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Retirement Community Project Profile

CUSTOMER: Shannex Retirement Communities

APPLICATIONS: Potable water

LOCATIONS: Canada

CONTRACTOR: In-house

Rest easy with Viega PEX Press behind the wall

Senior care is an important topic in Canada, where more than five million Canadians were 65 years of age or older as of 2015. That number is expected to double in the next 25 years to reach 10.4 million seniors by 2036, according to Statistics Canada. By 2051, about one-in-four Canadians is expected to be 65 or over.

Retirement communities, such as those offered by Shannex, make transitioning to a different type of lifestyle and accommodations hassle-free. A family-owned and operated business, Shannex operates 12 Parkland Retirement Living campuses located in communities throughout Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Ontario, as well as long-term care.

Shannex began in 1988 with the purchase of one nursing home. Since then, it has grown to include a full spectrum of care and services for seniors, including home care, lifestyle apartments, hospitality and wellness, assisted living, memory care, and long-term care.

“Our Parkland Retirement Living communities are very much like a university campus, with multiple buildings all connected on beautifully groomed properties,” said Heather Hanson, Vice President, Strategic Partnerships and Brand Shannex Inc. “So our clients can enjoy the gardens, walking paths and activities outdoors, and since the campus is completely interconnected, they can get their 10,000 steps walking inside on a rainy day as well.”

When their founder first started developing the concept for these campuses, he selected a competitor’s PEX crimp fittings for use in the facilities for the first 10 years in business. For the last 18 years, Darrell Dixon, Construction Manager for Shannex, has started looking at the life cycle of the building and wants to ensure they will last for 100 years.

“What started happening – approximately 8 years ago – was we started having failures in the original buildings,” Dixon said. “The cold expansion fittings on the reflex piping – where they stretch the pipe and put the fitting over – were actually breaking in the wall. Once that happened, we started revisiting the specs and standards with respect to not just potable water but all fittings inside the walls.”

“ We wanted to move to a spec and a standard that is going to ensure our buildings are 100-year buildings. That’s what brought us to Viega. ”



After some research, Dixon ultimately set a standard with his contractors that the pipe and fittings had to be manufactured to a specification and certified together. He mandated that the fitting be metallic and specified a positive connection with a crushable band that didn’t rely on reflex.

“All fittings in a wall you have to assume you’re going to get 100 years out of it,” Dixon said, “because the cost to go fix it is exponentially more expensive than the fitting itself.”

As Shannex continues to build, expand, and renovate its Parkland Retirement Living campuses, it is incorporating Viega PEX Press fittings in Zero Lead bronze.

“We used Viega first at Parkland at the Gardens five years ago,” Dixon said. “Since then, that’s been our standard. I like how it goes together. It hasn’t really affected my project costs. I believe we’re getting a higher quality piping network for our buildings for reasonably comparable numbers.”

Dixon did his research when he chose to make the switch to Viega.

“Shannex takes a collaborative approach to design/installation when it comes to the construction process and the vendors that they choose,” said Mark Evans, Director of Sales for Viega in North America. “They recognize the value that vendors like Viega

can bring to the table. This manifested itself in the meeting we had with Darrell. He invited his Viega sales representative and the rep firm, JF Taylor, to tour an operational facility to look at elements of the existing systems and offer suggestions on how to optimize the existing system and improve designs for future projects.”

Viega PEX Press has been included in eight facilities, with three in Nova Scotia and the remainder in New Brunswick. Today, Dixon and the staff and residents at Shannex campuses can rest easy knowing they are protected with Viega behind the walls.

“We had a history of problems, and we said we wanted to move to a spec and a standard that is going to ensure our buildings are 100-year buildings. That’s what brought us to Viega,” Dixon said. “We believe this is a well-manufactured and well-thought-of system. It’s not just a fitting or a pipe; it’s a system.”

For more information on Viega system solutions, visit www.viega.us, or call toll free: 800-976-9819.

