



SKI RESORT'S MASSIVE SNOW MELTING SYSTEM TAKES INDUSTRY GROUP'S TOP HONORS

IRVING, Texas - Installing nearly three miles of cross-linked polyethylene (PEX) tubing in a single day for a new snow melting system at the Sun Valley Ski Resort won the Plastics Pipe Institute, Inc.'s (PPI) 2013 Building and Construction Division's (BCD) Project of the Year award. The honor from PPI, the major trade association representing all segments of the plastic pipe industry, highlights the accomplishments of the project, which included a total of 32 miles of PEX tubing over 60,000 square feet of space and exchanging one large boiler with a more efficient 19-zone system.

"This is one of those projects that looks so enormous that it seemed almost impossible to do," stated Tony Radoszewski, president of PPI. "But the ability of the PEX pipe and fittings to be quickly put in place and its high reliability factor provided the resort with a more efficient snow melting system that saved energy and provided better service to its customers." Radoszewski made the presentation to PPI member company Viega LLC (Wichita, Kan.), the PEX pipe and fittings manufacturer, during the association's annual meeting held in May 2014 in Palm Springs, California.

The pipe, called ViegaPEX Barrier tubing, along with Viega PEX Press fittings, was used in the project.

Chris Share, HVAC boiler maintenance supervisor at Sun Valley, who oversaw the renovation, maintains around 80 boilers, which are mostly for snow melting, and in the summertime, he takes care of the cooling towers and chilling systems.



"We took out a nine million BTU atmospheric boiler that covered 60,000 square feet," Share said. "And it either had to be all on or all off. Now, I have 19 zones and I can run what I want, which greatly increases our efficiency and will reduce our operational costs.

"All my distribution lines are PEX," he said. "Every loop is exactly 400 feet. It was easy to do a pressure test on it once we had it laid and hooked up. For the entire renovation, including the building supplies and returns, we put in a little over 30 miles of tube installed in the ground."

***"I'm very excited about how much more energy efficient we can get,"
 Chris Share, Sun Valley***

Share and his team installed ¾" ViegaPEX™ Barrier tubing, Viega PEX Press fittings ranging in size from ¾ inch to two inches, and 300 copper manifolds. They also used insulated Viega panels in the installation. The 2013 project took just more than two months.

The main challenge Share and his crew faced was completing the project on time. "We did one area, the River Run Bridge, in one day," Share said. "That was 37 loops in one



day with six guys. If three guys can lay 3,000 feet in a day, that's good. But with these systems, we laid 14,800 feet in a day and it was a nasty day too. "I've used other snow melting systems," he continued, "but they're a pain because you're dealing with European tools. With a lot of the other fitting systems, the rings aren't attached. Here, the rings are attached so you don't have to hunt for them. Plus, the fittings come factory-assembled with stainless steel sleeves, so we have full confidence that the connection is secure.



"I'm very excited about how much more energy efficient we can get," Share said. "In January, we usually get a dry-cold spell, and now I'll be able to run the system just a little bit. If I get an icy spot, I can just turn on that zone instead of having to run the whole thing."

According to the PPI, PEX pipe continues to gain in popularity. "It is a product that satisfies the needs of homeowners, builders, and plumbers by providing long-term performance, and making installations more labor and cost efficient," stated Randy Knapp, director of engineering, for the PPI Building and

Construction Division. "PEX is the material of choice for radiant heating systems and is quickly replacing copper for residential potable water plumbing. In addition to outdoor snow and ice melt systems, other applications include AWWA municipal water service; turf conditioning; residential fire sprinklers; and geothermal systems. Typically found in sizes from 3/8 to 2 inches, and up to 3 inches in diameter, PEX pipe comes in straight lengths or coils and is made from proven high-performance materials."

For more information, visit the Plastics Pipe Institute website: www.plasticpipe.org.

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About PPI:

The Plastics Pipe Institute Inc. (PPI) is the major trade association representing all segments of the plastic pipe industry and is dedicated to promoting plastics as the material of choice for pipe applications. PPI is the premier technical, engineering and industry knowledge resource publishing data for use in development and design of plastic pipe systems. Additionally, PPI collaborates with industry organizations that set standards for manufacturing practices and installation methods.