



PIPELINE

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PROCESS PIPING • PLUMBING • HVACR • BOILERS • FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS • ELECTRICAL • SPRINKLERS INSPECTIONS **FALL 2024**

PSI Conquers the Wellesley College 'Summer Slammer' Steam to Hot Water Runtal and Jaga Challenge

PSI's current large-scale HVAC project is what we like to call a "Two-Part Summer Slammer." The project required removing Wellesley College's old steam radiators with Runtal and Jaga hot water baseboard radiators, new steam to hot water heat exchangers, and pumps and FCUs in common areas for cooling. This complicated project consisted of replacing units in over 200 dorm rooms, the kitchen, and common areas with modern heating and air conditioning equipment through the extreme heat of summer months.

It was a 10,000-man-hour project, and we were given two years to complete it.

We basically divided the U-shaped structure in half, which created a need to make sure the building was properly valved, so half the system would be operational upon the students' return. The construction schedule only allowed us to work from mid-May through August while students were away for the summer.

A 10,000 Man-Hour Project

The project kicked off last summer with a crew of 16 working 10-hour days plus Saturdays to keep us on schedule. It required licensed pipefitters, a few apprentice pipefitters, and several certified welders.

Check! Despite equipment delays, we finished the first half of the job last summer without a hitch. So our plan for summer 2024 was to repeat the same staffing schedule for the rest of the dorm rooms from mid-May to a clean August finish. But this year there was a plot twist!

The EPA shut down all construction for asbestos abatement for nearly 6 weeks! Mass takes asbestos removal very seriously. They require plastic walls for air monitoring, and no one is allowed in these areas until the state gives a thumbs up. The bad news was that even though PSI wasn't involved in that part of the project, the shutdown impacted all the construction crews, starting on a Thursday. The great news was that none of our employees were ever exposed to any hazards!

Untimely, Unforeseen Shutdown

What does a professional sub-contractor do at the 11th hour, starting on a time-and-a-half weekend that just got pulled out from under 16 guys?

continued on page 4



Photo courtesy of Massachusetts Office Of Travel & Tourism



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Trunk or Treat

You're invited to PSI's **2nd Annual Trunk or Treat!** Bring your family, friends, and costumes to Hathaway Park in Assonet on Saturday, October 19th, from 4-6 pm. Enjoy decorated cars, games, pumpkin painting, and candy galore. You won't want to miss this spooktacular public event!

Trade News

NFPA on Back-to-School Safety. With colleges back in session, the NFPA is promoting the importance of fire safety in campus housing. A lot of "first-time chefs" are cooking their own meals on unfamiliar appliances, and dormitory fires are at a heightened risk. NFPA's educational initiative includes proper fire safety measures, such as awareness of smoke alarms and sprinkler systems.

Sprinkler Age shares 4 reasons for annual fire pump testing:

- NFPA 25 compliance: Locally adopted fire codes require 5 pumps to be inspected, tested, and maintained.
- Early detection of problems and regular preventive maintenance reduces the risk of fire pump failure
- Minimization of property damage and loss of life in event of fire.
- Lower insurance costs because premiums are lower for properties with well-maintained fire protection systems.

[Read the full article](#)

Standpipe Failures. After the devastating standpipe failure of 1991 where 3 firefighters lost their lives, FEMA detailed the fire's cause, response, and deficiencies. That led to a change in NFPA 14 psi requirements from 65 to 100 in 1993. Today, a lot more is expected of Engineers of Record and building designers.

[Read more about NFPA 14](#)

Employee Spotlight: Masters at Work

In this edition of the PIPELINE Newsletter, we'd like you to meet three of PSI's longest-tenured foremen. These are the guys who get your job done on time, bring their expert crews, and always provide excellent customer service. We are proud to know each of them at work and personally!



William Babcock

William has racked up an impressive 48 years of service with PSI. His extensive experience includes managing projects, servicing, sales, and customer relations problem-

solving. "PSI always goes out of its way to keep customers happy and satisfied," he says.

Now having earned and is enjoying partial retirement, William works part-time, still finding joy in his contributions.

He adds, "PSI gives you a great opportunity to have a long and successful career."

All of us at PSI are grateful for William's long-term commitment, and we value his dedication, leadership by example, and continued hard work.



Bruce Bouchard

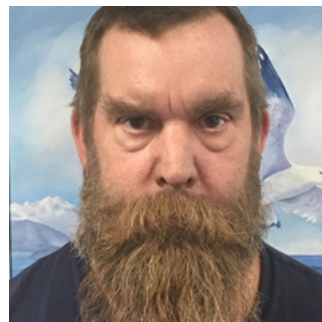
A dedicated employee with 21 years of experience, Bruce brings extensive expertise in new construction, tenant fit-outs, heating and cooling, along with some refrigeration work.

Bruce's long-standing tenure at PSI is what has helped PSI meet its commitment to excellence.

"Maintenance supervisors have said they are happy to have PSI on their projects because they know the job will be done right," Bruce says.

Bruce emphasizes the company's exceptional performance in reliability, safety, and quality of work, and he values the continuing education in the trade, personal development, and safety protocols that PSI provides, which contributed significantly to Bruce's career growth.

His determination and on-the-job expertise make Bruce an invaluable asset to the PSI team and guarantee top-notch results in every project he undertakes.



Mike Gordon

Mike has been a cornerstone at PSI for 29 years and brings his extensive experience in working

with coil connections. He attributes his career growth to PSI's commitment to education. "PSI sends you to school so you're always learning. It's also a great pleasure to work with such wonderful people."

Mike is a dependable, knowledgeable, and a skilled employee who consistently contributes to satisfying every customer. His dedication to quality and safety plays a significant role in maintaining PSI's reputation as a reliable, safe, reputable company that ensures each project meets the highest standards.

Fear of Refrigeration:

The First Cold Storage Banquet of 1911 (And P.S. Nobody Died)

At the turn of the 20th century, the concept of a refrigerated feast was more than a little unnerving. Yet, the world's first "cold-storage banquet," held at the luxurious Hotel Sherman in Chicago, set out to challenge the era's culinary fears.

On October 23, 1911, some 400 guests, including notable city officials, gathered under the ornate ceilings of the Louis XVI room to experience this groundbreaking event.

Nicola Twilley, author of *Frostbite: How Refrigeration Changed Our Food, Our Planet, and Ourselves*, explains that nearly everything served—from the eggs in the salad to the apples in the pie—was refrigerated. The only exceptions were the olives in the dry martinis.

The banquet menu even detailed which cold-storage facilities housed each course, a stark contrast to the farm-to-table assurances expected today.

The secretary of the National Poultry, Butter, and Egg Association toasted the guests' courage for trusting in the nascent technology of refrigeration, given the widespread skepticism fueled by media reports. (This event came nearly two years before commercial refrigerators began appearing in American homes, at a time when public anxiety about food preservation technologies was peaking.)

Meyer Eichengreen, the association's vice president, highlighted the



Hotel Sherman, circa 1911, considered at the time to be the swankiest hotel in Chicago. | Article Source: [Atlas Obscura](#)

Novelty of consuming foods long past their usual season, humorously noting the age of the capon served. Such remarks underscored the shifting perceptions of food freshness and safety precipitated by cold storage.

The banquet not only showcased the capabilities of refrigeration but also aimed to mitigate public fears, set against the backdrop of recent food safety legislation and ongoing debates about the impact of refrigeration on food quality.

This pivotal meal marked a significant moment in culinary history, redefining how food could be stored and consumed, despite initial public trepidation.



Courtesy Nicola Twilley



Con't from page 1: HVAC "Summer Slammer"

We sucked it up! Because when PSI works for a general contractor on multi-million dollar projects like Wellesley's, we always prepare a backup plan for unforeseen delays, costs, and emergencies. Our end goal is always to go above and beyond for our clients and deliver remarkable value with our remarkable expertise (two of our three company missions). Thankfully, our pre-planning and shop fabrication of all risers and mains had us ahead of the original schedule, so we were prepared for the unexpected!

Additionally, our backup plan never impacts our talent—the reason we are the go-to sub-contractor of choice in MA and RI. "For the short term," said Gary Babcock, PSI's senior project manager, "We paid the crews to be home until we could find out what was going on. Then some of the crew was placed in our shop or on other projects to continue earning their paychecks so their families weren't impacted by the shutdown. Our GCs count on us to perform on tight schedules with the correct manpower."

First Time for AC in some 200-Year-Old Dorm Rooms!

There was a lot of prep work to set up the new HVAC systems. "We had to install two steam-to-hot water heat exchangers along with hot water pumps to supply the new heating hot water throughout the dorms. That meant shutting down and connecting to facility steam lines in a miles-long underground tunnel. Then we had to install a new chill water system," Gary said. "Since there hadn't been a chill water system in the dorms, we were actually installing air conditioning in some areas for the very first time!"

Ultimately, when the project started up again, the deadline for "heads in beds" was extended by one week, and PSI added a bit more manpower to finish on time. "We basically hand-picked the crew to make sure they were willing to work the overtime, knowing the tight schedule," Gary said. "They worked 5am to 3pm basically five days a week, and then went in 8 hours on Saturdays. July 4 and the day after were PSI holidays, but some of the guys were on site all weekend." This project was the definition of PSI's grit in action. Or as Winston Churchill once said, "Difficulties mastered are opportunities won."

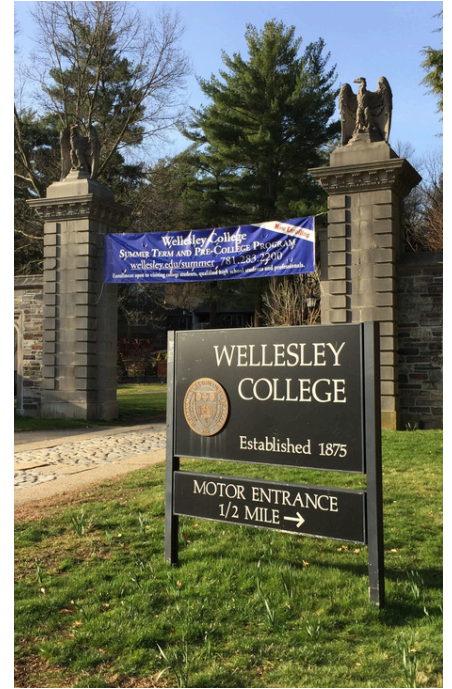


Photo courtesy of Wikimedia

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