

CASE STUDY

GIDEONS AND GRECO PLUMBING REPLACES CORRODED COPPER IN HOTEL BOILER ROOM WITH CORZAN® CPVC

Gideons and Greco

Brandon, Florida

Established: 1972

CPVC Outlasts Copper at Tampa Bay Area Comfort Suites

No one needs to convince 20 plus-year plumbing veteran James Greco that FlowGuard Gold® pipe and fittings can easily outlast copper plumbing. That's because the owner of Tampa-based Gideons and Greco Plumbing has relied on the FlowGuard Gold CPVC system to help grow his business since the early 1990s.

"Nearly 100 percent of our installations involve FlowGuard Gold pipe and fittings," said Greco. "If a customer wants copper instead, we insist that a liability waiver be signed, because we feel strongly that it's an inferior product."

What Greco didn't know, until recently, was that larger diameter CPVC in the form of Corzan® pipe and fittings (made from the same compound technology as FlowGuard Gold pipe and fittings) could even stand up to the harsh demands of a boiler room – an area of many commercial buildings still largely reserved for copper pipe. But after repeatedly repairing and replacing copper pipe within the boiler room at an area Comfort Suites, Greco knew he had to find a more reliable alternative.

"Over a six-to-eight-month time period, we had handled numerous service calls all related to the same boiler room," said Greco. "Almost on a weekly basis we were repairing the same copper pipe over and over again due to corrosion and leaks. Finally, the building owner came to the realization that a total re-pipe made more sense financially."

Initially Type K copper was considered for the repipe but was eventually ruled out due to reliability, cost and functionality concerns.

"I really wanted to use FlowGuard Gold CPVC pipe and fittings because that was what had originally been installed throughout the rest of the hotel and had continued to perform without any problems during the same period that the copper pipe had

failed repeatedly," said Greco. Copper Tube Size FlowGuard Gold pipe and fittings have the capability to handle the harsh environment but Greco wanted to use something even more robust for the boiler room application.

The local FBC™ Building Solutions sales and technical representative told Greco about schedule 80 iron pipe size (IPS) Corzan CPVC pipe and fittings, which is thicker walled and can therefore handle higher pressures than similarly-sized FlowGuard Gold pipe and fittings. After a lot of research and on-site training, Greco felt confident in making the recommendation to the building owner, who trusted the plumbing company's experience and had no objections to approving the piping material change.

With a higher cell class rating of 24448 – higher than any other CPVC pipe on the market – Corzan piping has a drop impact strength up to three times that of standard CPVC. Higher impact strength allows the pipe to be cut easier on the

construction site resulting in fewer fractures, breaks and, ultimately, a lower scrap rate. The cell class also means that Corzan CPVC has a higher Heat Deflection Temperature (HDT) rating of 230°F, so it will maintain its straight, professional appearance where other CPVC systems may sag and bend. Corzan piping is widely available in sizes from ¼" to 8" and greater.

"I've tackled really ugly projects before, but this one was particularly challenging," Greco explained. "Originally, there was a great amount of anxiety on how we were going to handle the repipe in copper without shutting down the entire hotel for several days. But the Corzan CPVC really simplified the design process. The two-step solvent cement joining process and the fact that the pipe was lighter in weight and so easy to cut allowed us to complete the project in less than a day. I know if we would have attempted the repipe with copper, the labor costs would have been double and I would have had twice the aggravation."



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Type of Construction:
Hotel

Installation Type:
Repipe

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What made the project so challenging, in particular, was the confined space. In total, the boiler room measured 8 feet by 16 feet. Inside were long lengths of very hot, large diameter pipe that made it difficult and, at times, dangerous to maneuver and access work areas.

“One of the other advantages of the Corzan pipe is that, like FlowGuard Gold pipe, it has better insulating properties,” said Greco. “The heat doesn’t transfer through the pipe as it does with copper. As a result, it’s safer to touch. That’s a real advantage when you have to access valves and perform routine maintenance. It’s also easier to isolate problems now. With copper, it was a nightmare just to replace the valves. You need a system that allows easy access and maintenance. What we have now, thanks to the addition of the Corzan CPVC system, is a leak-free, highly functional area.”

This high level of satisfaction contrasts sharply with Greco’s first experience with CPVC.

“I originally had very little faith in CPVC,” said Greco. “That was back at a time before FlowGuard Gold pipe and fittings had made their way into our market area. We were using another brand of CPVC and found it to be extremely brittle.”

That was a long time ago when the company, formed in 1972, was still owned by Wayne Gideons. Greco, who had worked at Gideons since he was a teen, purchased the company in 1990. Over the years, the company (which is located in Brandon, Florida, just outside Tampa) has grown to become a mid-sized, full-service operation that handles new construction and repair services for a variety of industrial and commercial applications, as well as a small percentage of custom homes.

Interestingly, it was not on his home turf of Tampa Bay that Greco first experienced the benefits of a FlowGuard Gold CPVC system. It was at Panama City Beach, an area devastated by the effects of Hurricane Opal, where Greco remembers first putting FlowGuard Gold pipe and fittings to the test.

“I went to Panama City because there was so much demand there,” said Greco. “The hurricane created a tremendous need for rebuilding in a short period of time. So we needed an easy-to-install, cost-effective product that would last and was not likely to be stolen from the jobsite.”

Based on his previous experience with other CPVC products, Greco was initially reluctant to make the switch. But after a great deal of field testing, he gained confidence in the FlowGuard Gold system and learned that not all CPVC products performed equally. That was in 1995. Today, Gideons and Greco Plumbing is a nearly 100-percent FlowGuard Gold pipe and fittings shop. And thanks to the positive experience at the Comfort Suites, Corzan CPVC pipe and fittings are now also part of the company’s standard inventory. In fact, since the completion of the boiler room, Greco has already recommended Corzan CPVC for two commercial shopping plazas.

“I will definitely continue using the product,” said Greco. “We have a tremendous amount of pride in our final product. It’s so important for us to give our customers a product we can stand behind. I know that the FlowGuard Gold and Corzan CPVC systems will eliminate problems in the future. And that means much less stress for me.”

Since Lubrizol Advanced Materials, Inc. (as part of BFGoodrich Performance Materials) developed CPVC plumbing systems over 45 years ago, more than four billion feet of CPVC pipe has been installed in homes, condominiums, buildings, apartments and hotels, including more than 12 million homes. For more information on the FlowGuard Gold® plumbing system, including pipes, valves, joining cement, caulks, sealants and tools, call 888-234-2436, x447-7393, or visit www.flowguardgold.com.



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