

NEWS RELEASE

For more information, contact
John O'Reilly
LNC Communications
815-469-9100
John@LNCmail.com

Saniflo Plumbing Just What the Doctor Ordered, Saving Rural Health Care Group More than \$250,000

UKIAH, CALIFORNIA — In late 2007, the prognosis wasn't good for tenants of a newly constructed health care facility in this rural northern California town. Originally designed as a medical office, the Ukiah Valley Medical Center (UVMC) became part of a hospital prior to completion. The change in designation meant the UVMC group could not occupy its new building until individual hand-wash sinks were installed in each examination room. With nearly half the sinks located on the ground floor and with slab-on-grade construction, installing these sinks in the conventional manner meant costly digging and a great deal of time – a serious setback, since the group was making lease payments on an empty building.



CONTRACTOR JOHN MORRIS AND KATHY SMITH, UKIAH VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR OF SUPPORT SERVICES, WITH ONE OF THE 22 SINKS THAT WERE FITTED WITH SANIFLO SANISHOWER GRAY WATER PUMPS (NOT SHOWN).

Fortunately, the construction team found a cure: Saniflo above-floor plumbing.

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In just six weeks, 22 Sanishower gray water pumps were installed to supply all the ground-floor sinks, saving the center hundreds of thousands of dollars and hastening its occupancy of the building.

Huge amount of work avoided: “We would have had to tear up all the carpet, jackhammer out all the concrete, dig trenches and tie into sewer pipes underneath the building and connect the sinks,” explains plumbing contractor John Morris, itemizing the obstacles to using conventional plumbing techniques on this project. “That’s a huge amount of work. It would have taken us an additional three months to do all that.”

Which is why Morris’s firm, Watersphere Plumbing in Ukiah, chose to use

Sanishower gray water pumps. Designed to work above the floor — not beneath it — these pumps can service one or two fixtures in a commercial or residential application, including sinks, wet bars, bathtubs and showers. Measuring only 13 inches wide and 6-1/2 inches deep, the 6-inch-tall Sanishower unit is small enough to fit within a lavatory cabinet, which is where Watersphere installed the units.

Wastewater enters the compact Sanishower container via two 1-1/2 inch inlets, located on either side of the unit, which is constructed of durable polypropylene. Entry of the wastewater triggers a micro-switch in the chamber, activating the pump motor. This wastewater is immediately discharged, after which the micro-switch automatically deactivates the Sanishower.



MEASURING ONLY 13 INCHES WIDE AND 6-1/2 INCHES DEEP, THE 6-INCH-TALL SANISHOWER UNIT (RED ARROW) IS SMALL ENOUGH TO FIT WITHIN A LAVATORY CABINET, LEAVING PLENTY OF ROOM FOR OTHER STORAGE.

Because the walls at the UVMC were already finished and cabinets installed, Morris used flexible PEX (crosslinked polyethylene) tubing for the ¾-inch discharge pipe coming from the Sanishower units, simplifying the installation even more, according to Morris.



CONTRACTOR JOHN MORRIS, WITH ONE OF THE SANIFLO SANISHOWER GRAY WATER PUMPS. USING CONVENTIONAL PLUMBING TECHNIQUES ON THIS PROJECT WOULD HAVE ENTAILED "A HUGE AMOUNT OF WORK," HE SAYS. "IT WOULD HAVE TAKEN US AN ADDITIONAL THREE MONTHS."

"The flexibility of this tubing saved us from having to cut the drywall open," he says. "We took the waste for the sinks up about 10 feet into the ceiling space and connected them to gravity drains there. The Sanishowers have a total lift capacity of about 12 feet, so it worked out really well."

"Fabulous" solution: Douglas Crane, president of Crane of Ukiah, the general contractor for the owner of the building, oversaw the construction project and subcontracted with Morris. "We didn't want to tear up the slab and dig ditches in a finished building and then have to put the building back together and repair or replace finishes," he confirms, noting he told the tenants he would try to find a way to save them money. "I became aware of Saniflo through trade publications, and John came forward with the Sanishower."

It turns out Morris already had a positive, personal experience with Saniflo technology. "I have a patio at home where I installed a Saniflo pump for an outside sink." But the technology wasn't as familiar to other principals on the UVMC project, so Morris bought a Saniflo pump, created a mockup installation and invited a plumbing inspector to the job site to observe. "I said, 'This is what we're proposing,' and asked if he had any problem with it. His only concern was that we install it in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications."

Morris then showed it to the tenants. “I explained it would fit underneath the sink and that every time the pump turns on, they’ll hear a little sound of an electric motor for a few seconds,” he says. “They checked it out and didn’t have a problem with it. The sinks are very quiet.”

“It turned out to be a fabulous suggestion,” says Kathy Smith, UVMC Administrative Director of Support Services. “Using Saniflo, rather than undertaking a complete remodel, saved us a ton of time, money and mess. The pumps are functioning very well, so we’re very pleased with them.”

Crane and Morris worked with Pace Supply in Ukiah for all the project’s plumbing needs, including all the Sanishower #010 units for the ground-level sinks. Pace recommended the team take advantage of Saniflo’s technical support to help with the sizing. “It’s an excellent service and a major value added,” says Lucas Peaslee, a Pace sales representative.

He also stresses that Watersphere used the Sanishower pump in all 22 applications. “The Sanishower can pump the maximum and the minimum ‘total dynamic head’ that we need. So we didn’t have to use different units.”

Crane agrees it was the right choice. “Using Saniflo made it possible to accomplish the changeover above the floor, saving time and money for the tenant,” he says. “It would have cost them \$250,000 more, conservatively, for conventional plumbing.”

This large project increased installer Morris’s appreciation for Saniflo’s alternative plumbing solution. “There’s a cost-effective option to tearing up concrete,” he says. “Not just for homes, but also the commercial market. Saniflo pumps are easy to install and economical, enabling me to say to a client, ‘Yeah, we can put a sink over here, and it won’t cost an arm and a leg.’ I wouldn’t hesitate to use it in an application like this again, because it works very well.”

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SFA SANIFLO INC. is the only manufacturer of its kind in North America, offering a complete line of macerating toilet systems and gray water pumping systems for residential and commercial applications. Saniflo markets through independent sales agents throughout North America, and the product line is currently available at distributor and dealer locations throughout the United States and Canada.

For more information, contact Saniflo at 1-800-571-8191. Or visit the Saniflo website at www.saniflo.com.

For editorial assistance, including photography, contact John O'Reilly c/o LNC Communications: 815-469-9100 or John@LNCmail.com

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Contacts:

Installer:

John Morris
Watersphere Plumbing
835 Pomo Drive
Ukiah, CA 95482
Phone: 707-391-5669
Email: bsat7595482@yahoo.com

General Contractor for the Building Owner:

Douglas Crane, President
Crane of Ukiah
200 Orr Springs Road
Ukiah, CA 95482
Phone: 747-462-1412
Email: Doug.Crane@CraneofUkiah.com

Salesman:

Lucas Peaslee

Pace Supply

3500 N. State St.

Ukiah, CA 95482

Phone: 707-462-8707

Email: lpeaslee@pacesupply.com

End User:

Kathy Smith, Administrative Director of Support Services

Ukiah Valley Medical Group

275 Hospital Drive

Ukiah, CA 95482

Phone: 707-462-3111

Email: smithka@ah.org