2009 TOP PROJECTS

The A List
Plumbing and mechanical contractors that stood out in 2009
Celebrating the land

JOHNSON CONTROLS WORKS WITH ENVIRONMENT

There was plenty of space at the 33-acre Glendale site of Johnson Controls Inc.'s new global headquarters, but not all of it was usable.

Working with existing wetlands and a navigable stream were major challenges for the project team on the $73 million job, said Jason Cooper, landscape architect and senior associate with Conservation Design Forum, Ann Arbor, Mich.

Time constraints only added to the challenge, said Dan Davies, senior project manager for Hunsinger Construction Co., Brookfield.

"We had a very limited time frame to be able to work within the waterway with permitting and notification requirements," he said.

Project staff carefully planned ahead so the wetlands and stream bisecting the property wouldn't hinder construction, Cooper said. The design even sought to turn the challenge into an amenity, incorporating views of the stream into employee spaces such as the new cafeteria.

The property's watery base required additional planning for storm-water runoff. The water conservation and reuse strategies used at the site as a result fit in well with the project's sustainable focus, Cooper said.

The two new 135,000-square-foot buildings constructed on site feature energy-efficient options such as vertical sunshades to control sunlight, said Bailey Broeggen, project manager for Omni Glass & Paint Inc., Oshkosh. The project also included renovations to three existing buildings.

In all, the project resulted in a 75 percent reduction in energy costs for the client. Parking lots also were given sustainable features, which helped control...
runoff, Cooper said. An existing asphalt parking lot, for example, was converted to permeable pavement and another was removed and replaced with a new parking garage that offers more space.

While the site created challenges, it also offered opportunities, Davies said. The addition of walking paths, the removal of scrub trees and the restoration of the site’s natural prairies blend to create a more park like setting, he said.

“They didn’t really know the full beauty of the land they had,” Davies said.

And the property is a work in progress, as many of the landscape changes will become more evident over time, said Trish Beckjord, associate and senior project manager with Conservation Design Forum.

“We’re looking forward to seeing the site grow and mature over the next couple of years,” she said, “as it comes into its own and becomes quite a beautiful thing.”

— Melissa Rigney Baxter