

Namba, Valerie

From: John Mitchem [jmmitchem@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, November 17, 2007 8:19 AM
To: Namba, Valerie
Cc: Olesinski-Daryl; Mike Stebbins; Jonathan Davis; digby cottrell; Ramey Ward; tryggvi@minarc.com; editor@inhabit.com; info@marmol-radziner.com
Subject: Statewide regulations on PEX tubing (California Building Code 2008)
Attachments: PEX Regulation.pdf

Dear Ms. Namba:

I am heartened to see that California is finally catching up to the rest of the country regarding PEX. I would offer the following notes to endorse the use of PEX over conventional copper pipes.

I would also recommend that, on a general basis, your future environmental impacts include an analysis of climate change/carbon implications of your regulations.

Carbon/Climate/Environmental Impact of Copper Pipe

Consider what it takes to put copper pipe in a home in California.

1. Copper ore is strip-mined out of a mountain in Chile, ruining ground water and rivers, producing all sorts of toxic heavy metal waste into that country's ecosystems.
2. The ore is shipped by carbon-burning ships, to China, where it is smelted - in coal-fired foundries that use low-grade Chinese "brown coal" - and refined into pipes.
3. The copper pipes are then shipped, by carbon-burning ships, to Long Beach, then ferried from Long Beach in diesel-spewing tucks to warehousing around the United States.
4. At the install, a small house may take a week or two of a four-man plumbing crew to install. That's sixteen pickup-truck days worth of traffic and auto exhaust. PEX, by contrast, is at most a two man crew for two days -- four pickup-truck days worth of traffic and auto exhaust. And consider all the acetylene torches, solder and etc. when the plumber's are working -- it can't be good for those tradesmen to breath in molten - metal fumes for a 3-decade career...
5. Throughout this, consider the weight of metal versus light plastic. Trucks, ships, etc. all transporting heavy metal
6. Once the PEX is installed, consider that, as the PEX creates no right angles, water pressure at the tap is markedly higher. This reduces stress on municipal water systems.
7. At the end of the building's lifecycle, I would dispute your document's contention that a PEX would result in increased landfill. PEX can be recycled, like any plastic, just as copper can be recycled. In any case it is not like to need recycling because the life duration of PEX is probably thousands of years, versus a few hundred for metal like copper. It would be very easy to remove PEX and install in another building -- something virtually impossible to do with copper.

Thanks for considering this comment and congratulations on bringing California's building codes up to the environmental standards of other States.

11/19/2007

I am CC'ing this note to other interested architects, builders, bloggers and etc. in hopes that they will also comment to your attached proposal and forward it to others.

Best regards

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