

Job Story:

CHALLENGE:

Insulating hundreds of grooved pipe fittings on fast track commercial project without incurring excessive labor or delays.

SOLUTION:

Install AP Armaflex Fabricated Fitting Covers instead of hand-assembling fitting covers at jobsite.

Project:
Chilled Water Piping Insulation for Large Mixed Use Facility

Locations:
600 Massachusetts Ave.,
Washington, DC

General Contractor:
Clark Construction Group,
Bethesda, MD

Mechanical Contractor:
W. E. Bowers,
Beltsville, MD

Insulation Contractor:
Old Dominion Insulation,
Fairfax, VA



Pre-fabricated Fitting Covers Help Keep Washington DC Project On Schedule

Grooved mechanical pipe joining systems are great for fast and flameless installation of piping systems, but they can also add complexity to the insulation process. The fittings add dimension to the pipe at connection points and this limits the length of insulation that can be installed in one step. The joint fittings must be insulated separately, in a piece-by-piece fashion, which can add hundreds of labor hours of measuring, cutting and gluing insulation. On large projects it can even disrupt construction schedules.

This was the dilemma faced by Old Dominion Insulation (ODI) when the company was chosen to insulate the chilled water system at a large redevelopment project at 600 Massachusetts Avenue, NW in downtown Washington D.C.

Armaflex flexible closed-cell foam insulation was selected to insulate the chilled water system at this 400,000 sq. ft. mixed-use facility. Rather than hand-assembling covers for nearly 300 grooved connection points within the system, ODI opted to use AP Armaflex® Fabricated Fitting Covers. The decision saved the contractor hundreds of hours of labor and helped bring the project in on time.

Fast and Sustainable

600 Massachusetts Ave. is typical of many up-and-coming urban properties where high performance and environmental design



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have been combined to lure tenants. Located in a what is hailed as Washington, D.C.'s new "epicenter of power," the 10-story facility includes both retail and office spaces and is designed to achieve LEED® Platinum Certification.

Its list of sustainable features is long and includes several hundred Victaulic® grooved fittings. Made with up to 90% recycled materials, these fittings do not require an open flame to install, which helps prevent jobsite pollution. They also take significantly less time to install, often saving as much as 45% labor over welded components.

Steve McDonald, Insulation Technician at ODI, has noticed an increase in grooved pipe fittings in HVAC applications. McDonald leads a team of 120 insulators, covering Western and Northern Virginia as well as the D.C./Maryland market. Several of his technicians have acquired the skills to fabricate insulation covers for grooved fittings using Armaflex. It isn't difficult, but it can be time-consuming.

This prompted ODI to consider a more inclusive solution: Armaflex pre-fabricated insulation covers.

After studying the project, McDonald and his team decided it would be less expensive to buy the fitting covers pre-fabricated from Armacell than to spend the labor fabricating the covers at the jobsite.

"I would say we saved a minimum of one to two hours per fitting, depending on the size and type," said McDonald.

The pre-fabricated covers, engineered specifically for Victaulic fittings (as well as grooved fittings from other manufacturers, like Gruvlok®) eliminate an enormous amount of cutting and gluing at the jobsite. Made completely of Armaflex closed-cell foam, the covers install in one simple step, providing a uniform appearance as well as consistent thermal performance. Along with Armaflex piping insulation, the covers provide complete system integrity with long-lasting and reliable protection from heat gain and condensation in chilled water and other cold systems.

ODI installed over 250 Armaflex pre-fabricated fitting covers for Victaulic grooved couplings, elbows and tees, saving 300 to 400 hours of jobsite labor.

"We will definitely use them again on future large projects," said McDonald.

ODI will no doubt get their chance as more and more HVAC and plumbing projects use grooved pipe fittings instead traditional welded fittings. The fittings are a major time saver and incorporate well with modern, sustainable building practices – making them a "perfect fit" with long-lasting Armaflex insulation and pre-fabricated covers.



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