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Kitec plumbing lawsuit impacts homes and condos

Home owners on red alert if you have orange and blue plumbing pipes

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June 17th, 2015 Online only.



Kitec plumbing lawsuit and remediation (Getty Images / Paul Bradbury)

Do you have pretty bright orange and bright blue pipes running through your home? If so, you may be handing over some hefty cash to a plumber in the near future—if you haven't already.

Homes built between 1995 and 2007 often used a then-new type of plumbing commonly known as Kitec. Marketed as a corrosion-resistant alternative to copper pipes and fittings, Kitec took the residential building industry by storm, until in 2005 the product was recalled. It had a tendency to corrode at an accelerated rate. These days it's no longer manufactured.

(Bright orange and bright blue were the most common colours, but Kitec piping also came in red, dark blue, gray and black.)

But the problems don't stop there. Apparently, Kitec plumbing not only corrodes quickly, it also flat out fails. And these leaks and bursts, which result in flooding, increase over time. The only real solution? To replace all the Kitec plumbing with copper pipes—a resolution that requires access behind walls and through floors.

If you're home or condo was built after 1997 and before 2007, consider exploring the pipes around your hot water heater (or if you live in a condo, in the mechanical room where the pipe connects to or exits from the walls). You can also examine pipes beneath kitchen sinks or bathroom vanities. Typically, a Kitec pipe will be marked with one of about [10 different brand](#)

[names](#), including Kitec and PlumbBetter. Also, all visible fittings should be stamped with Kitec or KTC.

One final spot to check would be on your home's electrical panel doors. Many professional plumbers would've added a sticker to the electrical panel stating that Kitec piping was used in the home and that the electrical system cannot be grounded to it. Find the sticker and you'll need to make plans for pipe remediation.

Buying a home built between 1997 and 2007

At one point in time the mention of knob-and-tube wiring sent potential buyers running. These days not so much. While replacing knob-and-tube can be expensive, it's also considered a standard upgrade for most older homes.

That said: disclosure of any knob-and-tube is mandatory. To the best of their knowledge a seller must be truthful to their real estate agent and the real estate agent must notify any potential buyers. These same rules apply to the installation and use of Kitec plumbing in Canadian homes. According to the [Real Estate Council of Ontario \(RECO\)](#), real estate agents must take "reasonable steps to determine the material facts" and then "promptly disclose those facts." This does not mean simply relying on a home owner's verbal assertions. Instead, a realtor must actually do a bit of digging—whether that's a visual inspection, or asking for supporting documentation to show what products were used in the construction of the home.

What if your home has Kitec plumbing?

If you find Kitec plumbing in a home, you'll need to call in a plumber to get it replaced. Skip this step and you run the risk of a messy and expensive water damage claim—assuming, that is, your insurance provider will cover the damage when (not if) the pipes leak or burst.

But you may be able to get some compensation. Because Kitec was so widely used in North America a class action lawsuit has been launched. For more information go to Kitecsettlement.com.