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## How To Identify Kitec Plumbing And What To Do About It

In our Home & Garden media obsessed society we devote an awful lot of attention to the “shiny” things in housing - like the fitting, finishes and overall aesthetic experience.

While there is no denying the appeal of these items, home buyers would be well advised to pay attention to what's behind those walls. In a city like Toronto where much of the housing stock is aging, you may well be up against some issues that could compromise your health - or the structural integrity of your property- which could have some serious financial consequences. But, as we'll explore below, these issues are not limited to the older housing stock; newer homes are also not immune.

This in part why urbaneer is continuing a series which will address some of these housing issues that help you comprehend those elements that you can't see - and help you understand why you might want to take a closer look. We recently wrote about air quality in your home in a handy “Guide To Radon Exposure” and about ‘Sick Building Syndrome’ in “The Search for a Healthy Home”. We've even addressed broader factors affecting your home life, including “What are the Real Financial, Emotional and Health Costs of Commuting?”

Today we're going to explore Kitec plumbing - which will be of particular interest to homeowners (or prospective homeowners) of homes and condos built between 1995 and 2007, where Kitec piping was a popular choice for builders and renovators.

### What the heck is Kitec Plumbing?

Mostly used as piping for drinking water, and baseboard water systems, the appeal of Kitec piping initially was that it was very resistant to corrosion, and offered a good alternative to copper piping.

However, it was determined that not only does Kitec corrode, it does so at an accelerated rate. Around 2005 Kitec was pulled from the market and is no longer manufactured. Buildings fitted with this piping will likely be subject to failure long before it should, based on its age. The rapid deterioration of these pipes as well means that pipes may not just leak - but explode - meaning that damage could be widespread (and expensive). Bottom line - if you own a home with Kitec plumbing, you can expect to have to replace it.

There's a great article on our site from the Toronto Star about why Kitec Plumbing could be an issue for you called “Kitec Plumbing In Your Home Will Cost you.”

### How do I know if I have Kitec Plumbing?

As a prospective homeowner, your property inspector will inform you that there is Kitec Plumbing, so that you can either anticipate this repair expense in the future or request that the seller fix it.

Most of the piping is either bright orange (hot water) or blue (cold water), but in reality it was made in lots of different colours and distributed as different brands. To be sure, your best bet is to check out in the area around the hot water tank or in the mechanical room where the pipe connects or exits the walls. You'll also be able to find them in bathrooms as well, under the sinks. Fittings are stamped clearly with Kitec or KTC.

### Yikes! What is this going to cost me?

That depends on the amount, obviously, and the time required to fix it. The Toronto Star article refers to a midtown Toronto condo building that was built using Kitec plumbing. In the article, they suggest that repair costs in this building varied from \$5,000 to \$6,500 for one-bedroom units to \$8,000 to \$10,500 for two-bedroom and larger suites - which included piping and drywall, but not tiles.

And here's the kicker: none of this is covered under the condominium reserve fund. Each owner is on the hook for his or her own expenses. In fact, we recently sold a unit in the aforementioned condominium just as this issue was coming to light. To offer the Buyer assurance, the Seller placed \$10,000 in trust with his Seller's solicitor on closing to cover the proposed repair cost should Kitec be in the suite (apparently - as the story goes - the second of the two towers did not have it installed).

It may not surprise you to learn that Kitec piping has been the cause behind a number of class action lawsuits, with the largest having been settled in 2011 to the tune of \$125 million USD (it included claims in both the U.S. and in Canada). While that may seem like a lot of money, there were so many claims that the amount that people will actually receive will be minimal - and likely won't help much to defray their repair costs.

While Kitec is not something that is identified by law according to the Real Estate Council of Ontario, it obviously is something to ponder if you are buying or selling a home built during that time period; like with all things real estate, due diligence and the guiding hand of knowledge and experience (from a professional) will go far to protect and preserve your best interests.

Wonder what's behind your walls (or your future walls)? With decades of experience in the market, based on constant research and a multi-disciplinary education in housing, we are not only here to help - we've got the expertise to be your best ally in your house hunt.

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## We are currently promoting...



### An Elegant Edwardian Home Sweet Home In Dufferin Grove \$1,299,000

This gracious Edwardian semi-detached merchant class manse has been substantially renovated into a spectacular family home with potential income supplement. Formerly multi-units, this residence now features an elegant open concept entertainment level with dreamy chef's kitchen, a generous second level with three bedrooms, a renovated bath and a second kitchen well-suited to becoming a laundry / craft room, and a third floor with two more well-proportioned bedrooms. The lower level - with separate side entrance - was recently dug down to create a laundry room, and an expansive volume of space with walk-out to the professionally landscaped rear garden ready to tailor to your own needs!



### Stylish Living on the Danforth

Upon entering this 3-bedroom semi from the covered front porch, one is welcomed by an upgraded, open concept space that boasts gleaming hardwood floors, recessed lighting, and custom California shutters. The sightlines are amazing; the sophisticated living area feeds into the elegant dining space which then opens to an upgraded, contemporary kitchen - everything feels open and airy! The second floor houses 3 ample bedrooms and a 4-piece bath. The finished lower level provides a bonus media room, laundry room and two-piece bath. This renovated treasure in the Danforth East neighbourhood truly sparkles!



### Salvation At The Church Lofts In Dufferin Grove \$629,000

Loft 104 is a large and unique one bedroom plus den unit. Thanks to a generous floorplan, this space has the scale - and a layout - that will always appeal to those who are looking for a one-of-a-kind living space. Featuring an open concept living/dining area, a den with sliding glass doors, a custom Nima kitchen, a serene master bedroom, engineered hardwood floors, and repurposed stained glass throughout, this first-time-offered loft in a converted church just steps from Bloor and Dovercourt may answer all your real estate prayers! One generous parking space and adjacent locker complete this stellar deal!



### A Vintage Robert Watson Loft in Roncesvalles Village \$449,000

This 605 square foot vintage Robert Watson Loft in Prime Roncesvalles just steps to Sorauren Park boasts soaring ceilings, concrete floors and exposed brick walls. Well-proportioned, the open plan entertainment space is thoughtfully-designed with zones for cooking, dining and relaxing. We love the linear kitchen with stainless steel appliances, breakfast bar island and granite counters. The sleeping zone, accessed by a sliding barn door, has a big window and a wall of built-in wardrobes. And the spa bath is just right! Including one car underground parking and two deeded lockers, this rare-to-market loft is great value!



### Mid-Century Bathurst Street Beauty in Forest Hill \$329,000

Do you dream of living in a prestigious neighbourhood with quiet avenues, mature trees and large well-maintained homes? For a budget-conscious buyer who desires living in a highly regarded neighbourhood it can be challenging to find a character property in a dynamite location. This charming suite is a brilliant example of how great space plan and location can be found on any budget. Over 800 square feet and configured as a one bedroom unit, this suite features hardwood floors, stainless steel appliances, a sleek kitchen with dark subway tile backsplash and granite countertops. Great flow for entertaining!

### Steven's real estate expertise includes:

- Featured in the New York Times, Reuters Press Canadian Real Estate Magazine, CBC Radio, Global TV, The Globe & Mail, and National Post
- Multi-disciplinary Master's Degree on Housing
- Over 28 years experience from Renovation & Design to Sales & Marketing
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- Consistently a Bosley Top 10 Producer (#6 in 2014!)
- Attained 106.6% of the asking price for our 2014 listings!
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