



Case Study

Georgia's Park Springs Retirement Village Successfully Markets New Concept of Continuous Care

Type of Construction:
Retirement Complex

Installation Type:
New

Location:
Atlanta, Georgia

Scope of Project:
25 single family homes, 50 duplexes & 80 apartment villas

Fire Sprinkler Contractor:
Affordable Fire Protection

Phase I “Tenants” Move In on Schedule After Two-Year Planning Process; BlazeMaster® CPVC Fire Sprinkler Systems Contribute to Contractor’s Ability to Meet Tight Construction Deadline

Only a few years ago the concept of a continuous care retirement community (CCRC) was relatively unknown. But today it’s growing to become a big business for those developers savvy enough to implement it.

Park Springs Retirement Village, a CCRC adjacent to Stone Mountain State Park near Atlanta, is a breathtaking 54-acre campus that offers independent living to active adults 62 and older. It offers three distinctive home styles: Park View Villas, Mountain View Cottages and Golf View Home – all in a variety of sizes, floor plans and options. The CCRC concept allows the developer to retain permanent ownership of the property and the dwellings while also remaining solely responsible for all maintenance and related services.

Real estate experts see CCRCs growing in popularity because of their comparatively high investment returns for developers. Residents benefit because they are not responsible for maintenance and because they are assured to receive a percentage refund on their initial investment (down payment). In the case of Park Springs, 90 percent of the entrance fee is refunded when a resident vacates the residence.

The concept seems to have definitely caught on in the Atlanta area. Occupancy for Phase I of the project (including 25 single family homes, 50 duplexes and 80 apartment villas) is already at 92 percent only a few months after completion. Many of these pioneer residents contracted to move in more than two years ago when plans were first underway for development.

“Some of these residents started making plans to sell their homes over a year ago in anticipation of moving to Park Springs,” explained Paul Prichard, project manager for Fortune Johnson General Contractors, Inc., the general contractor for the development.



The critical nature of the construction schedule dictated not only which fire sprinkler contractor was chosen for the project, but also what material was chosen for the fire sprinkler system.

“Our preferred choice is always Affordable Fire Protection, because we never have to wait on them,” said Prichard. “They’re either right on schedule or ahead of it.”

One of the reasons for Affordable’s long-standing reputation for on-time installation is the company’s preferred use of BlazeMaster® CPVC. A BlazeMaster CPVC system affords contractors tremendous labor savings because it can be installed faster and easier than a metal system. The one-step solvent cement bonding system reduces labor time anywhere from 25 to 50 percent, depending on the size of the project and architectural design of the building. In addition, BlazeMaster CPVC pipe is faster and easier to cut than steel. And it offers a cleaner, safer and quieter installation. Since the pipe is only about one-sixth the weight of metal, it is also easier to maneuver on the job site.

Even more important is the reliability of the BlazeMaster CPVC system. “In our business where safety is as critical, if not more, than speed, we need a product with a proven track record and a manufacturer that’s willing to stand behind its product,” said Milton Crosswy, president of Affordable Fire Protection. “We’ve tried other CPVC products, but there were quality control issues. The manufacturers of BlazeMaster pipe and fittings stand behind their product and have done so for more than 20 years. In addition,



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system.**

they've spent the time and money to secure more Listings and approvals so their product can be used in more applications than any other non-metallic pipe."

The wood frame construction of Park Springs also made BlazeMaster CPVC a more natural choice. According to Crosswy, his company insists on using BlazeMaster CPVC pipe whenever working around a wood frame because of the natural inconsistencies of the construction. "Steel is just not practical when you're working on wood construction," said Crosswy. "It offers no flexibility. But the BlazeMaster system accommodates on-site modifications quickly and easily. That's important when we're working on a tight schedule like the one for Park Springs. We could have not met the schedule presented to us had we used steel."



Park Springs Health Care Facility, Cobblestone, offers assisted living and skilled nursing, including separate Alzheimer's and dementia care.

Park Springs already garnered the coveted Platinum Award from the National Association of Home Builders for large Continuing Care Retirement Communities. Park Springs was nominated for its approach to addressing the needs of all seniors, including those who are still very active, as well as those who require nursing care. The community additionally received a Gold award from the NAHB in the CCRC Common Area Interior Design category for large communities. In both categories, Park Springs was chosen for top honors over other projects that had been nominated from all over the United States and Canada.

According to Fortune Johnson, the decision to accept the recommendation to use BlazeMaster CPVC was an easy one. "We relied on the expertise of the people at Affordable," said Prichard. "They told us the BlazeMaster system option was more reliable, faster to install and less expensive. In addition, we knew it would require less maintenance because it won't break down from the corrosive effects that jeopardize a metal pipe's integrity. That made it an easy sell."

Throughout Georgia, BlazeMaster CPVC pipe and fittings already enjoy a very strong, positive reputation. Especially in new construction involving wood frames, it is the preferred building material for a wide variety of commercial fire sprinkler piping projects.

So it's little wonder that BlazeMaster fire sprinkler systems were specified for all of Phase I, as well as the remaining phases, of the Park Springs CCRC. The heart of the development is an 80,000 square-foot community center that offers banking, convenience shopping, beauty, barber shop, dining (20 meals per month per person), a library, computer center and hobby center. The community also has a greenhouse and garden space.

The developer effectively simulates a resort lifestyle by offering comprehensive services as part of the monthly maintenance service, including landscaping, utilities, trash removal, pest control, a 24-hour security and emergency call system, biweekly housekeeping, annual heavy cleaning, recreational programs and scheduled transportation.

A new phase of construction taking place at Park Springs includes a 9,500-square-foot fitness center with heated indoor pool, warm therapy pool, exercise room, day lockers and showers. In 2005, an additional 64 new apartment villas will also be built, with yet approximately 80 new units being projected for 2006. To keep the final phases on schedule, the general contractor will again utilize the services of Affordable which will again be using its material of choice – BlazeMaster CPVC.

According to Fortune Johnson, the unique CCRC concept has attracted universal interest in that current and prospective residents represent diverse demographic lifestyles, as well as geographic locations throughout the country.

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