

Professor Plumber Puzzlers – Answers: September 2025

Below are the answers for Septembers “Professor Plumbers Puzzlers”

1. Answer: **b. Philadelphia, PA:** *The first city to use cast-iron piping for a citywide waterworks system was Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In 1804, Philadelphia adopted cast iron pipes for its water mains, making it the first in the United States to do so. This also marked the beginning of modern-day plumbing in the US.*
2. Answer: **a. Boston, MA:** *The first city in the United States to utilize wooden water pipes was Boston, Massachusetts in 1652. They used a system of hollowed-out logs, typically hemlock or elm, to create their waterworks pipes.*
3. Answer: **b. Bethlehem, PA:** *Lead piping was used in almost every major U.S. city for many plumbing applications in 1900, including to transport drinking water. However, the first U.S. city to utilize lead piping in a public water system was Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, around 1754. While lead pipes were also used in Springfield and Stockbridge, Massachusetts later, Bethlehem's system is considered the first documented example in the US.*
4. Answer: **e. New York, NY:** *New York City was the first city to implement a large-scale steam piping system for heating buildings. The New York Steam Company started providing service in lower Manhattan on March 3, 1882. By 1932, the company supplied steam to over 2,500 buildings from six steam plants. If the piping of the distribution system was laid end to end would stretch over 137 miles.*
5. Answer: **a. Boston, MA:** *The first hotel in the United States with indoor plumbing was the Tremont Hotel in Boston, which opened in 1829. It was designed by architect Isaiah Rogers and incorporated eight water closets on the main floor. This was a significant innovation in hospitality, and the Tremont Hotel is credited with setting a new standard for luxury in hotels.*
6. Answer: **c. Chicago, IL:** *The first major American city to implement a comprehensive sewer system was Chicago. This was largely due to the work of engineer Ellis S. Chesbrough, who was hired to design a system in 1855. The system, built in the late 1850s, was a crucial step in addressing sanitation issues and improving public health in the city.*
7. Answer: **e. New York, NY:** *The first U.S. city to adopt a plumbing code was New York City in 1881. This law, the Plumbing Law, required all master plumbers to register with the Board of Health and mandated that plumbing plans be approved before construction could proceed. The law also empowered the Board of Health to halt construction through injunction if plans weren't approved, making violating the law a misdemeanor.*

8. Answer: **d. Memphis, TN:** *The US city with the largest aquifer is Memphis, Tennessee, which relies entirely on groundwater from the Memphis Aquifer (also known as the Sparta Aquifer or Memphis Sand) to meet its water needs. The Memphis Aquifer is a vast underground water source. The Ogallala Aquifer, located in the High Plains region of the US, is the largest aquifer in the country, but it is not in a city.*
9. Answer: **b. Los Angeles:** *The first U.S. city to adopt the uniform plumbing code was Los Angeles in 1928. The city adopted the initial version of the code, which was developed by the Los Angeles City Plumbing Inspectors Association (LACPIA) based on input from various stakeholders. This code, often referred to as the "Hoover Report" or "Hoover Code," established 20 basic plumbing principles and technical requirements.*
10. Answer: **c. New York, NY:** *The first U.S. city to build a public water reservoir for its citizens was New York City, with the Croton Water Supply System completed in 1842. This system, which included a dam, a long aqueduct, and reservoirs in Manhattan, was a significant engineering achievement for its time and provided a more reliable and clean water source than the previous reliance on wells and springs.*