

# WEST CAMPUS COGEN FACILITY (WCCF)

In 2003, after nearly three years of planning, the University of Wisconsin-Madison teamed with Madison Gas & Electric (MG&E) and Alliant Energy to design a “cogeneration” facility – a natural gas-fired power plant that will generate 150 megawatts of electricity for MG&E customers, as well as steam heat and chilled water air conditioning for UW campus buildings. Ahern is serving as a prime contractor on all process/power piping, plumbing, HVAC, and fire protection systems. At its peak, this project was one of the largest in Ahern’s history in terms of manpower, with over 100 employees on site.

Space was a major consideration in WCCF’s planning stages. “Constructing a facility of this magnitude in a small area presents unique challenges,” said Ahern Industrial/Process Senior Project Manager David LeMay, who also serves as the lead project manager. “Superintendent Chuck Keller and his crew have worked very hard to keep things organized.” Ahern minimized the amount of material in the small laydown yard through weekly foreman meetings, which determined what piping each trade will need the following week. The spools are assembled in Ahern’s Pipe Fabrication Shop and shipped as needed.

Industrial/Process work included installation of over 30 piping systems made from chrome moly, stainless steel, copper, carbon steel, and other materials. Ahern’s Pipe Fabrication Division



shipped approximately 2,000 pipe spools, ranging from 2.5 to 72 inches in diameter. Fire Protection work included the installation of two fire pumps and underground distribution mains. Additionally, Ahern installed five wet systems, 13 deluge systems, five preaction systems, and four foam systems. Senior Project Manager Addison Knopps and Foreman Scott Warner led the plumbing installations, including underground temporary utilities, process drains, and full plumbing systems in several buildings. Foreman Mike O’Leary coordinated HVAC’s work. In addition to all sheet metal (comprised of over 26,000 pounds of duct), Ahern is also installing nine air handling units, eight inline electric duct heaters, 32 exhaust fans and related equipment, and a Direct Digital Central Control System to operate all HVAC equipment.

Involving nearly every trade that Ahern offers, the WCCF project is a testament to good communication and flexibility. As LeMay states, “Everyone in the company has done a great job of communicating their needs. The logistics are complex, but Chuck and the foremen have the experience and ability to keep work running smoothly.”

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