

**THE FUTURE OF PLUMBING:
SUSTAINABLE TRENDS AND
FORECASTING FOR 2023 AND 2024**



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to “The Future of Plumbing: Sustainable Trends and Forecasting for 2023 and 2024.” In this eBook, we will explore the latest trends shaping the plumbing industry and how sustainability plays a pivotal role in these developments. As we delve into the forecasted trends, we’ll also highlight feasible and cost-effective solutions that contractors can bring to their customers. So, get ready to discover the exciting world of sustainable plumbing and how it can transform homes and communities for the better.

EMBRACING DESIGN AND CLEANLINESS



In recent years, the importance of design and cleanliness in plumbing has gained significant traction. Homeowners and contractors alike are seeking easy-to-clean materials and fixtures that not only enhance hygiene but also elevate the aesthetics of their spaces. Clean lines and functional designs have become increasingly popular, creating a modern and sleek ambiance in bathrooms and kitchens.

[According to Jean-Jacques L'Henaff](#), a design expert with LIXIL Global Design:

...the bathroom has transformed into a space focused on health, wellness, and relaxation.

At the same time, larger home design trends are influencing aesthetic styles. Since the pandemic, cleanliness has become paramount and products like one piece toilets with full skirts have gained popularity because they're easier to keep clean.



As sustainability takes center stage, incorporating smart plumbing products has become a trend. These innovative solutions provide convenience while minimizing water and energy waste. Imagine a bathroom that feels like a spa, with smart showers, faucets, and toilets that adapt to your preferences. With advancements in technology, achieving a luxurious and eco-friendly bathroom experience is now within reach. Where plumbers and contractors will begin to run into obstacles is finding the right fit for clients who have expensive taste but are on a budget.

The variety of products that are readily available can be a challenge, and giving your client more than two models to choose from can be difficult. For example, if your client wants a toilet that has a built-in bidet, a seat warmer, and is also tankless it can cost them well over \$1,000 just for the fixture, and that's before installation and maintenance. If it's outside of their budget, you could suggest a toilet like [Niagara's Shadow 0.8 GPF](#) and add a bidet attachment that includes a seat warmer. This would be much more cost effective than an all-in-one toilet but still provide the same experience your client is looking for.

**Phantom with Stealth
Technology 0.8 GPF**

AGING IN PLACE AND BUILD-TO-RENT



As one of the largest generations hits retirement, the concept of aging in place has gained popularity. Homeowners, specifically those who have purchased homes during the housing boom are looking to create spaces that cater to their changing needs while maintaining comfort and independence. ADA compliance is crucial in designing residential spaces that are capable of serving the needs of various users.

Integrating inclusive design elements, such as wall bars and [ADA compliant height toilets](#), helps ensure that homeowners can use their fixtures for decades as they age.

This is also incredibly important to note for the build to rent properties that are springing up across the nation. Millions of gen Z and millennials are forgoing owning homes and choosing to rent instead. To meet this demand, builders are creating neighborhoods that are made simply to serve as long term rentals. People still want to settle in a home with a backyard, but they don't want the additional costs that can come with owning a property. To keep maintenance costs down, the owners of these build-to-rent neighborhoods need fixtures that will age with their residents and are easy to maintain over time.



SUSTAINABILITY SAVES MONEY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The world is witnessing a growing movement towards sustainable living, and the plumbing industry is no exception. According to the 2023 U.S. GMP Report, sustainability is continuing to be a key focus for 2023 and going into 2024. It encompasses not only the use of eco-friendly materials but also the adoption of practices that promote a greener and healthier future.

What exactly constitutes an 'eco-friendly material'? We define eco-friendly items as "not being environmentally harmful". For instance, the reason plastic has been deemed bad for the environment is simply because it cannot be effectively recycled, and it's made with environmentally toxic materials.

The idea of providing clients with eco-friendly materials can be daunting, but it may surprise you to know that you're already using many materials that you didn't even realize fall into the definition of eco-friendly. Most toilets, as an example, are made with porcelain and coated with Vitreous China, an enamel glaze that strengthens and smooths out porcelain. Usually

made of clay, feldspar, flint, and quartz sand, Vitreous China can be one hundred percent recyclable if you have a plant near you that can process porcelain. But, what makes toilets with Vitreous China more sustainable than toilets that do not utilize it is that it tends to last much longer, reducing environmental impact over time by reducing the need for replacement. Most toilets have a lifespan of close to 20 years and if properly maintained and if they have the Vitreous China glaze, they can last even longer.

In line with this trend, homeowners and contractors are choosing materials that minimize environmental impact, such as wood, stone, metal, glass, and natural fabrics. The preference for plastic and synthetics is diminishing, as people prioritize pure raw materials and products from environmentally friendly manufacturers. By incorporating sustainable elements into plumbing projects, professionals can demonstrate their commitment to both the environment and the well-being of their clients

WHAT EXACTLY CONSTITUTES AN 'ECO-FRIENDLY MATERIAL'?

We define eco-friendly items as "not being environmentally harmful."



FEASIBLE SUSTAINABILITY FOR THE AVERAGE HOMEOWNER

While sustainability is a paramount concern, it's essential to ensure that sustainable practices and products are accessible to all homeowners. Not everyone can afford extensive eco-friendly systems, nor do they necessarily need them. However, there are plenty of feasible options available that contribute to sustainability without breaking the bank.

One area where homeowners can make a significant impact is through efficient fixtures. Products like Niagara's toilets are designed to

save water without sacrificing performance. Advancements like their patented, award-winning [Stealth Technology®](#), allow for efficient flushing while minimizing water usage, making them a primary choice for sustainable projects. These, among other brands, fit industry usage regulations and often qualify for a rebate to the homeowner, making it an easier sell. Even if you don't want to use a Niagara model, you will want to utilize products that come with both a WaterSense and MaP or MaP Premium certification.

WATERSENSE

For over two decades, the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#) has championed the [WaterSense®](#) program, encouraging manufacturers to strive for greater water savings in the plumbing fixtures they produce.

These WaterSense Certified products provide consumers with simple ways to drastically cut their water use with little to no change in performance. With extensive testing, the WaterSense certification can be tough to earn, but the toilets who do earn the certification are guaranteed to perform.

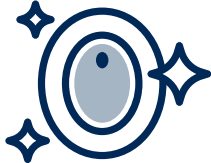


A WaterSense certified toilet will use 1.28 GPF or less while meeting specific standards:



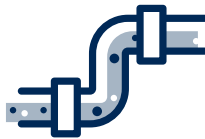
Mixed testing media flushability

Ability to flush testing media of different sizes and density (i.e., floating versus sinking media).



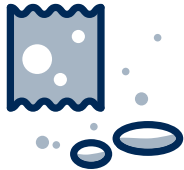
Bowl surface cleaning

Ability to clean the surface of the bowl.



Drainline waste transport

Ability to transport waste media through a drainline.



Waste extraction

Ability to clear soybean paste test media and toilet paper (meant to be representative of human waste) from the bowl.

MAP AND MAP PREMIUM

For those in the plumbing industry, or even those that influence it, high-performance and low maintenance are the end goals of every job or project. When it comes to toilets, the pros know to look for the MaP or MaP® Premium certified label. To meet the basic standards for a MaP certification, a toilet must flush at least 650 grams of waste down a toilet four out of five flushes. The waste must clear the bowl completely for the flush to count – see [this video](#) Pro Builder Matt Risinger put together on how the testing works.

Current EPA WaterSense standards only measure up to 350 grams of waste moved per flush. MaP's testing measures up to 1,000 grams, providing an even better evaluation of a toilet's flush capacity – as more grams equal a better performing flush.

In addition to a toilet's ability to remove waste, MaP Premium toilets must also use no more than 1.1 GPF with each flush, which is 14% less than current EPA WaterSense requirements. Whether you're installing, specifying, or stocking a MaP Premium toilet, you'll do so confidently knowing that the toilet has already achieved the EPA WaterSense certification, and has earned even further distinction from the independent MaP group.



Matt Risinger testing Niagara's Shadow Toilet

CONCLUSION

The future of plumbing revolves around sustainability and the adoption of eco-friendly practices.

As the industry embraces design and cleanliness, homeowners can enjoy functional and aesthetically pleasing spaces. Aging in place and inclusivity become more prominent, emphasizing the importance of accessible design elements.

Sustainability remains a driving force, encouraging the use of eco-friendly materials and practices throughout plumbing projects. Feasible solutions, such as efficient fixtures like Niagara's toilets, allow any homeowner to make sustainable choices without compromising performance or breaking the bank.

Remember, the journey towards sustainability begins with small, feasible steps. With the right knowledge and commitment, we can collectively build a greener and more sustainable world, one plumbing project at a time.



Shadow with Stealth Technology 0.8 GPF

Start your sustainability journey with Niagara.
[Find a wholesaler near you.](#)

ABOUT NIAGARA

Throughout this eBook, we have highlighted the innovative products and technologies offered by Niagara, a leading brand in the plumbing industry. Niagara's toilets, including the Pro line, are designed to provide water-saving solutions without compromising performance. With their Stealth Technology, Niagara toilets ensure efficient flushing while minimizing water usage.

To learn more about Niagara's products visit their website at pro.niagaracorp.com.