

Kohler invites you to shower in new LuxeHome showroom

By Pamela Sherrod

Tribune staff reporter

Bring your bathing suit and your imagination to the first Kohler store, which is scheduled to open Monday at LuxeHome on the first floor of The Merchandise Mart.

The new 7,000 square-foot store (southeast corner of The Mart at Kinzie and Wells Streets) was in a raw dress rehearsal stage when we visited early last week. So we had to visualize the reflecting pool that will be at the entrance and imagine the Kohler products all shined and clear of construction dust.

But even in the rough, there were signs of the design magic to come.

Kohler, (www.TheKohler-Store.com, 312-755-2510) the global leader in kitchen and bath design, will feature products from the Kohler, Kallista, and Robern brands. The store also will include a collection of room plans created by designers such as Laura Bohn, Ray Booth, Clodagh, Christopher Coleman, Benjamin Noriega-Ortiz and Brian Covington for Ferguson & Shamamian Architects LLP.

The store will be a showplace but the designs are meant to be tested.

"Everything can be turned on so that you can see it and try it," says Michelle Kowalski, manager of Kohler stores.

Does this mean people can test the showers?

"Yes, even the showers. But you have to wear a bathing suit," she says.

(Psst. The toilets have their own gallery setting in an area called The Performance Room.)

DIVA NEIGHBOR: Ann Sacks has a store that adjoins Kohler, but the designer and manufacturer of luxury tile, stone and plumbing products is a name unto itself.

Like Kohler, Ann Sacks, which is moving from its 12-year-old Wells Street location, was still a work-in-progress when we visited, but it will feature the works of designer Clodagh, Robert Kuo, Angela Adams and Barbara Barry.

To get an idea of what Ann Sacks offers, check out www.annsacks.com or call 312-923-0919.