

Building Green[^] Product Dealer

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The Dealer
Makes It Happen

Hot Green Building Materials

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Case History:

SIPs Deliver Winter Surprise for Unsuspecting Owner

When Terry Schroth decided to have his new HVAC, plumbing maintenance and repair building constructed with SIPs, he had no idea what would happen on the night of Thursday, January 13, 2011. Schroth had been interested in the long-term benefits of SIPs, but as fate would have it, he reaped substantial rewards on a very cold night in January before the building was finished.

That particular night the temperature dropped down to 0 degrees Fahrenheit. The hydronic heating system had not yet been installed. Schroth was understandably worried that his paint and drywall interior finish work would be damaged by the extreme cold. All he could do was plug in two small 1500-watt space heaters – one in the 50 by 40 shop with 12 ft ceilings, and the other in a smaller office – and hope for the best.

On Monday morning Schroth visited the structure to assess the damage. To his surprise, the thermometer inside the 2000 sq ft shop area read 60. No damage had been done to any of the finish work or equipment. “This



is amazing—if you can understand the size of this space and these were ‘milk house’ heaters – just little things. Our electrician was blown away that such a small amount of heat was needed to keep this space at 60 degrees through the winter,” said Schroth. “The SIP walls are phenomenal!”

According to contractor Gary Sutton of Sutton Construction, the building envelope uses R-Control SIPs, and the only opening in the shop area was a CHI 3216 10’ x 12’ garage door. “This was our first R-Control SIP project yet we were able to erect all of the panels in 36 man-hours,” he said. “My electrician was amazed at how easy it was to snake the flexible conduit through the pre-cut electrical chases in the SIPs,” said Sutton.

Frank Kiesecker, of ACH Foam Technologies, manufacturer of R-Control SIPs, reminds builders to pre-plan for electrical and equipment needs when





building with sips.

“During the design phase it’s extremely beneficial to pre-plan for electrical chases,” explains Kiesecker. “Since SIP panels are manufactured to meet the project’s specifications, it’s important to plan for electrical chases in advance to prevent time-consuming and costly changes for modifications during installation. For example, SIP

facings should never be cut horizontally for the installation of electrical wiring. Cutting the SIPs will result in compromising the structural performance. Also, during the design phase, it’s important to determine whether there are any equipment needs for the installation of the panels. If the project specifies roof panels or wall and floor panels larger than 8’ x 8’ in size, equipment such as a forklift or crane may be needed to install the SIPs.”

Schroth noted that Gary Sutton had performed a great deal of research on green building materials at the outset. As a consequence, Sutton suggested they use R-Control SIPs because of SIPs’ superior insulative qualities, as well as the expected savings in material waste and labor costs. “I agreed with him. Nothing like a cold night in January to show me I had made a good decision,” remarked Schroth. “When we get the solar installed and hydronic heating system operating, this will be a truly green building. That makes me feel good—and it will cut down my energy costs over the long-run. I can also let people know that TJ’s Maintenance and Repair, Inc. of Morrison, Illinois is a green business.”

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Terry Campbell is an expert of the standards and requirements for manufacturers, distributors and retailers. Contact Forest Products Solutions for copies of the FSC MSG and to learn about the 'Ask the Expert' on-line resource. www.forestproductssolutions.com