OTTAWA KITCHEN RENOS

Sink Moves & Layout Changes

Moving the sink or adding an island sink: the City's plumbing permit line, the fee, the plumber's role and what it adds to the cost

4 Expert Answers from Kitchen Reno IQ

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Q1

What does Ottawa's permit list say about kitchen plumbing changes?

On the City of Ottawa's permit list, the plumbing line reads "Plumbing - alterations, additions or extensions to a plumbing system (except replacing existing fixtures)." swapping out an existing faucet or sink for a new one in the same location is outside that line.

What falls on the permit side is any work that moves, adds or extends plumbing. Moving a sink to a new location, running a drain and supply to an island, or adding a dishwasher drain where none existed are all alterations or additions to the plumbing system. What stays off the permit list is a straight replacement: same sink, same location, same drain and supply connections.

The City also says that even exempt projects "must still comply with the Ontario Building Code and any applicable law." The City's submission requirements for renovation permits ask for floor plans showing plumbing fixture locations, so when a permit is needed, the drawings have to show where the fixtures end up.

One more point from the City: "It is the owner's responsibility to ensure that a Building Permit is obtained when required," and both the owner and the contractor "are equally liable under the Ontario Building Code Act." That means the permit question is not one to leave entirely to the contractor.

A few things to confirm in writing with whoever quotes the job: which fixtures are moving and which are staying in place, who applies for the building permit if one is needed, and whether the scope includes any new drain runs or supply extensions that would bring the plumbing line into play.

For anything not clearly on either list, ask the City's Building Code Services before the work starts.

Q2

Galley to L-shape with the sink moving in Vanier: what permits apply?

Moving a sink and changing the kitchen layout in Vanier touches three separate permit questions, and the answer is different for each part of the job.

The layout change itself, going from a galley to an L-shape, matters only if it involves opening or removing a wall. The City of Ottawa's permit list includes "adding or removing walls, i.e., creating different room sizes and/or uses." If the conversion requires taking out a wall or part of one, a building permit is needed before that work starts, under the Building Code Act. If the new L-shape is achieved only by repositioning cabinets and appliances within the existing walls, that wall line does not apply. A short partition that does not change room sizes is not named on

either the City's permit list or its exempt list, so ask the City's Building Code Services which side it falls on for your specific layout.

Moving the sink is a separate question. The City's permit list covers "plumbing, alterations, additions or extensions to a plumbing system (except replacing existing fixtures)." Relocating a sink is an alteration to the plumbing system, so a building permit is required for that part of the job. The City's submission requirements for renovations ask for floor plans showing plumbing fixture locations, so the new sink position needs to be shown. Ask your contractor who pulls the building permit, because both the owner and the contractor are equally liable under the Ontario Building Code Act.

Replacing the cabinets and countertops, with the sink staying in place, sits on the City's exempt list: "replacing kitchen or bathroom cabinets (provided plumbing fixtures remain in same location)." Because the sink is moving, the job as a whole includes permit work. The City notes that exempt projects must still comply with the Ontario Building Code and any applicable law.

If the renovation includes any electrical work, that is an ESA notification filed before the work starts, not a City building permit. If a gas range is involved, a TSSA-certified gas technician working for a TSSA-registered contractor does the connection.

One more check before demolition: if the house is in a Heritage District Overlay or is a designated heritage building, the City says those properties "are not subject to exemptions," and the owner contacts the City first.

Published 2025-2026 Ottawa guides put a mid-range kitchen with little or no layout change at about $35,000 to $60,000, and moving a sink at about $1,500 to $5,000, more for long runs or venting changes. A full gut with structural work runs from about $60,000 to $70,000, often past $100,000.

Comparing quotes for this job comes down to the same few lines: which quote includes the permit application and who files it, exactly which fixtures are moving and how far, what the cabinet run and counter area cover, and whether structural or plumbing work is itemised separately or buried in a single number.

Q3

What raises the price of moving a kitchen sink in Orleans?

Moving a kitchen sink or adding island plumbing is about $1,500 to $5,000 in published 2025–2026 Ottawa guides, more for long runs, slabs or venting changes. Those three are the factors the guides name, and how far the sink moves is the one you can see on the plan.

The permit is part of the job. Moving the sink is "Plumbing - alterations, additions or extensions to a plumbing system (except replacing existing fixtures)" on the City of Ottawa's building permit list, and a plumbing-only permit is $117 per application on the 2026 schedule. The City's submission requirements for renovations ask for floor plans showing "Plumbing fixture locations". The City says it is the owner's responsibility to ensure a permit is obtained when required.

Who does it matters too. Plumber is a compulsory trade in Ontario, and your plumber designs the drain and venting for the new location; drain sizing and venting detail is ottawaplumbingpro.ca's topic. If the move also takes out a wall or adds circuits in an island, those bring their own steps: the wall line on the City's permit list ("adding or removing walls, i.e., creating different room sizes and/or uses") and an Electrical Safety Authority notification for the wiring.

A fair quote for a sink move in Orleans says:

- where the sink is now and where it is going, on a drawing
- who pulls the building permit
- who does the plumbing
- whether patching the floor, wall or cabinet after the move is included
- the payment schedule

Ask each plumber or contractor what in their price would change if the run turns out longer than the drawing shows.

Q4

Second prep sink in an Ottawa kitchen: plumbing alteration or not?

Adding a second prep sink fits the City's plumbing line. The City of Ottawa's permit page lists "plumbing - alterations, additions or extensions to a plumbing system (except replacing existing fixtures)" as a building permit project, and a new sink in a new location is an addition to the plumbing system, not a replacement of an existing fixture.

So it sits on the City's building permit list, and the permit is issued before the work starts. The Building Code Act says no person shall construct unless a permit has been issued, and the City says both the owner and the contractor are equally liable under the Ontario Building Code Act. The City's submission requirements for renovations include floor plans showing plumbing fixture locations, so the drawings show where the new sink goes.

Published 2025-2026 Ottawa guides put moving a sink or adding island plumbing at about $1,500 to $5,000, more for long runs, slabs or venting changes. For this job, the price depends on how far the new sink is from the existing plumbing and whether it sits in an island. The plumbing-only permit is $117 per application on the City's 2026 schedule.

Electrician and plumber are compulsory trades in Ontario. The Skilled Trades Ontario Public Register lets you confirm that the individual doing the plumbing work is authorized. For the drain and venting design detail, ottawaplumbingpro.ca covers that topic.

A fair quote for this job names the permit applicant, the scope of the drain and supply run, who designs the drain and venting, any cabinet or countertop work needed to access or accommodate the new sink, and the fixture itself. Get the payment schedule, the permit responsibility and the full scope in writing before any work begins.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Ottawa Kitchen Renos. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified contractors and your local building authority (the City of Ottawa) before starting any kitchen renovation. Some of this work needs a City building permit, electrical work is filed with the Electrical Safety Authority, and gas work is regulated by TSSA. Information is current as of November 15, 2026 and may change. Visit **ottawakitchenrenos.ca** for the latest answers.