

Subject: Downstairs bath remodel

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Hi Mom,

I have been looking up how the downstairs bath remodel can be done, to replace your wet bar with a shower stall. The city would consider this a major remodeling because (1) it involves bathroom plumbing, and (2) it changes walls, so there must be verification that a load-bearing wall is not affected.

It's possible to do this without pulling a permit, but there are pros and cons. Summary: It costs \$2,000 more to do it the right way, but you'll have fewer headaches.

Advantages of no permit

- * Faster and saves money:
 - don't have to hire a designer to draw blueprints (at least \$1000)
 - don't have to get a city permit (around \$1000)

Advantages of pulling a permit

- * The city will check the plans and work to make sure it's done right.
- * Adds value to the house. Your house will have 3 baths, not 2.5 baths.
- * No problem with selling the house.
 - Some buyers will walk away from a house with unpermitted additions.
 - Some buyers will try to low-ball you, as if you have just 2.5 baths.
 - Some buyers will try to force you to get a permit before going on with the deal. Getting a permit afterward is more expensive.
- * No risk of:
 - city penalty (although it's rare that they discover the remodeling)

Huy