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## **KITCHEN REMODEL TOPS HOME MAKEOVER LIST**

*Maximize Your Kitchen Remodel with Elkay's Latest Tips and Trends*

OAK BROOK, IL – July 2009 – Despite the current economic challenges facing homeowners, a kitchen remodeling project still tops the list as the area where most can recoup the majority of their investment, according to *Remodeling* magazine's 2008 – 2009 Cost vs. Value Report. In fact, the National Association of Realtors® home buyers' profile study recently revealed that nearly half of all home buyers remodeled or otherwise made improvements to the kitchen within three months of the purchase of their home.

Whether moving forward with an elaborate redesign or a series of smaller projects that work together to enhance the overall look and feel of the space, homeowners tackling a remodel are facing the same question - what trends in the marketplace should they incorporate into their kitchen remodel to ensure it reflects their unique personal style, while increasing their home's long term resale value. The following tips and trends were developed to help guide homeowners make more informed design decisions when embarking on the kitchen remodeling process.

### **Color Splash**

One growing trend in kitchen design is adding a splash of vibrant color into the room. Whether it is through an interesting tile installation, countertop material or single

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accent wall, homeowners want to express their personal style in the hub of their home – the kitchen.

“Rooms should be designed to evoke an exciting sensory reaction that is often derived from using color to create a look that is new, surprising and fresh,” notes leading interior designer Jamie Drake, ASID. “By adding a punch of color, a room can be instantly transformed, but homeowners should always anchor the room with a strong neutral such as black, white, mahogany or charcoal, as it will give the room a sense of balance and crispness,” continues Drake.

Drake also notes that another designer tip is to try to find a piece of fabric that inspires, then build the room around it and let the design elements and colors within the fabric guide your choices for the room.

Homeowners can incorporate a dash of color in a variety of ways beyond just wall color – it can be expressed through appliances, countertop elements, backsplashes or the finish of the sink and faucet. In an effort to provide homeowners and designers with more color options within the kitchen, Elkay® now offers 19 distinct sink finishes, including stainless steel, antique copper hammered and the richness of black, husk, mocha and white in its Quartech sinks, as well as faucets offered in 18 different finish options ranging from stainless steel and copper to black and white.

“Chrome and brushed nickel remain Elkay’s most popular faucet finishes, but we have seen a few new players gain in popularity such as oil rubbed bronze, antique brass and mirrored copper faucet finishes,” notes Ann Rottinghaus, Elkay’s marketing communications manager.

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### **Mix and Match**

The concept of mixing and matching everything from textures to materials to style genres is another design trend that is gaining momentum. According to the “Kitchen Intelligence: A Designer’s Perspective” study conducted by the Research Institute for Cooking and Kitchen Intelligence (RICKI), kitchen designers have recently seen a willingness – even a demand – for mixing and matching. “A comparable analogy is in the fashion industry, where a segment of more fashion-conscious consumers are mixing colors and styles that violate the mass market’s desire for consistency,” notes RICKI.

“Through our interactions with Elkay’s designer council, we know that the movement toward personalized spaces continues to evolve with designers and homeowners wanting to integrate a variety of styles, materials and textures in an effort to create a truly distinctive and expressive kitchen design,” adds Rottinghaus.

“Elkay is continually expanding its product offering in terms of materials and textured finishes to help provide homeowners and designers with more options to mix and match. Over the years, Elkay has also reinvented classic sink and faucet designs - extending them into other style genres, such as creating a double bowl stainless steel apron front sink. An apron sink would normally be considered for a more traditional kitchen setting, but recreating the piece in stainless steel results in a sleeker look that extends that sink style to fit into decors ranging from transitional to contemporary,” continues Rottinghaus.

Elkay’s sink finishes include antique hammered copper, soft texture stainless steel, hammered mirror stainless steel and granite and quartz composite finishes such as the e-granite™ mocha and Quartech™ husk.

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### **Accessorize Is the New Way to Customize**

Kitchen accessories can also have a big impact on the kitchen's style, functionality and overall organization. Accessories such as a colorful countertop mixer or a built-in coffee maker can completely transform the look and feel of the kitchen. Also, according to the RICKI study, many homeowners desire streamlined designs with less ornamentation. The study notes that modern design is hot and it's driving the demand for simple, clean lines within the kitchen. Homeowners and designers alike want to reduce the clutter and maximize the efficiency and functionality of every element in the kitchen.

Inspired to provide this level of streamlined functionality, while enhancing the overall aesthetics of the kitchen, Elkay created 39 new custom-sized kitchen accessories including rinsing baskets, bottom grids, drain trays and cutting boards. The accessories are designed to be a perfect fit for each intended popular Avado® and Gourmet™ e-granite™ sink model, meaning the accessory is custom-sized to fit the sink bowl, ensuring items such as bottom grids and rinsing baskets fill the compartment completely for maximum use. Elkay also makes it simple for the homeowner to coordinate his/her sink and accessories by including the photos and information about all the matching accessories alongside each sink model on [www.elkayusa.com](http://www.elkayusa.com).

With the myriad of options facing homeowners when planning a remodel, incorporating leading design trends such as adding a pop of color, mixing textures and including interesting accessories should help to simplify the shopping process, while

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helping to strike the ideal balance between showcasing a homeowner's unique personal style and adding elements that will increase the home's resale value in the future.

For more than 89 years, Elkay has been an innovative manufacturer of stainless steel sinks, water coolers, drinking fountains and faucets for residential and commercial use. Elkay, which is ranked 57th in *Crain's Chicago Business* list of Chicago's Largest Privately-Held Companies, has more than 3,600 employees in facilities across the United States and select international markets. Elkay is also a member of key industry associations including the U.S. Green Building Council [USGBC], the American Society of Interior Designers [ASID], the National Kitchen & Bath Association [NKBA], and the Plumbing Manufacturers' Institute [PMI].

Headquartered in Oak Brook, Illinois, Elkay is also the parent company of E.B. Tecnica Mexicana<sup>®</sup>, Phylrich<sup>®</sup> International and Elkay China. Elkay is America's number one selling stainless steel sink company. The Elkay Manufacturing Cabinetry Division is the fourth largest cabinet manufacturer in the U.S. with its Yorktowne<sup>®</sup> Cabinetry, Medallion<sup>®</sup> Cabinetry and Mastercraft<sup>®</sup> Cabinets holdings.

For more information, Elkay customers can contact Elkay customer service at (630) 572-3192 or visit [elkayusa.com](http://elkayusa.com). For media inquiries, contact Maureen Brennan at (312) 946-6075 or view our electronic press kit on [elkayusa.com](http://elkayusa.com).

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