

# in the Loop

## Prevention and Cure: Piping Systems Get TLC

They may be hidden beneath the streets and sidewalks, but they're never out of mind: Hartford Steam Co.'s steam, hot-water and chilled-water pipes get a lot of attention year-round. By using high-quality piping, proper installation techniques and corrosion inhibitor, Hartford Steam has maintained quite a healthy piping system for more than four decades.

You may have noticed there is an occasional need for a shutdown, however, if a new customer is being added or there is a major leak that requires immediate attention for safety reasons. But for all practical purposes, Hartford Steam makes every effort to keep the system up and running no matter the time of day, no matter the time of year. Maintaining service to customers is our top priority.

That's why customers are the first to be called if there is any kind of shutdown required. And we take customers' operation schedules into consideration. "We discovered a significant steam leak in the system during the NCAA tourney and knew it had to be taken care of immediately," says Jim Elsner, project engineer in charge of piping

installation and repairs. "Obviously we wanted to take the tourney's schedule into consideration. So we performed the work in two phases between 1 a.m. and 7 a.m. to ensure we weren't disrupting restaurants and bars in the evening or shower time at the arena in the morning."

Jim has been with Hartford Steam for 15 years and knows his way around the three types of piping systems. He uses a heat detector to identify hot water leaks that aren't as physically obvious as steam leaks. He also has some tried-and-true methods for reducing the need for shutdowns.

"When we're hooking up a new chilled-water customer, for instance, there are a number of ways we can keep the chilled-water lines live and still make the connection," he says. One method is the use of liquid nitrogen: The company uses it to freeze the chilled water to create an ice plug, then makes the connection downstream, minimizing the effect to others in the area.

Keeping the company's chilled-water, hot-water and steam pipes in shape starts back at the plant. Each medium is treated with corrosion inhibitors and other chemicals to ensure optimal piping system operation. Hartford Steam also uses the best-suited material available for underground distribution piping and makes sure it undergoes rigorous testing during installation.

Jim has seen the positive results. Just last year he uncovered pipe that was installed in 1967. Upon testing he found that it had exactly the same wall thickness as when it was installed: it had not eroded or corroded a bit. "I'm confident the piping system we have now could last 100 years or better," he says.

If you have any questions about the piping system or shutdowns in your area, please contact Diane Wojcik at (860) 548-7357, [dianewojcik@hartfordsteam.com](mailto:dianewojcik@hartfordsteam.com).



**Jim Elsner**  
Project Engineer



**In March, workers from Hartford Steam's subcontractor D&G Contracting repaired a leaking pipe and added Foamglas® insulation.**

## Technician Serves Country, HSC Customers

Michael Mullaly has served his country for more than 21 years, recently earning the rank of chief petty officer in the Navy. He also has served Hartford Steam customers since 1990, putting many of his Navy skills to work as



**Michael Mullaly**  
**Technician Level III**

a technician level III. Mike helps run the main plant and remotely monitors the two other plants as well.

He was trained in the Navy as a nuclear machinist mate, a technician that works on valves, pumps, generators and steam turbines. He also was a pipefitter for submarines. In fact he served in two nuclear submarines and attended nuclear power school. After eight years of active duty, he joined the reserves. Shortly after Sept. 11, 2001, he was activated and

mobilized for 22-1/2 months in a totally new field: security.

Mike was born in New York City and now lives in Wethersfield, Conn., with his wife Laura and six children, ages newborn to 12. All school-age children are home-schooled. "My wife has been an awesome supporter of mine," says Mike. "I wouldn't have been able to have this job at Hartford Steam and be on a rotating shift – or be in the Navy – without her. And I want to thank her."

Hartford Steam Co. has a number of employees with military backgrounds and is pleased it was able to support Mike as he served on reserve duty. But we're also glad he's back at Hartford Steam – we're happy to have him.

## How To Prepare for the Cooling Season

College basketball season is over (but it was quite a grand ride!) and summer is just about here. So it's time to prepare your cooling system for the air-conditioning season. Here are some tasks to put on your checklist:

- Flush all cooling coils and piping that were laid up for winter. Drain the glycol into proper storage containers and flush the system with city water. This is extremely important, as any glycol that ends up in the chilled-water system feeds biological organisms that result in reduced chilled-water clarity, increased plugging of system strainers, and increased costs for you, the customer.
- Refill all in-house chilled-water systems with city water and vent the systems to release trapped air before opening the district cooling service valves.
- Check coils to be sure there were no freezeups during the winter months.
- Clean and maintain the cooling coils.
- Close coil drain valves.
- Lubricate all pump and fan motors and bearings.
- Check all dampers, fans and louvers to ensure they work correctly.
- Calibrate controls.
- Clean and flush all chilled-water strainers.
- Set up variable-speed drives on building chilled-water pump circulators.
- Check the energy management system to ensure it's ready for the cooling season.
- Review and test cooling system setpoints and operational programs.
- Inspect, test and repair air handler and fan coil cooling control valves.

If you have questions or would like us to turn on your chilled-water meters and open your primary chilled-water valves, please contact Diane at (860) 548-7357, [dianewojcik@hartfordsteam.com](mailto:dianewojcik@hartfordsteam.com). We also can secure the primary steam valve if you do not use steam during the summer months.

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For more information, call (860) 548-7348.

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