

CASE STUDY

FLORIDA WEST COAST PLUMBING CONTRACTOR SAYS “NO” TO GENERIC CPVC PLUMBING SYSTEMS

McGill Plumbing

Largo, Florida

Established: 1932

Quality, Durability, Ease of Installation and Proven Track Record Drive McGill Plumbing to Specify Only FlowGuard Gold® Pipe and Fittings

Florida’s humid, salty, coastal air doesn’t bode well for copper plumbing installations. Salt induces corrosion and progressively wreaks havoc on copper and other metal piping, causing systems to leak and fail, sometimes in as little as a few years.

That’s why the seasoned professionals at McGill Plumbing in Largo, Fla., have relied on corrosion-resistant FlowGuard Gold® chlorinated polyvinyl chloride (CPVC) pipe and fittings for years. They strive to install a durable, efficient system the first time around. Failure isn’t an option, so McGill Plumbing always uses FlowGuard Gold pipe and fittings in all of its re-piping projects.

The 75-year-old plumbing contracting company, known for its attentive customer service and its innovative headquarters building and showroom, specializes in re-piping jobs, spending very little time on new construction. Ninety-five percent of its customers are in the single-family market, with the remainder being in the multi-family and light commercial sectors.



“Corrosion issues definitely factored into our decision to use FlowGuard Gold CPVC pipe,” says Rick Leslie, McGill Plumbing’s vice president and general manager. “It was the logical and sensible choice six years ago and still is now, particularly considering how much copper prices have risen over the years. We can bid jobs more cost effectively because we specify CPVC.”

Pipe and fittings made from CPVC are ideal for residential and commercial plumbing applications in both new construction and re-piping installations. Key to the system’s value is its competitive pricing. Not only does the product result in a considerable material savings, but since it is easier and faster to install than copper (being able to be pressure tested within ten minutes of bonding, without the need to solder), less labor is required.

Unlike copper, CPVC is highly resistant to corrosion. Metal pipe may corrode internally and leak when local water is “aggressive” due to the presence of high levels of oxygen, low pH, or other potentially corrosive elements. Highly aggressive water, while safe to drink, can cause copper to corrode or “pinhole” and leak within only a few years. In Florida, corrosion is an even greater problem because the salt air can cause the pipe to also corrode from the outside.

In some cases, installing a corrosion-resistant CPVC plumbing system is the only permanent remedy for this problem.

Although almost any CPVC would be a superior piping choice over copper in coastal Florida applications, McGill quickly learned that not all CPVC systems perform the same. In fact, the first brand of CPVC the company used did not hold up to expectations, Leslie says. The manufacturer shipped the pipe directly to McGill, and the product often would arrive cracked and unusable. In addition, the pipe frequently cracked and failed during installation, a bad sign for the plumbing system’s long-term durability.

McGill’s team wanted to continue using CPVC in all of its re-piping jobs but needed a product that would endure the rigors of shipping and installation. So, they gave FlowGuard Gold® CPVC pipe and fittings a try and haven’t looked back.

“We already were using the FlowGuard Gold brass transition fittings with the other brand of CPVC pipe and were impressed with those. When we started to look at other brands of CPVC pipe, our distributor urged us to try FlowGuard Gold CPVC pipe and fittings. We knew it had a great reputation, so we decided to start using in our repiping projects.”

Backed by a 45+-year proven track record, FlowGuard Gold CPVC today is the most frequently specified non-metallic plumbing system in the world, thanks to its consistent quality and durability. All the resins in the pipe are manufactured from one main domestic source, and a special Quality Assurance Program guarantees consistency.



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Type of Construction:
Retail

Installation Type:
Repipe

FLOWGUARD GOLD®
PIPE & FITTINGS
NOT A DROP OF DOUBT.

FLOWGUARD GOLD®

"FlowGuard Gold CPVC pipe is a high-quality pipe. It's superior to any of its competitors," Leslie says. "We can put it in and forget about it. We love it."

McGill professionals use FlowGuard Gold pipe and fittings for all hot and cold water distribution. Over time, they have come to realize that CPVC offers other benefits beyond its obvious corrosion resistance properties. For example, most Florida homes are built on a slab, which presents a challenge when under-slab copper pipe springs a leak.

"If someone has three to four slab leaks over the course of a few years, it's time to talk about re-piping," Leslie says. "Re-piping with copper under slab is a logistical nightmare. We can run the FlowGuard Gold CPVC pipe overhead or trench around the house and lay it in the ground. We can go through walls in certain areas. We don't even have to deal with the slab. It's easier to feed CPVC through drop ceilings."

Leslie says that most of his customers welcome the opportunity to re-pipe in FlowGuard Gold CPVC vs. copper, even those living in multi-million-dollar homes in exclusive gated communities.

"After experiencing defective copper plumbing, they want a better alternative," Leslie says. "They don't want to deal with the leaks or the hassle of re-piping with copper. Re-piping with FlowGuard Gold CPVC pipe is simpler because it's much more flexible than copper. You don't have to cut as many holes in the wall or take out as much ceiling because you can feed it through much easier. Copper under the slab is a challenge. By the time you figure out what's there and what's not, you already could have re-piped it with FlowGuard Gold pipe and fittings."

One of the company's recent larger-scale re-piping jobs was for Dagwood Sandwich Shoppes. The franchise enterprise is the brainchild of Blondie comic strip creator Dean Young and longtime restaurant franchising-and-marketing executive Lamar Berry. The stores pay homage to Young's popular comic strip, in which the Dagwood sandwich was introduced more than 70 years ago and still appears in the strip at least two to three times a week. The company launched its first franchises in 2006 and recently started rapid expansion along Florida's Gulf Coast, particularly in Pinellas County where McGill Plumbing is based.



McGill plumbers removed all of the old plumbing in vacant strip store units that the franchise has purchased and replaced it with FlowGuard Gold CPVC pipe and fittings.

The company already has re-piped three stores and is starting

work on a fourth one. Turnaround times on the jobs ranged from four to six weeks, according to Leslie. He credits the easy solvent-cement installation method for the smooth re-piping process.

"It is so much easier and safer to install than a copper system because it doesn't require the use of a torch. You don't have an open flame. Joints are solvent-cemented and require no heavy tools for installation," he says.

For Leslie and the team of professionals at McGill Plumbing, installing CPVC plumbing systems has been the logical choice over copper systems for years. And for the past several years, only one brand of CPVC finds its way into McGill's specifications – FlowGuard Gold CPVC pipe and fittings. The professionals there have learned that a FlowGuard Gold CPVC system is the smart, durable, easy-to-install and corrosion-resistant choice for all of their jobs.

"My guys would throw things at me if we went back to non-FlowGuard Gold CPVC systems," Leslie says. "It's the best CPVC plumbing system we have ever used and we don't intend to specify anything else again. We are sold on FlowGuard Gold pipe and fittings. There's no reason to try anything else."

Since Lubrizol's development of CPVC plumbing systems over 45 years ago, more than four (4) billion feet of CPVC pipe has been installed in homes, condominiums, buildings, apartments and hotels, including OVER twelve (12) million homes. For more information on the FlowGuard Gold® plumbing system, including pipes, valves, joining cement, caulks, sealants and tools, call 1-888-234-2436, X7393, or visit www.flowguardgold.com.

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