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Return to HOME TYLE

Return to Home Improvement

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Previous story

Next story

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SITE INDEX

- Homepage
- Search
- CyberSurveys
- News Talk
- Sports Talk
- Lions Talk
- Tiger Talk
- Wings Talk
- Car Talk
- Tech Talk
- Horoscope
- Hot Sites
- Lottery
- Weather
- Staff

NEWS

- Autos
- Joyrides
- Business
- Careers
- Census
- Columnists
- Commuting
- Detroit History
- Editorials
- Health
- Metro / State
- Livingston
- Macomb
- Oakland
- Wayne
- On Detroit
- Nation / World
- Obituaries
- Death Notices
- Politics / Govt.
- Real Estate
- Religion
- Schools
- Special Reports
- Technology

SPORTS

- Sports Home
- Lions/NFL
- Pistons/NBA
- Red Wings/NHL
- Shock/WNBA
- Tigers/Baseball
- MSU

The handyman

# Designer plumbing, accessories improve the bathroom experience



Acorn Engineering's Neo-Comby, stainless steel one-piece toilet has everything you need in a small space.

By Glenn Haege / Special to The Detroit News



Whether you want your bathroom to be spartan, sinfully luxurious or practical, bathroom manufacturers aim to please. They brought their newest products to the recent Kitchen and Bath Industry Show in Orlando. Here are the trends that caught my eye:

## Toilets

Starting with the practical, Kohler made a big thing of its wide selection of comfort-height toilets. The toilet seats are the same height as a standard chair. While first introduced as an American with Disabilities (ADA) product, the higher toilets were immediately popular with anyone over 6-feet tall or over 40 years of age. Kohler had comfort-height toilets in all its high-style commode lines.

Reps from American Standard, (800) 442-1902, said that their company also

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[TV Listings](#)  
[Crossword](#)

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[Decorating](#)  
[Food](#)  
[Gardening](#)  
[Home Improvement](#)  
[Home Life](#)  
[Home Tech](#)  
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(updated April 17,  
2000).

features comfort-height toilets in all their major design lines so that customers will not have to sacrifice comfort for style.

If you are into minimalist or prison chic, the folks at Acorn Engineering Co., (800) 591-9050, introduced their Neo-Comby, one-piece toilet, paper holder, sink, storage cabinet and towel bar. All this is packed into a 32-by-33-inch package costing a mere \$5,000. When you go to brush your teeth with this baby, you'll not only be set for life, you'll think you're doing 10 to 20 in maximum security.

## Sinks and tubs

If you're in a Western mood, Rocky Mountain Hardware, (888) 788-2013, can rustle you up a hand-made sink that looks like a water trough for \$2,000. Rugged Western-looking fixtures will set you back another \$1,200 or so.

If you don't want your bathroom stainless steel or cast in bronze, how about carved out of granite? Stone Forest, (505) 986-8883, specializes in carved granite and marble lavatories. A classic marble or round granite sink costs about \$600. Iron lav stands cost from \$220 to \$450. A granite lav pedestal is \$600.

But why settle for just washing your hands? A 2,500-pound, six-foot long, blue/gray granite bathtub can be yours for \$12,000. If it doesn't fall through the floor, it will impress the in-laws and make your rubber ducky very proud.

American Standard, (800) 442-1902, could easily lay claim to having the most luxurious bathtubs at the Kitchen and Bath Show. The flowing lines of their free standing, draped tub made it a work of art. The price of the tub including frame was around \$3,200. An elegant freestanding tub with a cherry wood frame was \$2,800.

"Victorian Elegance" was a theme that kept repeating itself over and over again. The Soho Corp., (800) 969-SOHO, and Devon & Devon, (800) 351-0038, devoted their entire lines to ornate British designs. Baths, lavatories, commodes, faucets, showers and accessories all reminded you of a bygone era.

Delta Faucet Company, (800) 345-3358, capitalized on this theme with their new Victorian Collection of sink and bath faucets and accessories. The Delta Victorian Collection comes in chrome, a new Venetian Bronze, as well as the company's exclusive polished brass and pearl nickel Brilliance finishes.

Kohler, (800) 4-KOHLER, went back to 1929 for a retrospective look at Kohler products that were displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in that year. Most attractive was its 32-inch wide, fireclay console table sink equipped with retro-look Memoirs faucet and lever handles.

## Mirrors and more

Newhome Bath & Mirror, Inc., (877) 242-5327, introduced the Shower ClearMirror. This is an electrically heated 10-by-12-inch mirror that will actually stay fog free and allow you to shave in the shower.

Sanitary for All, (800) 363-5874, the American Division of a French plumbing products company, introduced SaniPro, a line of toilet, sink and shower fixtures that permit you to flush up from basements below sanitary lines and from areas in the house that may be too far away from a sanitary stack to flush or drain properly. The device includes a special compacting pump that creates water flow while compacting discharge to a 3/4-inch diameter pipe. Using the new equipment, an entire flushing cycle requires less than 1 gallon of water.

If you have little ones who keep the water running until it overflows the sink, the Step2 Co., (866) 2-ENDURE, introduced a line of water-proof plastic vanities. The vanities come in white and ivory and retail from \$169 for a single door vanity to

\$199 for the deluxe double door style.

Far more often the culprit is not a child but a burst pipe or defective piece of equipment. Step2 creators demonstrated FloLogic, (877) 356-5644, a unique circuit breaker for the home's water supply. The FloLogic System eliminates flooding by turning off the water when it senses a burst pipe or an unusually long-running plumbing appliance.

**Note to readers:** Please do me a favor. If you send a question that you would like answered in my Thursday Detroit News article in the Features section, I need to know at least your first name and the city in which you live. Thank you.

*If you have a tough cleaning problem and would like to see the answer in Glenn Haege's forthcoming cleaning book write: [Cleaning Question, Master Handyman Press, P.O. Box 268, Glenn, MI 49416](#), or e-mail [askglenn@masterhandyman.com](mailto:askglenn@masterhandyman.com). For do-it-yourself questions, call "Ask the Handyman" radio show from 8 a.m. to noon Saturday and Sunday, (800) 65-HANDY. Listen on WXYT-AM (1270) and 205 other stations. For answers to hundreds of remodeling questions, visit [www.MasterHandyman.com](http://www.MasterHandyman.com).*

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