

## LET'S REMODEL

## Here's what to expect when remodeling

**Q: We have just purchased our first home and know that the bathroom needs to be remodeled. We have had no previous experience with any type of remodeling and would like to know what we should expect the project to cover and how long will it take?**

**A:** Many people purchase their first house only to find that once they have moved in, unpacked the boxes, and arranged the furniture that it is time to start making it feel like home. With the creation of indoor plumbing out goes the days when a plain wooden shack with a creaking door, cold wooden seat and lack of proper lighting do we find that one room can require so many choices. Bathrooms come in many sizes and have become the one room in the house that needs to offer its owners and users the widest variety of functions, style and durability. So let's take a look at some of the features and areas that will need to be addressed from determining a practical budget to the finishing touches.

**The Budget:** This area is that starting point for which all future decisions will be impacted the most. Most total bathroom remodels start at about

\$6,000 and may go as high as \$20,000. That means that there are a lot of options to choose from.

**The Contractor:** Select a contractor who has built a good reputation within the area that he services. Ask how long he has been in business and ask for his referral list. Check to see that they are properly licensed and insured and the time in which the work will be performed and completed. Make sure that the proper permits/inspections will be obtained by the contractor. Take the time to follow up with phone calls to the people on the referral list and understand that this process may take time due to everyone working different schedules. Many problems arise from not taking the time to select a contractor that meets your expectations.

**The Fixtures:** Ask if there is a showroom available for you to visit and select the specific items for your bathroom. The range of items should not be limited to one manufacturer or color. Don't be afraid to ask what options are available and their impact on your budget. Selecting poor quality items can start you down the path to a poor quality bathroom. If your contractor sends you to the local discount home center



for your selections, then that may be the first indication that your contractor may not know the full range of product lines available.

**Installation:** From the time the old fixtures are removed, to the time that walls, floor structures, electrical and plumbing services are completely checked and ready to do we start the rebuilding process. Two inspections will be necessary during the project. One at the completion of the rough-in stage and one at the completion of all work. Any items that fail these inspections should be addressed right away.

**Final walkthrough:** Go over the entire project with your contractor to

insure that all items in the contract have been satisfactorily met. Remember to try to keep a clear line of communication with your contractor throughout the entire project as to avoid any unnecessary or uneasy feeling.

*Bob Decker, Accent Remodeling I, Canton, 313-981-2460.*

For your home improvement questions or a copy of our roster booklet, call Gayle Walters, executive director of the Michigan Remodeling Association (MRA) at 810-335-3232, or send questions to "Let's Remodel," 2187 Orchard Lake Road, No. 103, Sylvan Lake, MI 48320. Answers are provided by members of the MRA, the local chapter of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI). Members include professional contractors, manufacturers, wholesalers, consultants and lenders representing all facets of residential and light commercial remodeling. Members also answer questions on "Construction Talk" with Murray Gula on WEXL-AM 1340, 1-2 p.m. Saturday. You can call in your questions at 810-544-1340. In addition, members are featured on Ask the Handyman with Gula on WXYT 1270 on Saturday and Sunday mornings at 8 a.m.

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### A SHARED EXPERIENCE

When adults share a bathroom with children, the object of a remodeling project is usually to cut down on the crowd that gathers at the sink. The first step in the design involves adding a new basin and new vanity to accommodate it. The situation can further be helped by arranging all or part of the adult bedroom closer to create a new entry and separate dressing area for the adults. The requested closet space may be replaced by building a new closet out into the room in another area of the bedroom. Outfitted the new dressing area with pocket doors not only saves floor space, but it helps sequester the dressing area from the humidity and commotion emanating from the rest of the bathroom. There are a variety of ways to make the bathroom area in a home function more efficiently. Call MODERN KITCHEN & BATH at 810-546-0660 to arrange a design consultation. Our staff will review your tastes and objectives in order to make the remodeling of your bathroom a fun, enjoyable and creative. We have everything you need to remodel including DuPont Corian® sinks, vanity tops, and bowls. We're also pleased to carry Corian® ready-to-install tub and shower wall kits. Visit our beautiful showroom at 810 E. Fourth St., Royal Oak to discover how you can surround yourself with beauty and value.

HINT: The first place to look for added space for a bathroom is a hall closet. Call our office and receive our FREE Kitchen and Bath Design Handbook.

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