

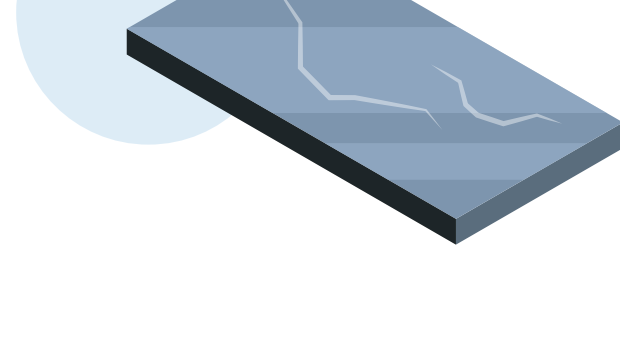
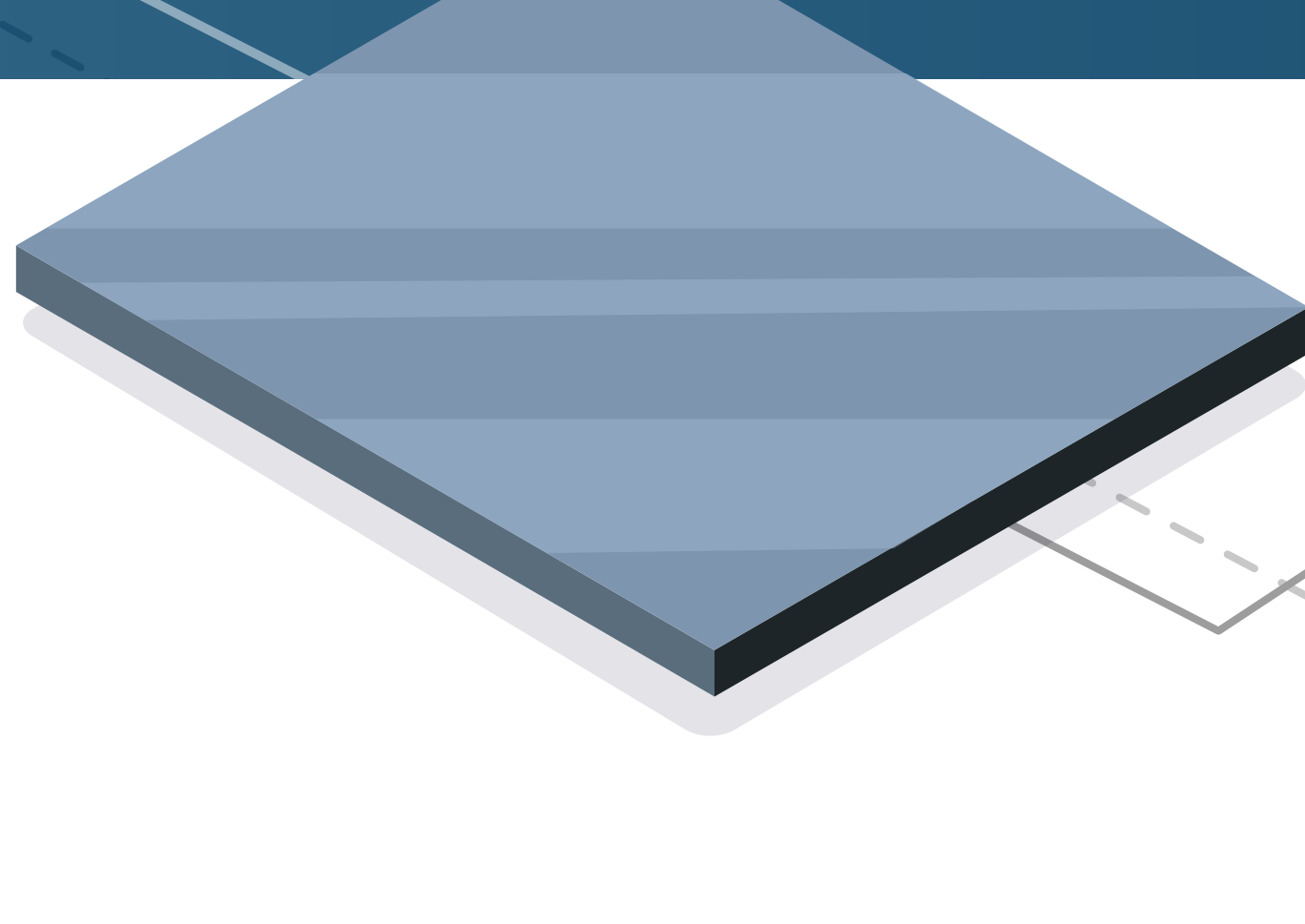
Incredibly beautiful materials that may *NOT* work well in bathrooms.

Like you, we believe bathroom spaces can be innovative, beautiful, and inspirational. It is equally important, however, that they are safe, hygienic, and durable. Material selection can play a key role in determining how many of these goals can be met, and you have more material choices now than ever. Before making a long-term commitment, please be aware of the following material-specific considerations for bathrooms.



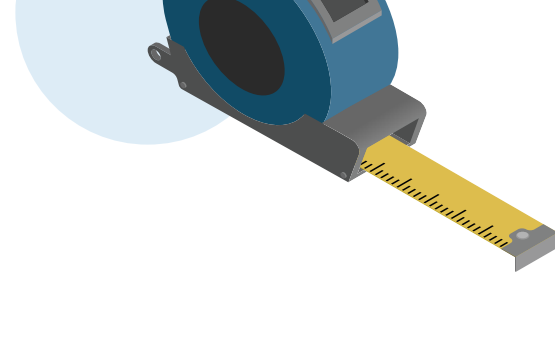
1 METAL LAMINATES

Decorative metals have long been valued for their lustrous color and sheen. Metal textures reflect energy, but they have downsides.



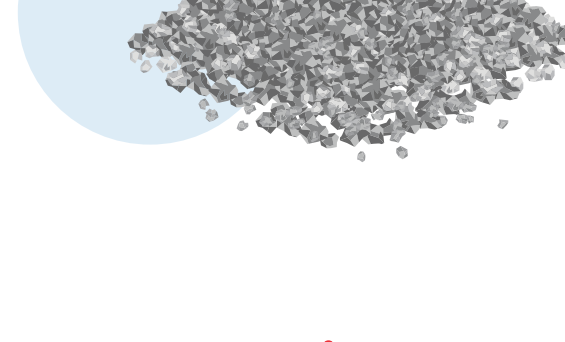
Easily Scratched

The inherently thin and soft metal laminate scratches and dents easily. The artificial lighting typical in most restrooms usually accentuates these flaws.



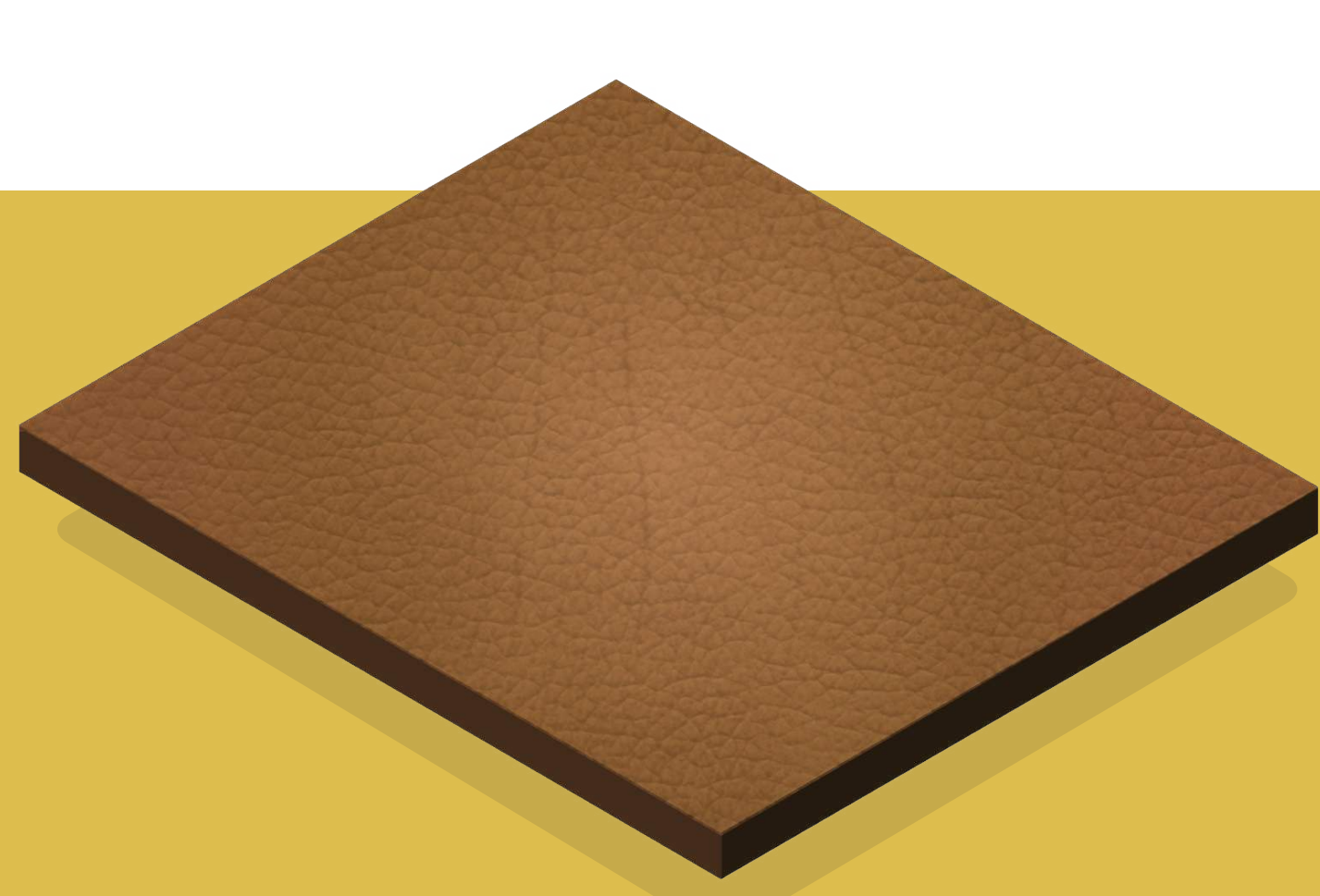
Limited Sizes

Metal laminates are typically only available in four-foot-wide sheets. This means wide parts, such as panels (typically 58 inches or wider), will require visible splices.



Telegraphing

In production, even the smallest foreign substance (like lint, sawdust, or hardened glue) can get trapped between the panel core and laminate and be “telegraphed” to the surface as a visual flaw.



2 LEATHER

Leather can add timeless sophistication to any room, including, yes, the bathroom. Protecting and preserving leather, however, calls for careful maintenance and gentle use.



Highly Sensitive

Leather is naturally porous and somewhat absorbent — not a good combination for restrooms. In addition to water and other fluids, restroom partitions are often subject to chemically harsh cleaners. This can strip the color and make the material brittle over time.

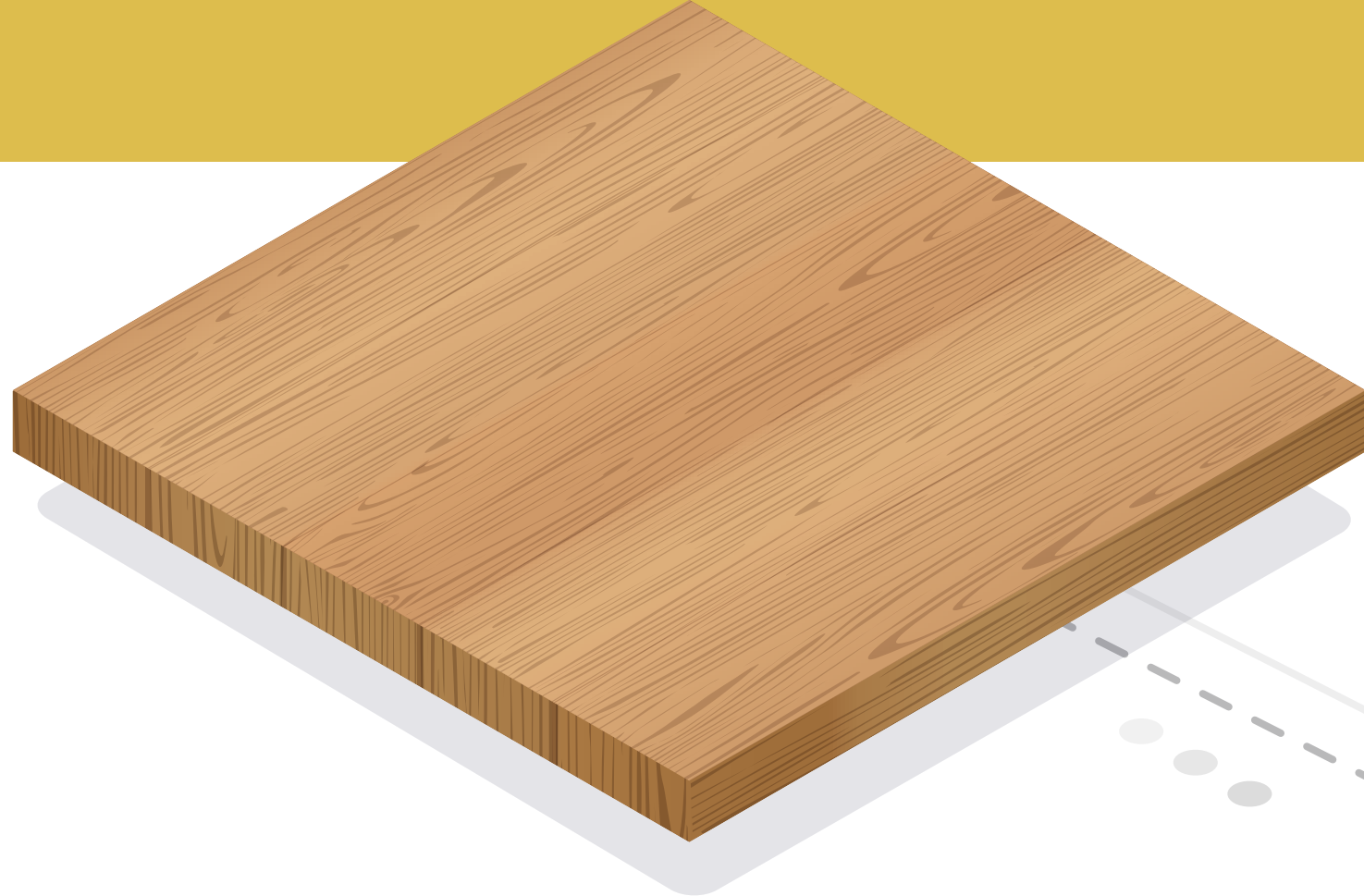


May Lose Form

Each partition component must be “wrapped,” like a present, with the corners folded neatly and tightly. These corner conditions are, unfortunately, hard to maintain and may relax or pull loose over time.

3 SOLID WOOD

Solid wood can convey strength and sturdiness, but solid wood partitions face a few challenges in a restroom.



Movement

As solid wood dehydrates (dries) or hydrates, it moves. That can lead to visual and even mechanical problems. Furthermore, other components can move in different ways, leading to warping, twisting, or other undesirable changes.



Customization Required

In raw material form, solid wood is not typically available in the standard thicknesses used in the toilet partition industry. Therefore, solid wood components often require additional custom steps to integrate with other parts of a partition or restroom.

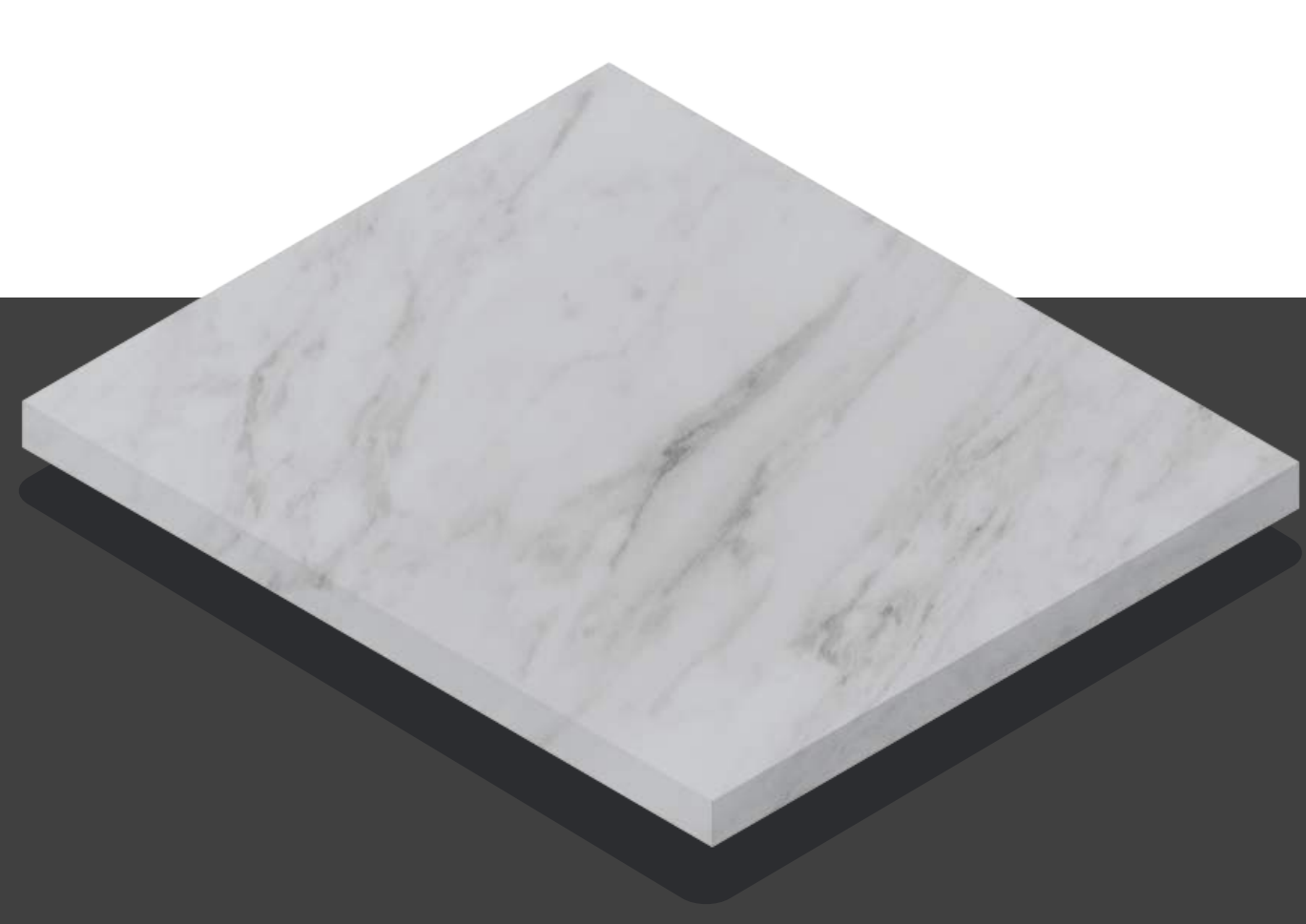


Scarce Hardware

Hardware options become very limited if solid wood components are not modified to standard thicknesses. As a result, manufacturers of restroom hardware optimize for standard component dimensions and offer few choices for non-standard dimensions.

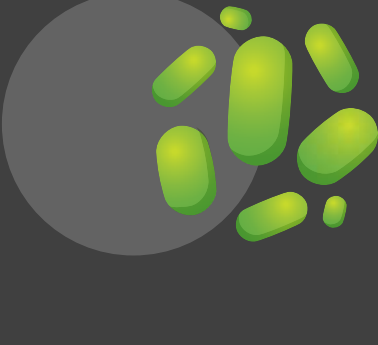
Possible Solution

Wood veneer affixed to an engineered core can convey the same beauty as solid wood without the threat of warping, expensive manufacturing processes, or limited hardware options.



4 NATURAL STONE

Choosing natural stone for a design is appealing because of its unique qualities. Unfortunately, stone's strengths are also stone's weaknesses.



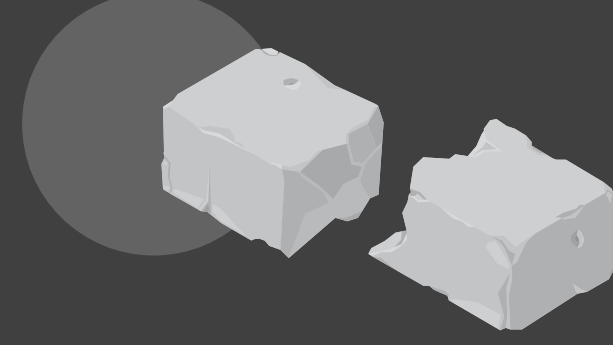
Easily Marred

The porous nature of natural stone lends itself to absorbing stains and even bacteria, some of the last things you want in a bathroom.



Hard to Match

When natural rock is excavated from a mountain, it often contains a wide variety of colors and veining. Big blocks are then cut into thin slabs. Uniformity of color and pattern is difficult since it is hard to get all the slabs from a single block.



Surprisingly Fragile

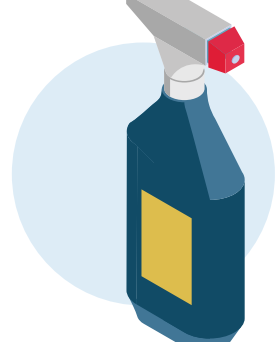
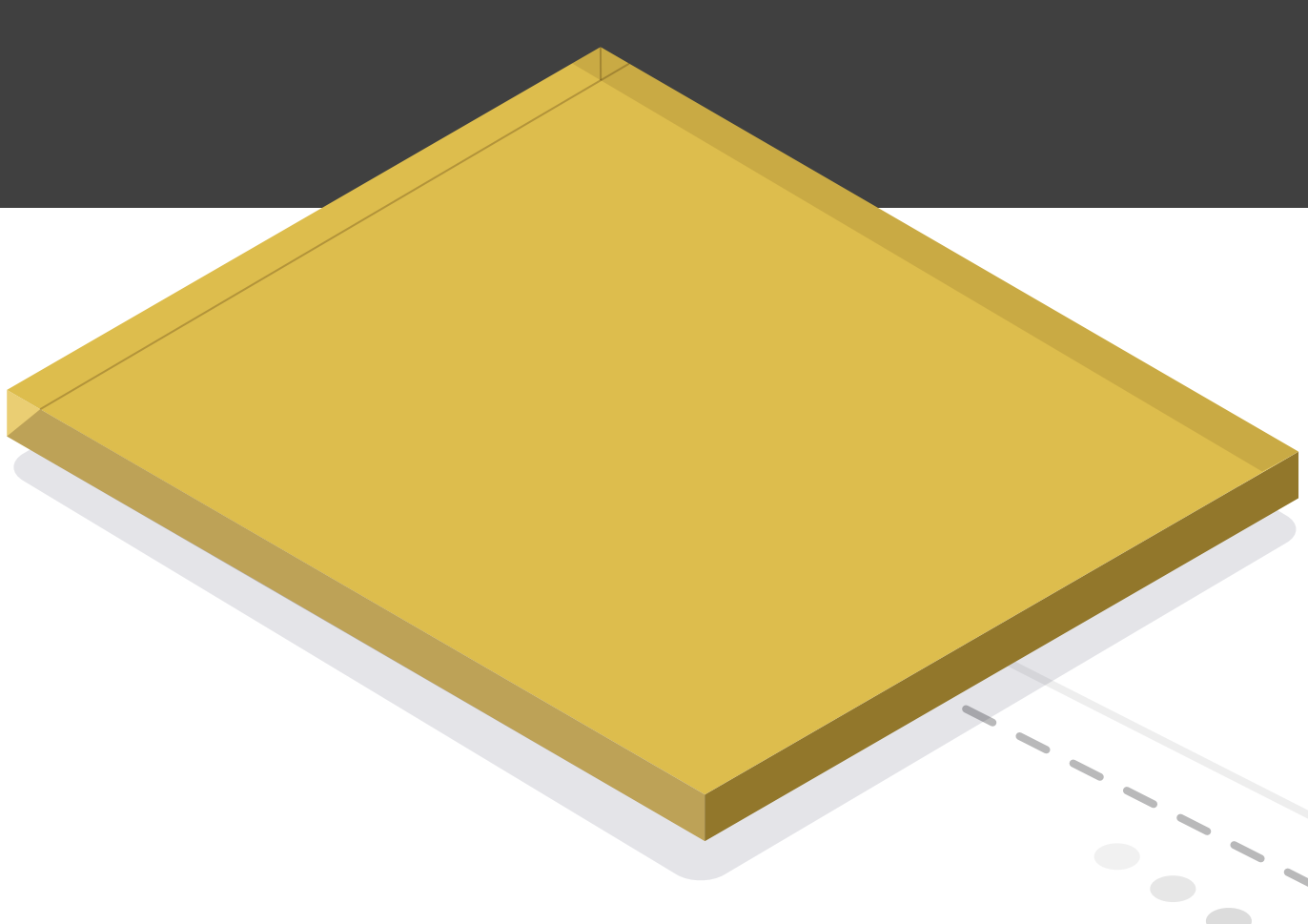
Natural stone becomes increasingly brittle with age and the continued absorption of cleaning chemicals. If a natural stone component is damaged to the point of needing replacement, finding a matching slab is nearly impossible.

Possible Solution

Choosing engineered stone is a way to get most of the benefits of stone, have control over the color and patterns, and ensure durability.

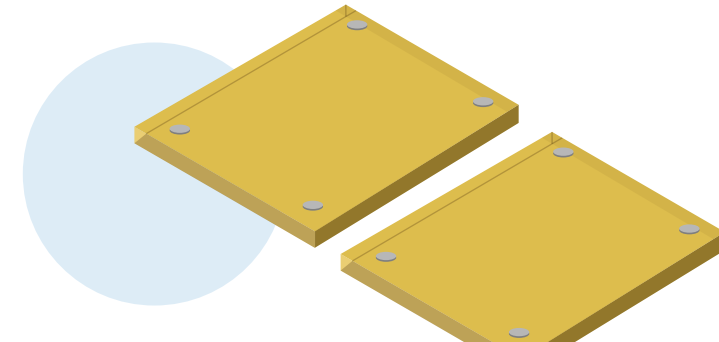
5 ACRYLIC

Acrylic has many desirable attributes. It is smooth, looks clean, has a nice glow, is available in a vast array of patterns, and is nonporous, making it less susceptible to mildew and mold. Unfortunately, it is also quite delicate and has limitations.



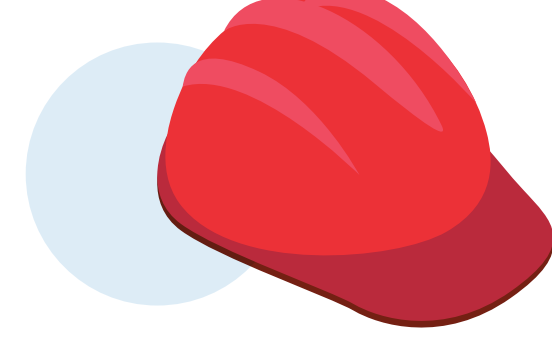
Sensitive to Chemicals

Cleaning instructions for acrylic often suggest only water and non-abrasive soaps. Failure to follow these instructions may cause swelling, hazing, and possibly physical changes. This is less than ideal given current commercial bathroom cleaning methods.



Usually Requires Splicing

Acrylics are typically only available in four-foot-wide sheets. This means any component over 48 inches (such as panels) will require a splice.

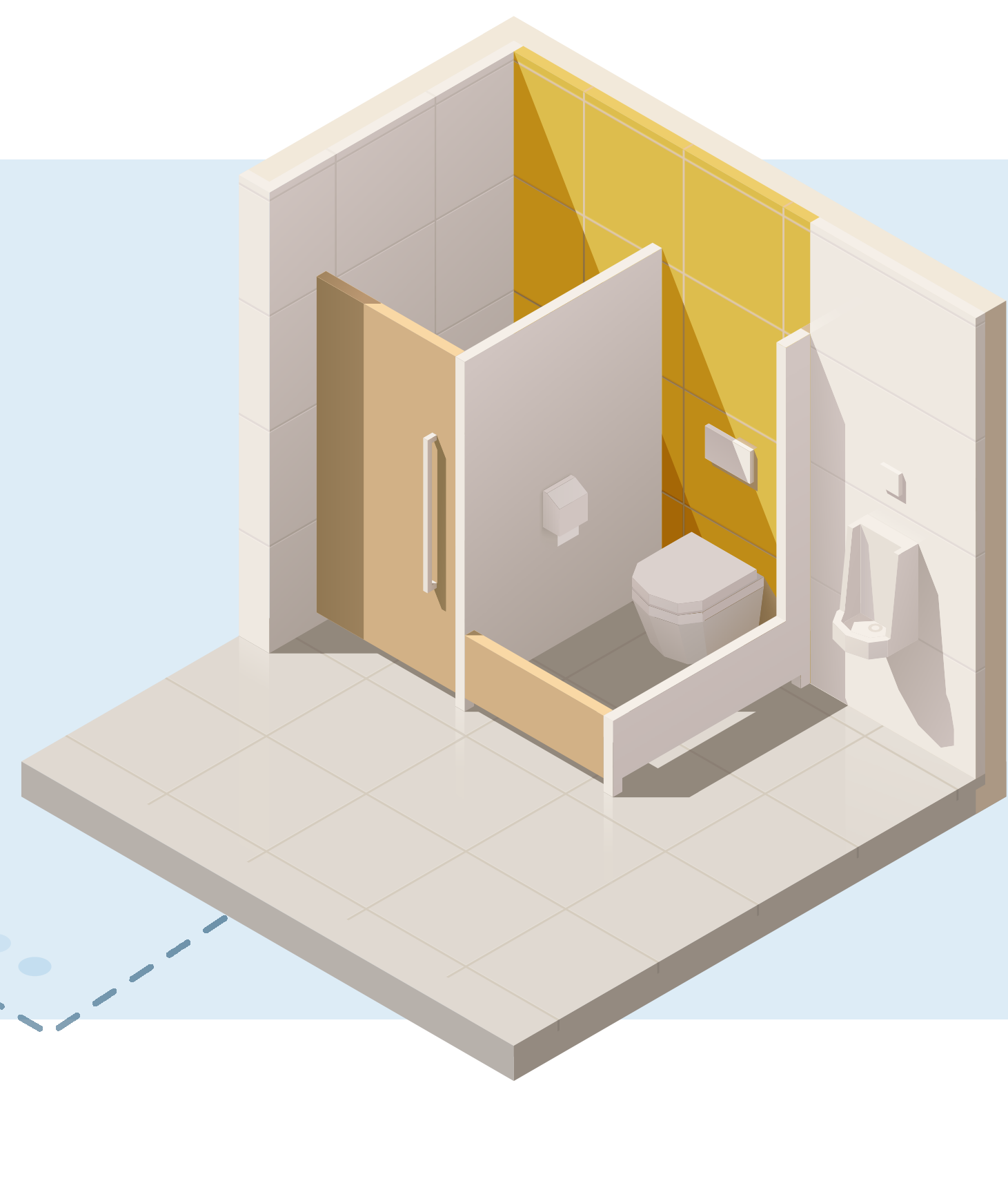


Structural Strength

Acrylics generally do not have the structural strength to be used as support pilasters or even panels. Stiffening hardware may be used to address this shortcoming, but such hardware is rarely ever aesthetically appealing.

Possible Solution

A reasonable compromise is to use acrylic as inserts only. Cleaning issues may still arise, but this generally resolves the other issues mentioned above.



Balancing form and function will always be one of the great design challenges.

If you find yourself pushing right up to the edge of the materials envelope, we're happy to get beside you and push too. Hopefully, the information above will help you avoid material dead ends and disappointments we've already encountered. We look forward to continuing to learn and provide you with the very latest findings in our industry and beyond.