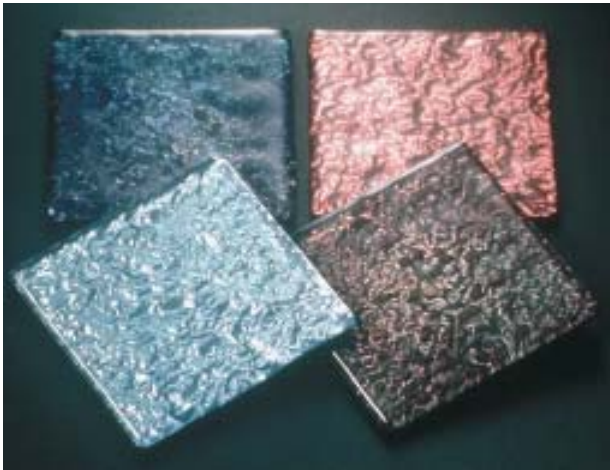


■ Kitchen & Bath

TILE



Eye Candy. Photography only hints at the striking three-dimensional qualities of this tile. Through a smooth undulating surface of clear glass, the textured, hand-colored backside reflects light with an iridescent effect. *Vitrium* glass tile is available in 2x2, 4x4, 6x6, and 3x6 sizes and costs around \$40 to \$60 per square foot, priced by distributor.

Vitrium, 215/766-3095, www.vitriumtiles.com.

Metal Mosaics. Solder doesn't replace grout in the *Metallismo* line of brass and stainless-steel mosaic tile. Each tile is

rubber backed to prevent conductivity, and the mosaics are mesh-mounted for easy installation. Shapes include squares, mini bricks, rhomboids, ovals, and more. Prices start at \$36 per square foot.

Walker Zanger, 818/504-0235, www.walkerzanger.com.



Picture This. How about a bleacherful of adoring fans adorning the client's shower wall surround? Images in Tile can permanently infuse any image into the surface of a specially coated ceramic, porcelain, or travertine tile. The artwork can occupy a single tile or an entire wall of unlimited size. The tile can be used anywhere ordinary ceramic tile lives, from a kitchen backsplash to a pool bottom. Prices vary by application and the tile body used; the cost for a project like the 4x6-foot shower wall shown is around \$1,500 to \$2,500, with a typical production time of about two weeks.

Images in Tile, 303/922-4007, www.imagesintile.com.

Better Grout Getter. Ceramic tile can last a long time, maybe forever. You probably can't say the same for grout, but it can be tough to remove when it's time for a touch-up. This *Grout Saw* has a comfortable, resilient handle and a sculpted thumb rest positioned directly over the maximum pressure point. The 2-inch tungsten carbide-coated blade is designed to chew through joints $\frac{1}{16}$ inch and wider. Replacement blades are available. The saw costs \$11.

Marshalltown, 641/753-0127, www.marshalltown.com.



WATER FILTERS



POE and POU. Whether your homeowner clients require a point-of-entry (POE) or point-of-use (POU) water purification solution depends on numerous factors. Chlorine's not going to harm the laundry, but it makes a lousy cup of tea. An undercounter POU filter can take care of it. Iron in the water can corrupt the entire plumbing system and calls for POE filtration at the primary inlet. The *Aquafer* filter uses a proprietary "KDF" filtering medium that's supposed to remove up to 99% of water-soluble lead, mercury, nickel, chromium, and other dissolved metals. Significantly, the system is said to require no wasteful backwashing or other regular maintenance. The filters cost from \$1,595 to \$2,495, depending on the required flow (gpm) capacity.

Puritec, 888/491-4100, www.puritec.com.



No Pipe Left Behind. Blue stains in the sink and shower are a sure sign of copper corrosion from aggressive (low pH, or acidic) water. Aggressive water shortens appliance life spans, while progressive etching of copper tubing leads to eventual pinholes and system failure. AWS offers a comprehensive line of pH neutralizers (and many other whole-house filtration systems) designed to address corrosive water at the POE.

Advanced Water Systems, 831/476-0515, www.advancedh2o.com.

Protozoan Park. If you're well hydrated, you drink at least eight glasses of water a day. That's just fine with cryptosporidium and giardia, wee parasitic protozoa that occur in municipal water supplies large and small and thrive in the human intestinal tract.

PureTouch AquaSuite under-counter filtration systems claim to provide 99.99% parasite removal, along with chlorine, lead, mercury, and other foul stuff, while delivering 1 gallon of water per minute. No-sweat installation is managed by a single bolt clamp for the faucet's deck mount, braided stainless-steel supply hoses, and an included tee-adaptor fitting. A battery-powered light on the faucet base signals when the filter nears replacement time. List prices start at \$280 for the chrome finish and top out at \$420 for a copper finish.

Moen, 877/374-6542, www.pure-touch.com.



RECYCLING CENTERS



Tasteful Waste Management. This organizer accommodates three 25-quart triangular plastic containers and a canvas bag supported on a wire framework. The canvas bag (shown stuffed with plastic shopping bags) is good for stuffing with plastic shopping bags. The containers roll out on bottom-mounted, full-extension slides in a 34-inch-wide base cabinet. The drawer above is a natural location for twist ties, rubber bands, twine, unidentified keys, a couple of chip clips, and other never-used items

that should probably just be recycled instead of stashed. It happens in the best of homes. Cabinets are independently priced by distributor.

Wood-Mode, Inc., 570/374-2711, www.wood-mode.com.

Trash Control. Homeowners have to think twice about their trash nowadays as more disposal companies begin to enforce rigid curbside presentations — all in the name of recycling, of course. Cans in one container, glass in another, newspapers lovingly bundled and tied, and pretty plastics all in a row. All this extra handling is made easier at the point of disposal with a cluster of organizing bins.

The *Roll Out Recycling Center* installs behind a hinged door or converts to a door mount unit with an included bracket. Two- and four-bin configurations hold 27-quart-capacity plastic bins (top).

A nice thing about door mounting is that it allows the use of a handy *Toe-Kick Opener* (bottom right); after all, your hands are probably full. Lift the catch with your foot, and the spring-loaded unit slides forward automatically.

A *Rotary Corner Recycling Center* may be one of the better applications for a 36-inch corner base cabinet (bottom left). Three 32-quart-capacity bins hang on a rotating center post behind pie-corner doors. The unit is also available for door mounting (but without a foot-power option).

Knap & Vogt Manufacturing, 800/253-1561, www.kv.com.



The Recyclinator. Here's a setup that could make taking out the trash a thing of the past. The *Recyclit's* stainless-steel chutes install through an exterior kitchen wall and emerge outside into a permanently-installed steel canopy that neatly tops a roll cart or a recycling bin. The chutes are capped by stainless-steel, magnetic flip doors that keep the wind from whistling in. Extension chutes are available for two-story drops. A single-chute system lists for \$495, plus your installation cost.

Recyclit, 800/353-5136, www.recyclitinc.com.

