



SOLARIS IN VAIL, COLORADO

RADIANT HEATING AND SNOW AND ICE MELTING
PROJECT PROFILE

REHAU Snow and Ice Melting System Improves Accessibility and Reduces Maintenance for Vail, Colorado Town Center

Nestled at the foot of the Rocky Mountains is Vail, Colorado's new town center, Solaris. A vastly impressive facility, Solaris boasts 79 condominium units and two stories of retail space, all encircling a community plaza where residents can enjoy a movie theatre, bowling alley and fitness center. With the amount of snow Vail typically receives, a robust, energy-efficient snow and ice melting (SIM) system was crucial. More than 75 miles (120 km) of RAUPEX pipe were used for the radiant heating and SIM systems throughout the complex.

By applying radiant heating technology to the walkways, central plaza, building perimeter and rooftop platforms, SIM provides a reliable way to reduce the amount of snow and ice over the 60,000 ft² (5,574 m²) area. The pipe is connected to 44 snow melting manifolds which enhance system security and control, mitigating the need for costly repair shutdowns.

Design Mechanical, based in Louisville, Colorado, was responsible for the design and installation of the REHAU systems. The flexibility of RAUPEX helped to overcome some obstacles during installation. "The exterior stairs have see-through risers, which required some really creative strategies from Design Mechanical," noted Mike East, REHAU account manager. "The PEX pipe was looped on each stair and threaded through a hole in the riser."

Radiant heating was installed in a total area of 200,000 ft² (18,581 m²) in the Solaris residences. "We chose radiant because of its exceptional comfort at relatively low operating temperatures," said Thomas Ogg, project manager at Solaris. The heating system is supplied by 120 PRO-BALANCE manifolds, with each condo unit controlled by at least two manifolds. EVERLOC compression-sleeve fittings, embedded in the concrete, join the radiant and SIM systems.

"Large, complex projects like Solaris allow us to demonstrate our capabilities as a system integrator," said Jon Bittenbender, REHAU technical manager. "We not only design energy-efficient products, but also have the technical expertise to support the builder, engineer and architect with implementation and integration of our systems throughout all phases of the project."

Solaris was named *Plastic Pipe Institute's* Building and Construction Division 2011 "Project of the Year"

Photographs courtesy of Rick Thomas/KenKo Co., Inc.

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Project: Solaris in Vail, CO

Construction: Mixed Use

Scope of Project: 75 miles (120 km) of RAUPEX pipe

Owner: Solaris Property Owner

Designer/Contractor: Design Mechanical

Project Manager: Thomas Ogg

REHAU Systems Used: Radiant heating and snow and ice melting (RAUPEX[®] pipe, EVERLOC[®] fittings, PRO-BALANCE[®] manifolds)

Website: www.solarisvail.com