or less and solids to be flushed using 1.6 gpf.

2. Low-flow Faucet

The water flow rate of a standard faucet is 2.2 gallons per minute (gpm). A low-flow aerator can improve performance in an existing faucet. Most new faucets today are available with a high-performance low-flow aerator already installed that reduces the flow by 30 percent to 1.5 gpm. A multitude of styles and finishes are offered, so choosing a low-flow faucet will not limit your decor options.

3. Water-saving Showerhead and Hand Showers

A standard showerhead's water flow rate is 2.5 gpm. High-performance showerheads yield a 30 percent savings on water at 1.75 gpm. In addition, these new showerheads have been engineered to provide a strong showering experience.

Eco-Performance models by Moen: the Single-Function Hand Shower flows at 1.75 gpm, the Flat Rainshower flows at 2.0 gpm.



Photo: Courtesy of Moen (www.moen.com)