

Building an Organized Laundry Room

By Linda A. Birkinbine of Keep It Organized!

When dividing up the square footage in home plans, the laundry room typically doesn't get its fair share. Thankfully, that seems to be changing. A recent *New York Magazine* article reports "in a 2004 National Association of Home Builders survey, a laundry room was top-rated among 90 amenities as the most desirable in a new house...". In space-challenged New York City, a private laundry room is the "luxe-apartment accessory of the moment. Builders are not only including washer-dryers in new and renovated apartments; they're devoting whole rooms to spin-cycling and tumble-drying." (Schoeneman, October 18, 2004, p.72).

Actually, there is a lot more to laundry than "spin cycling and tumble drying." There is sorting, stain removal, line drying, flat drying, folding, hanging, wrinkle removal, clothes waiting to be put away, mending and more. Think of the laundry room as the "clothes-keeping" room.

Architects or builders who wish to set themselves apart should talk to their clients about their laundry habits, dreams and plans. For example, do they own or are they considering purchasing any of the new large capacity, high efficiency models of washers and dryers? They take up much more space than traditional models. Further evidence that laundry is a "hot item" comes from Sears that is now offering their large capacity, high efficiency HE4t model washer/dryer in Pacific blue, champagne and Sedona orange besides traditional white.

An organized laundry should accommodate with ease the tools and tricks of "clothes-keeping" including:

- Washers and dryers (Multiples speed up the time-consuming process.)
- Sink(s) with high arc faucet and sprayer
- Countertops
- Shelves/cabinets to store laundry detergents, bleaches, stain removers, dryer sheets, fabric softeners, distilled water, lint rollers, depillars, spray starch, wrinkle releaser, drain lint catchers, errant buttons, socks without mates, mesh laundry bags for fine washables, etc.
- Sorters
- Baskets
- Drying racks or clotheslines
- Hangers
- Ironing board and iron
- Full-length mirror
- Bulletin board for buttons/thread packets, laundry instructions etc. as suggested in *Real Simple* magazine (February 2005, p.64)
- Basin for soaking stains

- Sewing kit
- Sewing machine
- Step stool
- Steamer

If you haven't given laundry rooms the square footage they deserve in your plans, now is the time to change. Your clients will thank you for their easily organized and therefore, effective "clothes keeping" room. Also, visitors responsible for laundry will be jealous they don't have one just like it.

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