

NEW BRUNSWICK KITCHENS

Kitchen Plumbing

Sink and faucet installation, dishwasher hookup,
water lines, drain modifications, and fixture
upgrades

19 Expert Answers from Kitchen IQ

newbrunswickkitchens.com/construction-brain

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What is the cost difference between copper and PEX piping for a kitchen renovation in NB?

PEX piping costs 40-60% less than copper for kitchen renovations in New Brunswick, with PEX running \$2-4 per linear foot installed versus copper at \$5-8 per linear foot. For a typical kitchen with 30-50 feet of supply lines, you're looking at \$150-300 for PEX versus \$400-600 for copper in material and labor costs.

The cost difference becomes more significant when you factor in **installation time and complexity**. PEX is flexible and can be run through walls with fewer fittings, reducing labor costs by 2-3 hours on most kitchen projects. Copper requires more joints, soldering time, and precise measuring — all adding to your contractor's labor bill. In New Brunswick's renovation market, this translates to \$300-500 additional labor costs for copper installation.

Material availability also affects pricing in New Brunswick. PEX is readily available at all major suppliers (Kent, Home Depot, Rona) with consistent pricing. Copper prices fluctuate significantly based on commodity markets and can spike 20-30% during busy renovation seasons. Many NB plumbers stock PEX year-round but may need to special-order specific copper fittings, adding time and cost to your project.

For **New Brunswick's climate conditions**, both materials perform well, but PEX has some advantages. It's less likely to burst if frozen (expands rather than cracks), which matters in older NB homes with exterior wall plumbing. PEX also doesn't corrode like copper can in areas with acidic water — common in some rural NB wells. However, copper is more heat-resistant and some homeowners prefer it for the hot water line to the dishwasher.

Code compliance is identical — both PEX and copper meet NB Building Code requirements for potable water supply. Your plumber will need the same permits and inspections regardless of material choice. The rough-in inspection focuses on proper support, connections, and pressure testing rather than the specific piping material.

Practical considerations for your kitchen renovation: If you're doing a gut renovation with walls opened up, the cost difference might justify choosing PEX and investing the savings in better fixtures or finishes. If you're only moving the sink location with minimal wall opening, the material choice has less impact on total project cost. Many NB contractors default to PEX for residential work unless the homeowner specifically requests copper.

When to hire a professional: All supply line changes require a licensed plumber and plumbing permit in New Brunswick. Don't attempt this as a DIY project — improper connections can cause significant water damage, and insurance may not cover DIY plumbing failures. Get quotes from multiple plumbers, as pricing can vary 30-40% between contractors for identical scope work.

Need help finding a kitchen renovator who works with trusted plumbers? New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with local contractors who handle full kitchen renovations including plumbing updates.

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Q2

How much does a touchless kitchen faucet installation cost in New Brunswick and do I need a plumber?

A touchless kitchen faucet installation in New Brunswick typically costs \$150-\$400 for professional installation, plus \$200-\$800 for the faucet itself. Whether you need a plumber depends on your existing setup and comfort level with basic plumbing connections.

DIY Installation Requirements

If your current faucet has accessible shut-off valves under the sink and you're replacing a single-handle faucet with another single-handle model, this is often a straightforward DIY project. You'll need basic tools (adjustable wrench, basin wrench, flashlight) and about 2-3 hours. The process involves shutting off water supply, disconnecting old supply lines, removing the old faucet, and installing the new one with fresh supply lines.

Touchless faucets require electrical power, but most plug into a standard outlet under the sink or use battery packs. The sensor and solenoid valve connections are typically plug-and-play with clear instructions. However, if there's no electrical outlet under your sink, you'll need an electrician to install one safely.

When to Hire a Professional

Call a plumber if you're dealing with older galvanized supply lines (common in pre-1980 NB homes), corroded shut-off valves that won't turn, or if you're switching from a two-handle to single-handle configuration requiring new holes in the countertop. Galvanized pipes are notorious for seizing up when disturbed, potentially requiring supply line replacement that adds \$300-\$800 to the project.

New Brunswick Considerations

Maritime humidity can affect electronic components over time, so choose touchless faucets with good moisture ratings and warranties. Many NB homeowners find touchless faucets particularly valuable during muddy spring months and berry-picking season when hands get messy frequently.

Professional installation through a licensed plumber ensures warranty coverage and proper connection to your home's plumbing system. Most plumbers in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John are familiar with touchless faucet installation and can complete the job in 1-2 hours if no complications arise.

Need help finding a qualified plumber for your faucet installation? New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with local professionals for a free estimate.

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Q3

How much does it cost to install a kitchen prep sink in Saint John NB?

Installing a kitchen prep sink in Saint John typically costs \$800-\$2,500, depending on whether you're adding it to an existing island or creating a new plumbing location. The wide price range reflects the complexity difference between simple hookups versus running new supply and drain lines.

Breakdown of Prep Sink Installation Costs:

If you're adding a prep sink to an existing kitchen island that already has plumbing rough-in, you're looking at the lower end — around \$800-\$1,200. This includes the sink itself (\$150-\$400 for a quality stainless steel prep sink), faucet (\$100-\$300), and plumber's time to connect supply lines and drain (3-4 hours at \$80-\$100/hour in Saint John).

However, most Saint John kitchens don't have islands with existing plumbing, which means running new water supply lines and drain connections. This pushes costs to \$1,500-\$2,500 because your plumber needs to tie into existing supply lines (often in the basement), run hot and cold lines to the new location, and connect a drain line that slopes properly back to the main stack. In older Saint John homes built in the 1960s-80s, this often involves

working around galvanized pipes and tight basement spaces, adding complexity.

Saint John-Specific Considerations:

Many Saint John homes have their main kitchen plumbing along exterior walls, which can complicate running lines to a central island location. The city's older housing stock often has galvanized supply lines that should be upgraded during any plumbing work — your plumber may recommend replacing sections with PEX while they're already opening walls.

You'll need a plumbing permit through the City of Saint John for any new plumbing connections (\$75-\$150). The permit process typically takes 1-2 weeks, and you'll need both rough-in and final inspections. Most reputable Saint John plumbers handle the permit process as part of their service.

Additional Costs to Consider:

Electrical work adds \$300-\$600 if you want a garbage disposal or need additional outlets near the prep sink. Countertop modification runs \$200-\$500 if you're cutting into existing quartz or granite — some fabricators in the Saint John area charge a service call fee for small modifications.

When to Hire a Professional:

All plumbing connections require a licensed plumber in New Brunswick, and any electrical work needs proper permits. While you might handle the sink selection and coordinate timing, the actual installation should be left to professionals to ensure proper drainage slope and code compliance.

Need help finding a qualified plumber for your prep sink installation? New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with local professionals who handle kitchen plumbing projects in the Saint John area.

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Do I need a plumbing permit to install a kitchen sink in Moncton NB?

If you are replacing an existing kitchen sink in the same location with no changes to the supply or drain lines, you do not need a plumbing permit in Moncton. However, if you are moving the sink to a new location, adding or modifying supply lines, or changing the drain configuration, a plumbing permit is required through the City of Moncton's building inspection department.

The distinction comes down to whether you are making a like-for-like swap or modifying the plumbing system. Swapping an old sink for a new one of similar size, reconnecting to the same supply valves and drain line, and replacing the faucet is considered maintenance rather than a plumbing alteration. This is something a handy homeowner can do themselves, provided the existing shut-off valves are functional and accessible. If your shut-off valves are seized, corroded, or leaking, replacing them is still considered a straightforward repair, but you may want a plumber to handle it since shutting off the main water supply is involved.

Once you start changing the plumbing layout, you enter permit territory. Moving a sink from one wall to another, or from along a wall to a kitchen island, requires extending both hot and cold supply lines and the drain and vent system. This is skilled work that must meet NB building code requirements for pipe sizing, slope on drain lines, and proper venting to prevent sewer gas from entering your home. The permit process in Moncton typically takes one to three weeks, with fees in the \$75 to \$200 range for residential plumbing work.

Cost Considerations

A straightforward sink replacement in the same location typically costs \$300 to \$800 for professional installation, including the labour to disconnect the old sink, install the new one, connect the faucet, and test for leaks. The sink itself ranges from \$200 for a basic stainless steel drop-in to \$800 or more for a premium undermount or farmhouse style.

Moving a kitchen sink to a new location is a significantly larger project, typically adding \$1,500 to \$4,000 to your renovation budget for the plumbing rough-in work alone. If your Moncton home was built before 1980 and still has galvanized pipes, your plumber will likely recommend replacing the affected sections with copper or PEX while the walls are open, which is worth the additional cost to avoid corrosion problems and pressure loss down the road.

For sink installations that are part of a larger kitchen renovation in Moncton, your general contractor typically coordinates the plumbing permit and inspection as part of the project. The plumbing rough-in inspection must be completed before walls are closed up and cabinets are installed. Planning the sink location early in the design phase is essential because plumbing changes affect cabinet layout, countertop templating, and the overall renovation timeline.

If you are planning a kitchen renovation in Moncton that involves plumbing changes, getting matched with an experienced kitchen renovator who handles permits and coordinates trades will save you significant time and hassle. New Brunswick Kitchens can connect you with local contractors for free estimates.

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Q5

How much does it cost to move kitchen plumbing in a NB renovation?

Moving kitchen plumbing during a New Brunswick renovation typically costs \$1,500 to \$4,000 for the rough-in work, though the total can climb higher depending on the distance of the move, the age of your existing plumbing, and what needs to be relocated. This is one of the most significant cost variables in a kitchen renovation, and it is important to understand what drives the price before committing to a new layout.

The simplest plumbing relocation is moving a sink a few feet along the same wall. The supply lines (hot and cold) and drain line can usually be extended without major structural work, and the existing vent stack may still serve the new location. This type of move typically falls in the \$1,500 to \$2,500 range in New Brunswick. Moving a sink to a completely different wall or to a kitchen island is more complex and expensive, usually \$2,500 to \$4,000 or more, because it requires running new supply lines through the floor or walls, extending or adding drain lines with proper slope, and potentially adding a new vent or air admittance valve.

Island Plumbing Is the Most Complex

Putting a sink in a kitchen island is one of the most requested layout changes in NB kitchen renovations, and it is also one of the most expensive plumbing moves. The supply and drain lines must run through the floor from below, which means accessing the basement or crawl space. In homes with concrete slab floors, which are less common in New Brunswick but do exist, the concrete must be cut and the lines run beneath it, adding \$1,000 to \$2,000 to the cost. Venting an island sink also requires creative solutions since you cannot run a traditional vent pipe straight up through the ceiling from an island. Most plumbers use an air admittance valve or a loop vent, both of which must

meet NB building code requirements.

If your NB home was built before 1980, there is a strong chance the kitchen has galvanized steel pipes for the supply lines. These pipes corrode internally over decades, restricting water flow and potentially leaching lead into your drinking water. When you are already opening walls and floors to move plumbing, replacing galvanized sections with copper or PEX is one of the smartest investments you can make. The incremental cost to replace galvanized pipe while walls are open is \$500 to \$1,500 compared to \$2,000 to \$5,000 if you wait and have to open finished walls later.

Additional plumbing costs that often come up during kitchen renovations include adding a dishwasher connection at \$200 to \$500 if one does not already exist, installing a garburator line at \$150 to \$400, adding a pot filler faucet above the stove at \$300 to \$800 for the plumbing plus the cost of the faucet, and connecting a refrigerator water line for ice makers and dispensers at \$150 to \$400.

All plumbing changes require a permit in New Brunswick, whether you are in Moncton, Fredericton, Saint John, or a rural area covered by a Regional Service Commission. Permit fees run \$75 to \$200, and your plumber must pass a rough-in inspection before walls are closed. Budget the permit fees and any inspection wait times into your project timeline. During peak renovation season from May through October, inspection scheduling in some NB municipalities can add a week or more to your timeline.

Getting an accurate plumbing estimate early is essential for keeping your kitchen renovation on budget. A qualified kitchen renovator will assess your existing plumbing during the quoting phase and provide a clear breakdown of relocation costs. Get matched with local NB kitchen renovation contractors for free through New Brunswick Kitchens.

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Q6

Should I replace galvanized pipes during my NB kitchen renovation?

Yes, if your New Brunswick home has galvanized steel pipes in or near the kitchen, replacing them during your renovation is strongly recommended. Galvanized pipes were standard in homes built before 1980 and are common throughout NB's older housing stock in Moncton, Fredericton, Saint John, and surrounding areas. After 40 to 60 years of use, these pipes are almost certainly corroded internally, restricting water flow and potentially contaminating your drinking water.

Galvanized steel pipes corrode from the inside out. Over decades, rust and mineral deposits build up on the interior walls of the pipe, gradually narrowing the opening and reducing water pressure. You may have noticed that your kitchen faucet does not flow as strongly as it once did, or that the water runs slightly discoloured when you first turn it on after being away. These are classic signs of galvanized pipe deterioration. More concerning, corroded galvanized pipes can leach lead into your water, particularly at threaded joints where lead solder or lead-containing fittings were commonly used.

Why Renovation Time Is the Best Time

The single biggest reason to replace galvanized pipes during a kitchen renovation is cost efficiency. When your contractor already has walls open for cabinet installation, electrical upgrades, or plumbing relocation, the incremental cost to replace galvanized sections with modern copper or PEX piping is \$500 to \$1,500. If you wait and need to do it later as a standalone project, you are looking at \$2,000 to \$5,000 or more because the plumber has to open finished walls, do the work, and then patch and refinish everything.

Modern replacement options include copper and PEX. Copper is the traditional choice, durable and proven with a lifespan of 50 to 70 years, but it costs more in materials and labour. PEX (cross-linked polyethylene) has become the most popular choice in NB renovations because it is flexible, faster to install, resistant to freezing, and significantly less expensive. PEX also handles the temperature swings common in NB homes better than rigid copper, as it can expand slightly if water freezes without bursting. Your plumber can advise on which makes sense for your specific situation, but either is a massive upgrade over galvanized.

Even if you are not moving your sink or changing the kitchen layout, a kitchen renovation that involves opening walls is your opportunity to inspect and replace galvanized pipes running through the kitchen area. Ask your contractor to check the condition of any exposed pipes during demolition. If they find significant corrosion, address it before closing the walls back up. The cost of drywall repair pales in comparison to a pipe failure behind your new \$20,000 kitchen cabinets.

There is also an insurance consideration. Some NB home insurance providers are increasing premiums or adding exclusions for homes with galvanized plumbing because of the elevated risk of water damage from pipe failure. Replacing galvanized pipes during your renovation can improve your insurability and potentially lower your premiums.

A plumbing permit is required for pipe replacement in New Brunswick, and the work must pass a rough-in inspection before walls are closed. Your kitchen renovation contractor should coordinate this as part of the overall project schedule. If you are planning a kitchen renovation in an older NB home, finding a contractor experienced with older housing stock is essential. New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with local kitchen renovators who understand the unique challenges of NB's aging homes.

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What type of kitchen sink is best for NB families?

For most New Brunswick families, a **double-bowl stainless steel undermount sink in 18-gauge thickness offers the best combination of durability, practicality, and value.** It handles the demands of a busy family kitchen, resists NB's humidity swings, and works beautifully with the quartz countertops that are the most popular choice in the province. That said, the best sink for your family depends on how you use your kitchen, your countertop material, and your budget.

Stainless steel remains the most popular kitchen sink material in New Brunswick for good reason. It is durable, heat-resistant, easy to clean, and affordable. For families, look for 18-gauge or 16-gauge thickness, as thinner 20-gauge sinks dent easily and sound hollow when water hits them. A quality 18-gauge stainless undermount sink costs \$250 to \$600 for the sink alone. The sound-dampening pads on the underside matter more than you might think, especially with kids running around and dishes clanking. Stainless handles NB's humidity without any issues and will not crack, chip, or stain.

Granite composite sinks have become increasingly popular in NB kitchens over the past few years. Made from a blend of granite stone dust and acrylic resin, they are extremely durable, heat-resistant up to around 280 degrees Celsius, and available in colours that complement modern kitchen designs. They resist scratching better than stainless and do not show water spots. Prices range from \$350 to \$800 for a quality composite sink. The main drawback is that heavy pots dropped from height can chip the surface, though chips are repairable.

Single Bowl vs Double Bowl

The classic debate. Double-bowl sinks let you wash in one side and rinse or stack in the other, which many NB families with children find practical for managing dishes and food prep simultaneously. However, a large single-bowl sink, typically 30 to 33 inches wide, has become the preferred choice for many families because it accommodates oversized pots, baking sheets, and roasting pans that simply will not fit in a divided sink. If you have a dishwasher, which handles most of your dish cleaning, a single large bowl gives you more usable space for hand-washing those big items.

For families who want the best of both worlds, a 60/40 split sink offers a larger main bowl and a smaller secondary bowl. The larger side handles big items while the smaller side works for rinsing vegetables or draining dishes.

Farmhouse (apron-front) sinks are a style choice that also happens to be very family-friendly. The front-facing apron means you stand closer to the sink without leaning over a countertop edge, which reduces back strain during long cooking sessions. They are available in fireclay, stainless, and composite materials, ranging from \$500 to \$2,000. Keep in mind that farmhouse sinks require a specialized cabinet base, so plan this during the design phase

rather than trying to retrofit one later.

For NB's climate specifically, avoid cast iron sinks with enamel coatings if your kitchen is on an exterior wall with significant temperature variation, as the expansion and contraction can cause micro-cracks in the enamel over many years. Stainless and composite materials handle temperature swings without issue.

Regardless of which sink you choose, professional installation is recommended for undermount sinks because they require precise cutouts in the countertop and secure mounting to support the weight of water and dishes. Get matched with a kitchen renovator through New Brunswick Kitchens for a free estimate on your project.

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Q8

How do undermount sinks compare to drop-in for quartz countertops?

Undermount sinks are the superior choice for quartz countertops and the clear recommendation for NB kitchen renovations. They mount beneath the countertop surface, creating a seamless edge that makes cleaning easier, looks more modern, and showcases the beauty of your quartz investment. Drop-in sinks sit on top of the countertop with a visible rim, which is functional but collects crumbs, grime, and water around the lip, and visually breaks up the countertop surface.

The practical advantages of undermount sinks with quartz are significant. Because there is no raised rim, you can sweep water, crumbs, and food debris directly from the countertop into the sink with a single wipe. With a drop-in sink, that debris catches on the rim and accumulates in the caulk line between the rim and the countertop. In New Brunswick's humid summers, that trapped moisture around a drop-in rim can promote mold and mildew growth, making the undermount option even more practical for NB kitchens. The seamless look also adds to your home's resale value because undermount sinks are the expected standard in modern kitchen renovations.

Quartz countertops are ideal for undermount sinks because the material is non-porous, strong, and does not absorb water at the exposed cutout edge. Unlike granite, which needs sealing at the sink cutout to prevent water

absorption, quartz requires no special treatment. The fabricator polishes the cutout edge during manufacturing, and the sink is secured from below with clips and adhesive. This is one reason quartz has become the most popular countertop choice in New Brunswick.

Cost and Installation Differences

An undermount sink installation costs \$50 to \$150 more than a drop-in installation, primarily because the countertop fabricator must create a precise, polished cutout. The sink itself is priced similarly in either mounting style, though undermount models are available in a wider range of premium designs. For a typical NB kitchen with quartz countertops running \$60 to \$120 per square foot installed, the modest premium for undermount installation is well worth it.

Drop-in sinks do have one practical advantage: they are easier to install and replace. A drop-in sink sits in a rough cutout with the rim covering the edge, so the cutout does not need to be perfectly polished. If you are doing a budget-friendly countertop swap and keeping your existing sink, or if you are working with a laminate countertop where undermount is not recommended, a drop-in sink makes sense. However, if you are investing in quartz countertops at New Brunswick prices of \$60 to \$120 per square foot, pairing them with a drop-in sink undermines the investment.

One important consideration is that undermount sinks must be installed by a professional. The countertop fabricator templates the sink cutout based on the exact sink model you have purchased, so you need to have your sink on hand before countertop templating begins. The sink is then mounted and sealed before or during countertop installation. Attempting a DIY undermount installation risks cracking the quartz or creating an improper seal that leads to water damage in the cabinet below.

For NB homeowners investing in a quartz countertop kitchen renovation, undermount sinks are the standard for good reason. The cleaner look, easier maintenance, and better hygiene in our humid Maritime climate make them the clear winner. A kitchen renovation contractor can help you select the right sink size and style for your countertop layout. Find local kitchen renovators through [New Brunswick Kitchens](#) for free.

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Is a garbage disposal worth installing in my NB kitchen?

A garbage disposal can be a worthwhile addition to a New Brunswick kitchen, but it is not the essential appliance it is in many American kitchens, and there are some NB-specific considerations to weigh before installing one. The cost is modest at \$200 to \$600 for the unit and professional installation, making it a relatively low-risk upgrade during a kitchen renovation.

Garbage disposals, also called garburators in Canada, grind food waste into fine particles that flow through your kitchen drain and into the municipal sewer or your septic system. For NB families who cook frequently and want to reduce food waste in the garbage, a disposal reduces odours from the kitchen trash, cuts down on fruit flies in NB's humid summers, and means fewer messy trips to the green bin during winter. They handle most soft food scraps including vegetable peels, fruit, cooked pasta, small bones, and coffee grounds.

The Septic System Question

This is the most important consideration for many New Brunswick homeowners. A significant portion of NB homes outside Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John are on private septic systems rather than municipal sewer. If your home is on septic, a garbage disposal increases the solid load entering your septic tank, which means more frequent pump-outs and potentially faster wear on your system. The additional food waste can upset the bacterial balance in the tank that breaks down solids. If you are on septic, you can still install a disposal, but you should plan on pumping your tank 30 to 50 percent more frequently, moving from every three to five years to every two to three years. The extra pump-outs at \$200 to \$400 each add up over time, so weigh this against the convenience.

If your home is connected to municipal sewer in Moncton, Fredericton, Saint John, Bathurst, Miramichi, or other NB cities, there is no septic concern. The ground food waste goes into the municipal wastewater treatment system, which is designed to handle it. Check your municipality's bylaws to confirm there are no restrictions, though most NB municipalities allow residential garbage disposals.

Installation Requirements

A garbage disposal requires a dedicated electrical circuit, which is an NB building code requirement. If you are already doing a kitchen renovation with electrical upgrades, adding the circuit is straightforward at \$150 to \$300. If you are adding a disposal to an existing kitchen without other electrical work, the wiring adds to the cost and requires an electrical permit. The disposal connects to your sink's drain line and typically fits under a standard sink cabinet, though it does take up space that you might otherwise use for storage or an under-sink water filter.

The unit itself ranges from \$100 to \$400 depending on horsepower and features. For a family kitchen, a one-half to three-quarter horsepower model is sufficient. Higher-end models run quieter and handle tougher scraps.

Professional installation runs \$100 to \$200 in New Brunswick if done as part of a larger kitchen renovation. As a standalone project, expect \$200 to \$400 for a plumber to install the unit, connect the plumbing, and wire the electrical.

Practical tips: never put grease, oil, fibrous vegetables like celery, or starchy foods like rice in large quantities down the disposal. Always run cold water while the disposal is operating and for 15 seconds after turning it off. These habits prevent clogs and extend the life of the unit.

If you are planning a kitchen renovation and considering a disposal, your contractor can add one during the plumbing and electrical rough-in phase for minimal additional cost. Need help finding a kitchen renovator in New Brunswick? New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with local contractors for free.

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What kitchen faucet style is most practical for daily use?

A pull-down faucet with a single-handle design is the most practical kitchen faucet for daily use in New Brunswick homes. This style combines ease of operation, flexible reach for filling pots and rinsing produce, and simple temperature control with one hand — which matters when your other hand is holding a dish or managing food prep.

Pull-down faucets feature a spray head that pulls straight down into the sink, making them ideal for deep sinks and heavy-duty cleaning. They typically offer two spray modes — a steady stream and a wider spray — and the magnetic or weighted docking system keeps the head securely in place when not extended. For NB kitchens, where many homeowners are replacing original faucets from 1970s and 1980s builds, this is a significant upgrade from the old two-handle designs that were standard in that era.

Single-handle operation is the clear winner for practicality. You can adjust water temperature and flow with one motion, which is invaluable during cooking. Two-handle faucets look elegant in traditional kitchens but require both hands to dial in the right temperature. Touchless faucets with motion sensors are gaining popularity and run \$350 to \$700 installed, though they require batteries or a dedicated electrical connection under the sink — worth considering if you are already doing electrical work during your renovation.

When choosing a faucet for your NB kitchen, pay attention to the **spout height and reach**. A high-arc spout (typically 8 to 10 inches above the sink deck) clears large pots easily but can cause splashing in shallow sinks. If your renovation includes a new sink, match the faucet arc to the sink depth — a 9-inch-deep undermount sink pairs perfectly with a high-arc pull-down. Spout reach matters too; you want the water stream to hit the centre of the sink basin, not the edge.

Materials and NB Water Considerations

New Brunswick's water varies significantly by municipality. Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John all have treated municipal water, but many rural NB homes rely on well water that can be hard or have elevated mineral content. Hard water deposits build up on faucet internals and finishes over time. **Chrome finishes** are the easiest to clean and most affordable (\$150 to \$350 installed), while **brushed nickel and matte black** hide water spots better and run \$200 to \$500 installed. Steer clear of polished brass if you have hard well water — mineral deposits show immediately.

For the valve cartridge, ceramic disc cartridges are the gold standard. They outlast rubber-washer designs by years and handle NB's temperature extremes without leaking. Brands like Moen, Delta, and Kohler all use ceramic disc technology in their mid-range and premium lines.

Replacing a kitchen faucet is one of the few plumbing tasks many homeowners can handle themselves, provided the shut-off valves under the sink are accessible and in working condition. If your shut-off valves are old gate valves that seize or drip, have a plumber replace them with quarter-turn ball valves while the faucet is being swapped — it adds \$100 to \$200 but prevents future headaches. Budget \$150 to \$500 for the faucet itself, plus \$150 to \$250 for professional installation if you prefer not to DIY.

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Q11

Can I add a pot filler to my NB kitchen during renovation?

Yes, adding a pot filler during a kitchen renovation is absolutely doable and is the ideal time to install one, since the walls are typically opened up for other plumbing or electrical work. A pot filler is a wall-mounted faucet positioned above or near your stove that swings out to fill pots directly, eliminating the need to carry heavy pots of water from the sink.

The cost to install a pot filler in a New Brunswick kitchen typically runs **\$600 to \$1,500 total**, depending on how far the new water line needs to travel from the existing supply. The fixture itself costs \$200 to \$700 for a quality model from brands like Delta, Moen, or Brizo. Labour for running the cold water line through the wall, installing the mounting bracket, and connecting everything runs \$400 to \$800. If your stove is on the same wall as the sink, the plumbing run is short and costs stay toward the lower end. If the stove is on an opposite or non-adjacent wall, the plumber needs to run pipe through the wall cavity, which adds complexity and cost.

Timing is everything with pot filler installation. Since the plumber needs access inside the wall to run a water supply line, this work must happen during the rough-in phase — before drywall goes back up. If your renovation includes moving the sink, adding a dishwasher line, or replacing old galvanized pipes (common in NB homes built before 1980), adding a pot filler to the same scope of work keeps costs down because the plumber is already on site with the walls open. Retrofitting a pot filler after a renovation is finished means cutting into finished drywall, patching, and repainting — adding \$500 to \$1,000 in extra costs.

Practical Considerations for NB Kitchens

Pot fillers connect to the **cold water supply only** — they do not have a hot water connection. The standard mounting height is 18 to 24 inches above the stove top, centered over the back burners. The faucet arm folds flat against the wall when not in use, so it does not interfere with cooking. Most pot fillers have a dual-valve design with a shut-off at both the wall and the spout end, which is important for preventing drips.

For NB homes, there is one critical consideration: **freeze protection**. If your stove is on an exterior wall, the water line running through that wall cavity is vulnerable to freezing during New Brunswick's harsh winters, when temperatures regularly drop to minus 20 degrees Celsius or colder. Your plumber should insulate the pipe thoroughly and ideally route it through the interior side of the insulation layer. If the exterior wall is unavoidable, discuss adding heat trace cable along the pipe run as a safeguard — an extra \$100 to \$200 that can prevent a burst pipe and thousands in water damage.

A pot filler also requires a **plumbing permit** in New Brunswick since it involves adding a new water supply line. Your contractor should pull this permit through your local municipality (Moncton, Fredericton, Saint John) or your Regional Service Commission if you are in a rural area. The permit adds \$75 to \$150 but ensures the work is inspected and up to code.

While a pot filler is a luxury feature, it adds genuine convenience for homeowners who cook frequently, and it is a selling point that appeals to buyers if you ever list your home. If you are already renovating your kitchen, the incremental cost is modest compared to the total project budget.

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Q12

How do I prevent frozen pipes in my NB kitchen during winter?

Preventing frozen kitchen pipes in New Brunswick requires a combination of insulation, air sealing, and maintaining adequate heat flow to vulnerable plumbing runs — especially in older homes where pipes often

travel through exterior walls or unheated crawl spaces. With NB winter temperatures regularly hitting minus 20 to minus 30 degrees Celsius, frozen pipes are a genuine risk that can lead to burst lines and thousands of dollars in water damage.

The most vulnerable pipes in NB kitchens are those running along **exterior walls**, which is a common configuration in older homes built from the 1960s through the 1990s. In these layouts, the kitchen sink supply lines often travel through the wall cavity between the insulation and the exterior sheathing, putting them directly in the cold zone. During a renovation, this is the perfect time to address the issue by rerouting pipes to the interior side of the insulation or adding proper pipe insulation within the wall cavity.

Immediate Steps for Existing Kitchens

If you are not currently renovating, there are several effective preventive measures. **Open cabinet doors** under the kitchen sink during extreme cold snaps to allow warm room air to circulate around the pipes. This simple step is surprisingly effective and costs nothing. If your kitchen is on a slab or above a crawl space, keep the thermostat at a minimum of 16 degrees Celsius, even when you are away — dropping the heat too low is one of the most common causes of frozen pipes in NB homes during January and February cold snaps.

Foam pipe insulation on all exposed supply lines under the sink and in accessible areas costs \$2 to \$5 per six-foot section at any NB hardware store and takes minutes to install. For pipes in harder-to-reach locations such as crawl spaces or joist bays, use self-sealing foam tubes rated for your pipe diameter. Pay special attention to any pipes near rim joists — the area where the floor framing meets the foundation wall — as this is one of the coldest spots in any NB home.

For chronically vulnerable pipe runs, **electric heat trace cable** is a reliable solution. These thermostatically controlled cables wrap along the pipe and activate automatically when temperatures drop near freezing. Installation runs \$150 to \$400 depending on the length of pipe, and the electricity cost is minimal since they only draw power when needed. A licensed electrician should install heat trace cable that is permanently wired, though plug-in versions are available for accessible areas.

Air sealing around pipe penetrations is equally important. Where pipes pass through exterior walls, rim joists, or the foundation, gaps around the penetrations allow frigid air to flow directly onto the pipe surface. Seal these gaps with expanding spray foam or caulk. During a renovation, your contractor should seal every penetration as standard practice.

If you are planning a kitchen renovation, discuss pipe routing with your plumber early in the design phase. Moving supply lines to interior walls adds \$1,500 to \$3,000 to the project but eliminates freeze risk permanently. For NB homeowners who have experienced a frozen pipe event, this investment pays for itself the first time you avoid an emergency plumber call at 2 AM in February — which typically runs \$300 to \$600 just for the after-hours service

call, plus repair costs.

Keep your municipality's emergency water shut-off location marked and accessible. If a pipe does freeze, knowing how to shut off the main water supply quickly can be the difference between a minor inconvenience and a major flood.

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Should I add a water filtration system to my kitchen renovation?

Adding a water filtration system during a kitchen renovation is a smart move for many NB homeowners, particularly those on well water or in older homes with galvanized or lead-soldered copper pipes. The cost is modest when bundled with other plumbing work, and it provides cleaner, better-tasting drinking water directly from a dedicated tap at your sink.

The most popular option for kitchen renovations is an **under-sink reverse osmosis (RO) system**, which removes up to 99 percent of contaminants including sediment, chlorine, heavy metals, and bacteria. These systems cost \$300 to \$800 for the unit and \$200 to \$400 for professional installation, which includes mounting the unit under the sink, connecting to the cold water supply, adding a drain line to the sink's drain pipe, and installing a separate filtered water faucet on the countertop. During a renovation, the plumber can pre-drill the countertop hole and run the lines before the countertop is templated and installed, making everything seamless.

For homeowners who want simpler filtration, a **carbon block filter** system runs \$150 to \$400 installed and effectively removes chlorine taste, sediment, and some organic compounds. These are lower maintenance than RO systems and do not produce wastewater, but they do not filter as comprehensively. A third option is a **whole-house sediment and carbon filter**, which treats all water entering the home — useful for well water with high sediment or iron content — and costs \$500 to \$1,500 installed at the main water entry point.

NB Water Quality Considerations

Your water source matters significantly in deciding what filtration you need. **Municipal water** in Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John is treated and tested regularly, so a carbon filter or basic RO system is typically sufficient for taste improvement and chlorine removal. However, many NB homeowners on **private well water** face different challenges — elevated iron, manganese, hardness, or bacterial contamination are common in rural New Brunswick. If you are on well water, get a water test done before choosing a filtration system. Your local public health office or a private lab can test for a full panel of contaminants for \$50 to \$150.

Older NB homes present another concern. Homes built before 1990 may have **lead solder joints** on copper pipes, and homes built before 1970 often have galvanized steel pipes that corrode internally and release particulates. If your renovation includes replacing old plumbing — which it should if you still have galvanized pipes — filtration becomes less critical for metal contamination but is still worthwhile for taste and general water quality.

From a renovation planning standpoint, the best time to install filtration is during the rough-in phase when the plumber is already working under the sink. You will need space in the under-sink cabinet for the filtration unit and storage tank (RO systems include a small pressurized tank about the size of a basketball). Factor this into your

cabinet layout — many homeowners forget to account for the space the system occupies, which can conflict with garbage pull-outs or under-sink organizers.

RO system filters need replacement every 6 to 12 months (\$30 to \$60 per set), and the RO membrane itself lasts 2 to 3 years (\$50 to \$100). Ongoing costs are manageable but worth budgeting for. Overall, a filtration system is a relatively low-cost addition to a kitchen renovation — \$500 to \$1,200 all-in — that delivers daily value and can be a selling point for future buyers.

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How do I choose the right kitchen sink material for NB?

The best kitchen sink material for New Brunswick homes is stainless steel for durability and value, or fireclay for a premium farmhouse look, with both handling NB's hard water and humidity swings well. Your choice should factor in daily use, Maritime climate conditions, water quality, and budget.

Stainless steel remains the most popular kitchen sink material across Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John for good reason. It is affordable (\$200 to \$600 for quality 18-gauge models), resists heat, does not chip or crack, and handles NB's temperature and humidity variations without any issues. Look for **18-gauge or 16-gauge thickness**, as thinner 20-gauge models dent easily and amplify noise from running water. A satin or brushed finish hides scratches and water spots better than a mirror finish. The main drawback is that stainless shows water spots from NB's hard water, particularly in areas served by well water, but a quick wipe after use keeps it looking clean.

Fireclay sinks (\$800 to \$1,500) are the premium choice for farmhouse-style kitchens and perform exceptionally well in NB's climate. They are fired at extremely high temperatures, making them virtually impervious to staining, chipping, and thermal shock. Unlike cast iron, fireclay will not rust if the surface gets damaged. They come in the classic apron-front style and hold up well against NB's hard water without discolouration over time.

Granite composite sinks (\$300 to \$800) are an increasingly popular mid-range option. Made from 80 percent crushed granite mixed with acrylic resin, they resist scratches, heat, and stains effectively. They come in a range of colours that coordinate with quartz countertops, and they are quieter than stainless steel. They perform well in NB's climate, though some homeowners report that lighter colours can show mineral deposits from hard well water over time.

Materials to Approach with Caution in NB

Cast iron with enamel (\$300 to \$900) offers a classic look and heavy, solid feel, but the enamel coating can chip from dropped pots or heavy cast-iron cookware. Once chipped, the exposed iron rusts quickly, and NB's humid summers accelerate that corrosion. If you choose cast iron, be prepared for careful use and know that re-enamelling is not practical for most homeowners.

Porcelain sinks have similar chipping concerns and are more prone to staining from tea, coffee, and red wine. In NB's older homes with iron-rich well water, porcelain sinks can develop persistent rust stains that require regular treatment with specialty cleaners.

Copper sinks (\$600 to \$1,500) develop a living patina that some homeowners love, but NB's variable water chemistry, especially sulphur-rich well water common in rural areas, can cause unpredictable patina patterns and green verdigris deposits. They also require specific cleaning products and should never be exposed to acidic foods or harsh cleaners.

When choosing your sink configuration, an **undermount** installation (\$100 to \$200 more than drop-in) paired with a quartz countertop is the cleanest and most hygienic option because there is no rim to trap crumbs and moisture. This matters in NB's humid summer months when trapped moisture promotes bacterial growth. Make sure your countertop material supports undermount installation, as laminate countertops cannot. For plumbing, plan your sink location near existing drain lines to minimize costs. Moving a sink to a new location adds \$1,500 to \$4,000 for extending supply and drain lines. Get matched with a kitchen renovator through New Brunswick Kitchens for expert help selecting and installing your ideal sink.

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How do I choose between a single and double kitchen sink for my NB home?

For most New Brunswick kitchens being renovated today, a large single-bowl sink is the better choice — it accommodates oversized pots, baking sheets, and cutting boards that simply won't fit in a divided double sink. That said, the right answer depends on your cooking habits, whether you have a dishwasher, and your countertop space.

The **single-bowl sink** has become the dominant choice in NB kitchen renovations for good reason. A 30-33 inch single bowl gives you an uninterrupted basin that fits large stock pots, sheet pans, and roasting racks without fighting a centre divider. If you cook regularly — and especially if you preserve, can, or process game and fish as many New Brunswickers do — the single bowl is dramatically more functional. Cleaning a large cutting board or filling a canning pot simply isn't practical in a divided sink. Pair a single bowl with a quality pull-down faucet and a good drying rack, and you have an efficient, versatile wash station.

Double-bowl sinks still make sense in specific situations. If you don't have a dishwasher — which is common in older NB homes and smaller apartments in Moncton, Saint John, and Fredericton — a double bowl lets you wash in one side and rinse in the other, which is the traditional and still effective approach. A 60/40 split (one larger bowl, one smaller) offers some of the flexibility of both styles. The smaller bowl works as a dedicated food prep wash station or a place to soak items while the main bowl stays clear.

Practical Factors for NB Homeowners

Cabinet size matters. Your sink must fit your base cabinet, and many older NB homes have 30-inch sink base cabinets. A standard double bowl needs a 33-36 inch cabinet, while single bowls are available in 27-33 inch widths. If you're keeping your existing cabinet layout to save on plumbing costs, measure your sink base cabinet first — this may make the decision for you.

Countertop material affects the decision too. If you're installing an undermount sink with quartz or granite countertops (\$60-\$120 per square foot installed), the sink cutout size impacts the structural integrity of the countertop. Larger single-bowl cutouts require proper support, and your countertop fabricator will advise on maximum dimensions for your specific material and edge profile.

Sink material is worth considering in NB's climate. Stainless steel (18-gauge for quality) is the most popular and affordable option at \$200-\$600. Granite composite sinks (\$300-\$800) resist scratching and come in colours that coordinate with countertops, but they're heavier and require a well-supported cabinet. Fireclay farmhouse sinks (\$500-\$1,500) make a design statement but add weight that your base cabinet must accommodate.

If you're moving your sink to a new location, budget an additional \$1,500-\$4,000 for extending supply and drain lines, which requires a plumbing permit in New Brunswick. Keeping the sink in its current position — regardless of bowl configuration — saves significantly on plumbing costs. A simple sink swap on the existing plumbing runs \$300-\$800 for professional installation, including reconnecting the drain, supply lines, and dishwasher connection.

For most NB homeowners renovating a kitchen with a dishwasher, the large single bowl is the practical winner. It handles everything a modern kitchen demands while looking clean and contemporary.

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What kitchen plumbing code requirements apply in Fredericton NB?

Kitchen plumbing work in Fredericton requires a plumbing permit from the City of Fredericton's building inspection department whenever you are moving, adding, or modifying supply lines, drain lines, or gas connections. Cosmetic changes like replacing a faucet on existing supply valves do not require a permit, but anything beyond a like-for-like swap does.

The **NB Building Code** governs all plumbing work in Fredericton, and the city enforces it through their municipal building inspection office on York Street. When you pull a plumbing permit, you will need to show your renovation plans including the location of all fixtures, supply lines, drain connections, and venting. Permit fees typically run \$75 to \$200 for residential kitchen plumbing work, and processing takes one to three weeks in Fredericton — faster than rural areas served by Regional Service Commissions.

What Requires a Permit

Moving a kitchen sink to a new location is the most common trigger for a plumbing permit in kitchen renovations. This involves extending both hot and cold supply lines and rerouting the drain and vent stack. The drain line must maintain proper slope (typically 1/4 inch per foot) to prevent standing water and sewer gas issues. If your new sink location is more than a few feet from the existing drain stack, you may need additional venting to meet code — either a traditional vent through the roof or an air admittance valve where permitted.

Adding a dishwasher requires a hot water supply connection, a drain connection (typically through the sink drain with a high loop or air gap to prevent backflow), and a dedicated 15-amp electrical circuit. If you are adding a dishwasher where one never existed, this is permit-required work for both plumbing and electrical.

Gas line work for a gas range or cooktop must be done by a licensed gas fitter in New Brunswick — this is not optional. Gas fitting is a separate trade certification, and improper gas work is both a code violation and a serious safety hazard. Your kitchen contractor may subcontract this to a licensed gas fitter.

Island sink plumbing is more complex and always requires a permit. Running supply and drain lines through the floor to a kitchen island involves cutting into the subfloor and potentially the floor joists. The drain venting for island sinks often requires a loop vent or circuit vent configuration since you cannot run a traditional vent pipe straight up through the ceiling above an island.

Fredericton requires a **rough-in inspection** before any plumbing work is enclosed behind walls or under flooring. This is critical — if you close up walls before the inspector signs off, you may be required to tear everything out at your own expense. After all plumbing is complete and connected, a **final inspection** confirms everything meets code.

Older Fredericton Homes

Many Fredericton homes built before 1980 have **galvanized steel supply pipes** that should be replaced during a kitchen renovation. These pipes corrode internally over decades, reducing water pressure and potentially leaching lead. If your renovation opens up walls where galvanized pipes are visible, your plumber will likely recommend replacing them with copper or PEX — and this is money well spent. Budget \$1,500 to \$4,000 for plumbing rough-in changes during a kitchen renovation.

Always hire a licensed plumber for any code-required kitchen plumbing work in Fredericton. Find qualified kitchen renovation contractors who coordinate plumbing trades through the New Brunswick Construction Network.

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Q17

How do I add a kitchen island with plumbing in my NB home?

Adding a kitchen island with plumbing is one of the more complex kitchen renovation projects and requires a building permit, a licensed plumber, and careful planning around your home's existing drain and supply line locations. In New Brunswick, expect to budget \$8,000 to \$20,000 for a plumbed island depending on the distance from existing plumbing, the complexity of venting, and the finishes you choose.

The first step is determining whether your floor structure allows it. Supply and drain lines need to run from the existing plumbing stack, under the subfloor, and up through the floor to the island location. In homes with a **basement or crawl space** — which is most NB homes — this is straightforward because a plumber can access the underside of the kitchen floor to route new pipes. In homes built on a concrete slab (less common in NB but found in some newer construction), running plumbing to an island is significantly more expensive because the concrete must be cut and trenched, adding \$2,000 to \$5,000 to the project.

The **drain line** is the most challenging part. Kitchen sink drains require proper venting to prevent siphoning the trap and allowing sewer gas into your home. For a standard kitchen sink against a wall, the vent pipe runs straight up

through the wall and out the roof. An island sink cannot do this, so plumbers use alternative venting methods: a **loop vent** (also called a circuit vent) that runs up inside the island cabinetry and loops back down under the floor to connect to the main vent stack, or an **air admittance valve** where local code permits. Your plumber will determine which method meets NB Building Code requirements for your specific configuration.

The **supply lines** are simpler — hot and cold water supply pipes (typically PEX in modern NB installations) run from the existing supply through the floor joists to the island location. If you are adding a dishwasher in the island as well, you will need an additional hot water supply and a drain connection.

Electrical Considerations

Most plumbed islands also need electrical service. NB Building Code requires **GFCI-protected outlets** on kitchen islands, and if you are adding a dishwasher or garbage disposal, each needs a dedicated circuit. An island with a sink, dishwasher, and countertop outlets may need three to four separate circuits run through the floor — this requires an electrical permit in addition to the plumbing permit.

If your NB home has a **60-amp electrical panel** (common in homes built before the 1980s), adding island circuits may push you past capacity, requiring a panel upgrade to 100 or 200 amps at an additional cost of \$1,500 to \$4,000.

Permits and Inspections

In cities like Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John, you will need both a plumbing permit and an electrical permit from the municipal building inspection department. Rural areas process permits through Regional Service Commissions, which can take two to five weeks. A rough-in inspection is required before the floor and island cabinetry are closed up — do not skip this step.

Budget Planning

For a typical NB kitchen island with sink and dishwasher, here is a realistic cost breakdown: plumbing rough-in and connection (\$3,000 to \$6,000), electrical rough-in (\$1,500 to \$3,000), island cabinetry (\$2,000 to \$6,000), countertop (\$1,500 to \$4,000), and permits (\$150 to \$400). The total ranges from \$8,000 for a basic island to \$20,000 or more for a large, fully equipped unit with premium finishes.

This is not a DIY project — hire experienced professionals who coordinate plumbing, electrical, and carpentry trades. New Brunswick Kitchens can match you with local kitchen renovators who handle plumbed island installations.

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How do I fix low water pressure in my NB kitchen after renovation?

Low water pressure in your NB kitchen after a renovation is usually caused by a clogged aerator, a partially closed shut-off valve, debris in new supply lines, or an undersized supply line connecting to older galvanized plumbing. The fix depends on the cause, but most are straightforward to diagnose.

Start with the simplest fix first: the faucet aerator. New plumbing work dislodges sediment, mineral deposits, and pipe debris that flow to the faucet and clog the aerator screen. Unscrew the aerator from the tip of your faucet (most twist off by hand or with gentle pliers), rinse out any debris, and reinstall it. This solves the problem in roughly half of post-renovation low-pressure cases and costs nothing. If your water pressure improves dramatically with the aerator removed, you have found your culprit.

Next, check the shut-off valves under the sink. During renovation work, plumbers frequently close the hot and cold shut-off valves and sometimes do not reopen them fully. Turn both valves completely counterclockwise to ensure they are fully open. Also check the main shut-off valve for the house, as it may have been partially closed during the renovation and not fully reopened.

Common Causes in Older NB Homes

If your home was built before 1980, there is a strong chance you have galvanized steel supply pipes. These corrode internally over decades, building up mineral deposits that restrict water flow. When a renovator connects new copper or PEX supply lines to existing galvanized pipes, the junction point and the remaining old pipe become the bottleneck. If the renovation only replaced the visible pipes under the sink but the lines running through the walls and floor are still original galvanized, that older section is likely restricting your flow. Replacing the remaining galvanized supply lines with PEX or copper is the permanent fix and typically costs \$1,500 to \$4,000 depending on accessibility and how much pipe needs replacing.

Another post-renovation cause is a kinked or undersized flexible supply line. The braided stainless supply hoses connecting your shut-off valves to the faucet come in different diameters. If a 3/8-inch supply line was used where a 1/2-inch line is needed, or if the hose has a sharp bend restricting flow, pressure will drop noticeably. Replacing the flex lines is an inexpensive fix at \$10 to \$20 per hose.

If the low pressure only affects the hot water side, your hot water tank may be the issue. Sediment buildup in the tank reduces output pressure, and the dip tube inside older tanks can deteriorate and restrict flow. Flushing the hot water tank costs nothing if you do it yourself or \$100 to \$200 for a service call.

For persistent low pressure that none of these fixes resolve, call your renovator back. Any reputable NB kitchen contractor should address post-renovation issues within their warranty period. If the plumbing work required a permit, the final plumbing inspection should have checked for adequate water pressure. If no permit was pulled for plumbing changes, that is a separate concern you should address with the contractor. For plumbing issues beyond basic troubleshooting, find a licensed plumber through the New Brunswick Construction Network at newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com.

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What are the best kitchen water shut-off valve upgrades for older NB homes?

The best shut-off valve upgrade for older NB kitchens is replacing old gate valves with quarter-turn ball valves, which are more reliable, less prone to seizing, and provide a positive shut-off when you need to stop water flow in an emergency. This is one of the most practical upgrades you can make during a kitchen renovation, especially in homes built before the 1990s.

Older New Brunswick homes typically have gate valves under the kitchen sink. These are the round-handle valves that require multiple turns to open or close. The problem with gate valves is that they corrode internally over time, especially in NB's older homes with galvanized plumbing or hard water. After sitting untouched for years, they seize in the open position and will not close when you need them, such as when a supply hose bursts or your faucet starts leaking. Even worse, forcing a seized gate valve can snap the handle or crack the valve body, turning a minor leak into a flooding emergency.

Quarter-turn ball valves use a lever handle that rotates 90 degrees between fully open and fully closed. Inside the valve, a chrome-plated brass ball with a hole through the centre either aligns with the pipe to allow flow or turns perpendicular to block it completely. This design means the valve is either fully open or fully closed with no in-between dribbling, and the lever action is smooth even after years of sitting untouched. A quality brass quarter-turn ball valve costs \$8 to \$20 per valve at NB hardware stores, and you need two under most kitchen sinks (hot and cold).

Installation Considerations

The installation method depends on your existing plumbing. If you have copper supply lines, a plumber can solder new ball valves directly onto the pipe or use compression fittings for a solder-free connection. For homes with galvanized steel pipes, which are very common in NB homes built before 1980, the plumber should replace the galvanized stub-outs with copper or PEX at the same time rather than threading a new valve onto corroded galvanized pipe. This adds cost but prevents the frustration of a new valve on a deteriorating pipe.

For PEX plumbing (used in most NB construction since the early 2000s), push-fit ball valves like SharkBite are an option but crimp-ring or expansion-type PEX ball valves are more reliable for permanent installations. Push-fit connections are convenient but can develop slow leaks over time if the pipe surface has any scratches.

A licensed plumber can replace both kitchen shut-off valves in about an hour, typically costing \$150 to \$350 including parts and labour. If the work involves modifying supply lines or dealing with galvanized pipe, expect \$300 to \$600. This is well worth doing during any kitchen renovation because the walls and flooring are already disturbed, giving the plumber easy access.

While you are upgrading the kitchen valves, consider having the plumber install a dedicated shut-off for the dishwasher supply line as well. Many older NB kitchens have the dishwasher teed off the hot water line with no independent valve, making it impossible to service the dishwasher without shutting off the entire kitchen hot water. Also ask about adding a hammer arrestor if you hear banging pipes when the dishwasher valve cycles, a common complaint in older NB homes. This kind of valve upgrade work is straightforward for any licensed plumber. Find one through the New Brunswick Construction Network at newbrunswickconstructionnetwork.com.

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