



J. Francis Company LLC

GENERAL CONTRACTING AND REMODELING

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newsletter

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Super Trivia Challenge

Here's your Chance at a \$20 Gift Card!

Trivia is a fun feature of the newsletter. Each & every month brings a new question & opportunity for **you** to win! The first correct answer emailed to jean@jfcollc.com will be the proud winner of a \$20 Gift Card of your choice.

Question: Who said, "Every morning I get up & look through Forbes Magazine list of the richest people in America. If I'm not there, I go to work?"

Answer:

- a) Robert Orben
- b) April Bernard
- c) John Ashbery
- d) Shel Silverstein

Thanks for the Kind Words

"The build out of our new payment center...was not what you would call a normal project but by working together with J.

January 2008

Greetings!

As we roll through the winter season we want to remind you that besides getting ready for your taxes, this is a good time to plan for home remodeling & business renovations. Construction is an ever changing industry and we like to keep you up to date on the latest. Under "Remodeling Tips" we discuss "copper robbers" and under "What's New in '08" we review the copper vs. PEX debate. We love hearing from you!

Company Update

We Are Not the Typical General Contractor.....

"Recently, the experiences of one weekend helped me realize what our customers frequently tell us. Starting on Friday evening, a contractor hanging wallpaper at a Pizza Hut yells at the counter clerk to "get out of my *!?!* way". This seemed backwards and I left wondering why the contractor was performing the work 7 PM on a Friday. Saturday morning, a home builder is working on a home in the neighborhood. As I approached the street corner I hear a radio blaring at the construction site at 7 AM and see chunks of mud in the street from construction trucks.

Saturday afternoon, the contractor I was considering to replace my tile flooring shows up 35 minutes late. They track snow in my house while I wonder if this is what to expect before I hire this person, what is the work going to end up like? Sunday, while driving past a neighbor's house, I notice that the contractor installing a block retaining wall and patio has dropped stone on the concrete patio and is using a Bobcat to move the stone into place. I am looking for a contractor right now to build landscape retaining walls. As I pull over, I notice the fresh gouges in the concrete driveway, diesel fuel spilled on the driveway and open beer cans. I would never bring this contractor to look at my job.

I share these stories at our management meeting Monday and feel proud that "We Are Not the Typical Contractor".
David Myers, Vice-President and General Manager

Feature Project

Commercial Retail/Office Buildout

Francis Company, LLC and a lot of patience, everything turned out great.

Dave was a great help in working out the details to move the project forward and have the work started. John was there to make sure everything went smooth and was always there for questions, answers, and solutions. Together they made quite a team and completed the job in budget and ahead of schedule.

The professionalism and job quality that your company represents are refreshing to see and two qualities that are not easy to find. I look forward to working with J Francis Company, LLC in the future. Thanks for a job well done!"
Customer from Featured Project

Remodeling Tips

"Copper Robbers"

J. Francis Company, LLC recently had an after hours break-in at a construction site. Copper piping was cut out of the building as part of the burglary. This article explores the recent rash of copper theft.

Copper prices have been rising steadily this year mostly due to demand in China, where more than 776,000 tons were imported in the first quarter of 2007. Copper hit \$3.62 a pound in April on the New York Mercantile Exchange, the highest level since May 2006. The price of copper scrap (processed and sold to metal-making firms) has also doubled, with high-grade scrap now fetching around \$3 or more per pound at scrap-yards, and lower-grade scrap less, depending on quality, according to scrap-metal dealers.

With the price of copper

Project Description: This 3,200 sq ft, office/retail buildout included new walls, new doors and sidelights, drop ceiling, HVAC and lighting retrofits, an ADA bathroom & kitchenette, with carpet, VCT & floor tile performed to customer specifications. The design involved building a reception area for customer service with a separate employee office space including interior offices and a storage area. The two-sided storage closets for products are accessible from both the reception area/customer service side and the employee office side. The scope of work included cutting a new fixed panel window into the exterior masonry wall for additional interior light. We took an empty space & remodeled it into a bright, attractive & functional office space.

Before View



Finished Views



soaring, ordinary copper wire has become a target of opportunity for thieves looking for easy money. They will take copper from construction sites, abandoned houses, air-conditioning units, the backs of unattended trucks - anywhere they can find it.

In the past several months, police departments across the country have reported a surge in the number of copper-related thefts at homes, businesses and elsewhere. Police have reported everything from copper vases stolen from gravesites to more serious thefts, such as the copper wire stolen recently from a power substation in Oklahoma City that utility officials say caused a six-hour power outage for 4,000 customers.

Residential air-conditioning units in particular are becoming popular with thieves. The copper insides of a condensing unit - the portion of a central-air system that sit outside - can fetch \$50 to \$150 at a scrapyard, while replacing an entire unit that's been stolen can cost 2,000 or more.

Police say the culprits are usually petty criminals looking for some quick money. Those who are arrested are charged with burglary or larceny, depending on the circumstances of the theft, and face fines, probation or several years in jail. People can be reimbursed through homeowner's insurance but often must pay a deductible.

Another target for thieves is copper piping, which often runs exposed beneath many older homes. In one instance, a West Virginia resident was renovating his home and left it unattended one night. He returned to find the kitchen tap not working. After checking below the house,



he found that about a thousand dollars worth of copper pipe was gone. He was amazed that thieves would make off with the pipes in the roughly 10 hours he was away. Police in other parts of the country report criminals posing as servicemen, removing copper plumbing and air-conditioning units in the middle of the day.

Our Core Values

- Caring
- Competence
- Integrity
- Respect
- Timeliness

J. Francis Company, LLC approaches business with our core values as a guide.

What Kind of Work Does J. Francis Company Do?

Our Typical Remodeling/Renovation Work Includes:

- Additions
- Bathrooms
- Basement Remodeling
- Classroom Improvements
- Demolition
- Drywall and Plasterwork
- Electrical
- Finished Carpentry
- Flooring
- Gut and Rehab
- Kitchens
- Mechanicals
- Office Build-Outs
- Painting
- Plumbing
- Roofing
- Rough and Trim Carpentry
- Siding
- Space Reconfigurations
- Tenant Build-Outs



Before View



Finished Views

- Windows
- Wood and Metal Framing
- and Much More !!

Referral Rewards Program

Could You Use \$100.00??

- For every referral you send our way that becomes a customer, you will receive your choice of: a \$100 gift certificate to the store or restaurant of your choice or a \$100 donation to the charity of your choice in your name.
- By referring your friends, clients & co-workers to us for remodeling & renovation projects, you've helped our business grow. Offering these special rewards is our way of saying thanks. To take advantage of our Referral Reward Program, just email to jean@jfcollc.com or fax to 412.322.6425 the following contact information: your name & phone number, the name, address & phone number of the person you are referring. We will follow up on every referral.

Contact Us

Our Mission Statement...

"J. Francis Company, LLC exists to provide our customers with competent general contracting services. We emphasize integrity, respect and timeliness in all our relationships. Our goal is sustained growth and profitability by continually exceeding expectations."

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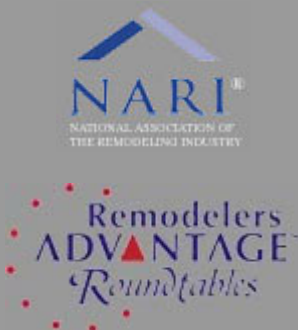
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Links



Team Update

Mike Tendick is a laborer for J. Francis Company, LLC. Mike performs many diverse jobs. He runs a mini-excavator, lays pipe, helps with drywall, performs masonry and concrete work, and wraps windows.

Before joining J. Francis Company, LLC Mike worked at remodeling houses for a realtor. Mike particularly enjoys running equipment, such as the mini- excavator. Mike said, *"Working for J. Francis Company, LLC has been an enjoyable, learning experience"*. His interests include ATV's, quads, dirt bikes, working on cars and relaxing.

What's New in '08

PEX vs. Copper

The recent increase in the cost of copper has boosted the appeal of plastic piping alternatives such as PEX (cross-linked polyethylene) among builders. Both have advantages and disadvantages. A third alternative is CPVC (chlorinated polyvinyl chloride tubing) - a thermoplastic pipe & fitting material.

Here is a review of the advantages for PEX: PEX is a versatile and easy to use plumbing system. It is suitable for use with hot or cold water. With the proper adapters, PEX pipe material can be used with steel, copper, PVC and CPVC plumbing pipe. PEX is much more flexible than other plumbing options. It can be shaped to bend around most corners without adapters. The flexible nature of PEX allows it to expand and contract more than other types of pipe. These features make it more burst resistant and less susceptible to

freezing as compared to copper.

Most plumbing leaks occur at joints in fittings. Since PEX requires fewer fittings, it has less opportunity to leak. Installation time is also greatly reduced. PEX is easy to repair, eliminating the task of "sweating" pipes, which requires having a blow torch on site.

PEX systems are designed to have a shut-off valve at each supply line. This allows repairs to be made while leaving the rest of the system operational. Properly installed PEX can create a totally pressure balanced system. Therefore, if the toilet is flushed on the second floor of a structure it will not dramatically change the water pressure when someone is showering in the basement. In summary, PEX is easier to install, offers maneuverability around obstacles, has fewer seams, and no oxidation. The primary disadvantage of PEX is that the quality of PEX supply materials can vary from manufacturer; not all PEX is made the same. The life of the product is unknown because it has not been on the market long enough to know if it can stand the test of time for 50+ years like copper. Copper has a significantly longer proven track record. The presence of chlorine in the water and its effect on PEX in the long term is unknown.

When compared with galvanized steel or CPVC pipes, copper offers significant advantages. It is incredibly durable, flexible and relatively easy to install. This durability has shown copper to be safer when placed under extreme stress. It is also resistant to weather and bacteria. Until recently, this material has been competitively priced. For decades, developers and builders have preferred copper plumbing for its dependability and solid value. Homeowners also prefer copper plumbing because it generally increases the resale value of homes.

Since copper is a softer metal, it offers advantages over other metallic pipes. Copper pipe comes as tempered lengths that are hard, and annealed, or malleable coils. You have a choice as to the diameter of the tube and the thickness of the wall. It is overall much thinner, while transporting a large volume of water.

Copper plumbing ensures a clean, safe water supply. Lead has been removed from the manufacturing process. Lead has also been removed from the soldering material used to create durable connections. Unlike galvanized pipe and early copper installation, today's modern copper systems no longer pose a health risk. Copper is also considered a biostatic material. This simply means that it naturally prohibits bacterial growth. It carries potable (drinkable) water whose pH lies in the range of 6.5- 8.5. The best application for copper is in buildings connected to a municipal water supply, as a well- water source may be too acidic.

Unlike CPVC, copper plumbing doesn't release toxic gases in the event of a fire. It actually resists burning. Properly

installed, reasonable temperature variation leaves copper plumbing relatively unaffected. However, problems may arise when temperatures get very hot, and pipes can burst if they freeze. Leaks without external intervention are rare. If something should happen, the universal system for fittings and sizes make it easy to repair the problem.

Such qualities reduce repair and maintenance costs sufficiently to make copper plumbing an economic, long-term investment. The material may initially cost more, but it often comes with a 50- year warranty. This longevity is virtually unheard of with any other type of plumbing material. It may not be as expensive as you think to choose copper plumbing. Copper is even recyclable, making it a more sound environmental choice than CPVC.

We checked with Jody Goblick, Master Plumber from Staab & Sons, Inc. Jody has 34 years of experience in the plumbing industry. He reviewed the above information and stated that based on his experience, the copper is the time tested product. He first used PEX tubing as long as 15 years ago in heating applications. He has never seen a failure of the pipe not caused by an outside source. The system Staab & Sons uses is made by Rehau. Check out a link to their web site: <http://na.rehau.com/index.html>. They believe the Everloc fitting system by Rehau is the better choice. The insert fittings are brass and a spreading tool for the tubing, allows full flow through the fitting with no restriction. The retaining sleeve is then pressed over the tube with a special tool providing a secure connection.

The "Home run" method of piping does allow for more shut off valves in the system at a central manifold, but with full flow fittings Jody believes it is not a requirement for a dependable installation. He prefers a more conventional piping method with a trunk line and tee branches at the fixture. The end result may be with more connections in the walls however. That's where the Everloc system's reliability comes into play...plus the bonus of less labor for installations.

A comparison of the cost today is 1/2" Pex tubing .29 per foot, M copper tube .99 per foot. Cost is probably the deciding factor in many cases. CPVC systems that Jody has used require glued connections or compression rings and retaining nuts. Installing compression fittings may not save labor in many cases. CPVC seems more susceptible to problems due to cold weather.



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