

NEWS RELEASE

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AGED GALVANIZED AND COPPER PIPES IN HISTORIC LAKE ARROWHEAD BOAT HOUSE PRESERVED WITH CURAFLO EPOXY PIPE LINING

Suppose you owned a beautiful 75-year-old house on the shore of a lake in the mountains that, with additions over the years, had grown from an A-frame boathouse to a four-story, eight-bedroom, and six-bath 5,000-square foot mansion. You knew the plumbing system needed repair and you were tired of dealing with rusty water and low flow, but you didn't want to rip into the walls and floors to remove the old galvanized and copper pipes. Neither did you want to spend upwards of \$500,000 for a 4-6 month project to locate, remove and replace the pipes. Plus you were sure you needed to have it done in the summer months and not wait for winter.

That was the dilemma faced by Heather Hallderson, personal assistant and estate manager for Michael and Mary Shannahan, owners of The Boat House, a historic property on Hamiltair Drive in Blue Jay, an upscale community on the south shore of Lake Arrowhead in the San Bernardino Mountains.

Green technology to the rescue!

Brinks-Curaflo of San Diego which has been epoxy coating pipes in Southern California for over 5 years came in with an affordable proposal to line the aged pipes with their proprietary high-tech epoxy formula. The patented process includes drying and cleaning the inside of the pipes, and then blowing the epoxy lining into the piping system in 100-foot segments, filling pinhole leaks and creating "a pipe within a pipe." Brinks' four-man, three-vehicle crew was in and out in four weeks, on time and on budget. Their restoration bid was a fraction of the re-piping cost, according to Bill Brink, owner of the firm.

Even so, Brinks' salesman, Joshua Bellows, judges the Lake Arrowhead Boat House as one of the toughest, most complicated single-family home jobs he has experienced. Old galvanized pipes are particularly challenging, requiring higher heat in the initial drying stage and using larger gauge grit to blast out rust and corrosion during the cleaning process. Add to that the fact that this job has a mixture of galvanized and copper pipes, all different ages and installed by different people, and you end up with the potential for disaster.

"It's easier to epoxy coat a 10 story apartment complex then epoxy coat a mixed system with this many dead legs and this much corrosion.", Said Lee Tims, Foreman of the epoxy lining crew; a plumber with 30 years experience and a 6 year veteran of epoxy lining.

Brinks' also told me that much of the plumbing system had to be brought up to current building codes, including forming a "dielectric union" between the galvanized and copper pipes wherever they were joined to inhibit electrolysis. They also cleaned and coated the hot and cold lines separately, leaving a source of water in service most of the time.

Another high-tech feature the Brinks' crew employed was electric current and fiber optic technology to trace and locate every joint and turn of the pipes in the walls, under stone floors and under ground. Several "dead legs" were located as well (old pipes that had been branched off and been capped sometime in the past 75 years.)

An additional project was to clean and coat the 120-foot, 1.5-inch main line from Hamiltair Drive down a slope paralleling the driveway and entry staircase. It turned out to have a split, with several dead legs. The better solution was to dig and install a new polybutylene pipe. “We like to offer our customers the best options for their particular situation”, said Bill Brink, owner and President of Brinks Services. “Sometimes epoxy lining is the best solution, sometimes it’s not. Because Brinks Investigation-Restoration Services, Inc. is a full service plumbing company, we can custom engineer a plumbing solution so that we are not trying to fit square pegs into round holes.” Mr. Brink also happens to be one of only a handful of certified plumbing inspectors and diagnosticians in the San Diego area.

Brinks’ made a few more points favoring lining the pipes rather than replacing them. “Since there was no demolition, we created no landfill waste. Since we didn’t have to cut into walls or ceilings that contain asbestos or lead paint, we had no hazardous materials issues. And of course, doing this work before there was damage from actual major leaks, we did not have to treat any mold or dry rot.

The original boathouse, a replica of a boathouse on the Thames River in London, was built in 1933 by the Thomas Hamilton family. Considered the first structure to be constructed on the lakeshore, it stands on the north side of a 36-acre peninsula now called Hamiltair Point. Hamilton was an inventor, and is credited with developing the variable pitch propeller for aircraft.

Among past residents of The Boat House is Tom Selleck, the actor. Scenes in the classic “Frankenstein” motion picture starring Boris Karloff are said to have been filmed there.

