References

Homestead Rochester

Uponor involvement

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Project highlights

- Senior Housing Complex in Rochester, MN
- 140,000-square-foot, four-story building with three single-story wings
- Mechanical Contractor: Superior Mechanical, Rochester, MN
- Uponor Hydronic Heating and Cooling System
- Uponor Plumbing System

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Products used

- Wirsbo hePEX™ pipe for hydronic piping
- Uponor AquaPEX® pipe for plumbing
- ProPEX® Fittings

A multifamily expansion project features Uponor PEX

Learn more about a multifamily retirement complex and the benefits of including a new Uponor PEX plumbing and hydronic piping system...
With Americans turning 65 at a rate of about 10,000 a day, it’s no wonder the explosive growth in the $300 billion U.S. senior housing sector is seeing yet another surge. In Rochester, Minn., home to the Mayo Clinic, several new facilities have gone up over the last several years, and one of them, the Homestead of Rochester (built in 2006), recently added an additional four-story building to accommodate the continued growth.

Superior Mechanical, a Rochester-based firm, and one of the largest mechanical contractors in Minnesota, installed the plumbing and the hydronic piping systems – both from Uponor – for the 140,000-square-foot expansion. Superior Mechanical has worked with PEX and Uponor in potable, radiant, snowmelt and Ecoflex® applications, but this was their first project where Uponor was a solution for all piping 2" and below for both potable and hydronic piping.

Project Facts:

Location	Completion
Rochester, MN, USA	2015
Building Type	
Health Care	
Project Type	
New building	

See why the Homestead in Rochester, MN chooses Uponor for both domestic water and mechanical piping systems

The system, a six-pipe solution (two for potable hot and cold, and four for the hydronic hot and chilled) is a hybrid system since it's coupled with CPVC on potable water larger than 2" and Victaulic (mechanical pipe fittings) for hydronic piping larger than 2". Over the last several years, hydronic piping has been gaining traction among builders and contractors because the systems offer both time and cost savings and are quicker to install than traditional HVAC systems.

However, due to the relative newness of these types of installations, the learning curve can be steeper than normal. ''It's important to provide on-site training to ensure that the contractors fully understand how to install these types of systems,'' Ryan Swanson, an Uponor rep with Fourmation Sales, said.

Jim Ronnenberg, project manager with Superior Mechanical, oversaw the installation for his company. ''We used about 1,250 feet of Wirsbo hePEX™ in the corridors and it worked beautifully. We were unprepared for how much the piping expanded when the water heated up, and we needed training on how to use anchor points in the overhead piping in order to restrict movement during the expansion and contraction phase. Once we were trained on this, the installation went smoothly and without any significant problems,'' he said.

Uponor's Dominic Marzitelli is the Midwest technical sales rep for indoor climate and he served as a sounding board during the design and installation phase. ''This is an important project because it showcases how Uponor and PEX can solve significant obstacles in design/build jobs,'' he said. ''By using PEX in these types of applications, the contractor and the building owner save significantly on both installation time and on product cost.''

Ronnenberg agrees. ''We saved significantly on this installation by using PEX and not steel or copper. And we also found that we saved on labor – we didn't need as many installers and they worked faster using PEX installation processes.''

Marzitelli is focused on educating the professional community on the benefits of PEX in hydronic heating and cooling systems, and he works with engineers and city inspectors to help them see the value of these types of installations. ''The building community is used to doing things a certain way, and we are slow to change old habits,'' he said. ''But over the last few years, I've seen a real interest from mechanical contractors to learn more about the savings a hydronic piping system provides. It's an exciting time for our industry.''

Case in point; Ronnenberg and Superior Mechanical quickly moved on to new projects where they duplicated the Homestead of Rochester installation, but this time, according to Ronnenberg, they felt comfortable with the process right from the start, utilizing ''tried and true'' installation tips that they learned the first time around.

Homestead at Rochester

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