NATURAL GAS REDEFINES TODAY'S MARKETPLACE

CenterPointEnergy.com/multi-family

"Natural gas is a fairly new feature being installed in apartment developments today."

Jair Vasquez.,
consultant engineer,
HG Engineering

Benefits to developers:

- Operating costs tend to be lower
- Works well with tight construction
- Maximizes margins on rental rates

Benefits:

Flex pipe:

- Faster installation time
- Protects against corrosion
- Decreases possibility of future leaks

Meter manifolds:

- Conserves space
- Reduces the number of potential leak points
- Improves the appearance of finished installation

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The Natural Gas Advantage

Natural gas on the rise in multi-family developments

Meter manifolds and flex pipe speed installation

An increasing number of Houston-area affordable multi-family developments are choosing natural gas to provide tenants with a steady supply of hot water. Corrugated stainless steel tubing (CSST), more commonly known as flex pipe, and meter manifolds ease the installation of natural gas water heating and save precious time for developers.

When developing affordable apartment communities, it is important to keep in mind that it costs less to heat water with natural gas than it does with electricity. "An increasing number of multi-family developments are choosing natural gas as their energy source of choice due to its long-term value and benefits to residents," said Jair Vasquez, a consultant engineer at HG Engineering. "We're definitely pushing for it, because it's energy efficient and more affordable. We're starting to see more and more multi-family developments installing natural gas for those exact reasons."

In the past, natural gas and individual gas meters were rarely used in multi-family communities because of the time and materials it took to pipe a development.

Now many developers use flex pipe, a technologically advanced pipeline product. "Flex pipe is flexible, so it is easier to install. It allows the plumbing contractor to make his runs and installations much easier and faster. It costs a little more than standard black iron pipe, but it's worth it considering the amount of installation time it saves," said Vasquez.

Meter manifolds are also being used in multi-family developments to simplify meter installations, conserve wall space and improve the community's overall appearance. Plus with individual meters, residents are more in control of their energy use and developers are free of the responsibility for hot water costs.

With the help of meter manifolds, developers are able to overcome a common design obstacle found in many multi-family developments. Vasquez recalled, "In a recent project that I was involved with, each individual unit needed to be metered, and available wall space was an issue. The meter manifolds allowed us to save space by placing them all in one location. Our problem was solved."

As installation practices become more efficient, developers and residents will continue to benefit from the use of natural gas in multi-family developments.

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