

# the NEWS

A **bnp** PUBLICATION  
media

THE HVACR CONTRACTOR'S WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE

\$3.00

## Furniture Retailer Looks To The Future

Ikea Stores First To Receive Lennox R-410A Rooftops.

By Joanna R. Turpin  
Of *The News Staff*

It's amazing how fast time flies. Not that long ago, it seemed that it would be ages before R-22 was phased out. Granted, the refrigerant will be available for service purposes until 2020, but for those buying new rooftop units, which typically have a 15-year life span, it may be time to think about installing equipment that contains an alternative refrigerant, such as R-410A.

Consider that the U.S. government has mandated that as of 2010, manufacturers will no longer be able to produce equipment that contains R-22. That's only six years away. Manufacturers knew this was coming and are in the middle of undertaking the necessary research and development to switch their equipment over to other refrigerants.

Lennox is one of those forward-looking manufacturers and just recently rolled out its first L Series® rooftops to use R-410A. The company was spurred to introduce its R-410A units a little early, due to the request of a customer. Ikea, the furniture retailer, expressed a desire to install "green" rooftop units on three of its new California stores. Lennox responded to the challenge, concentrating its resources to have the rooftops available for installation in less than six months.

### Green Customer

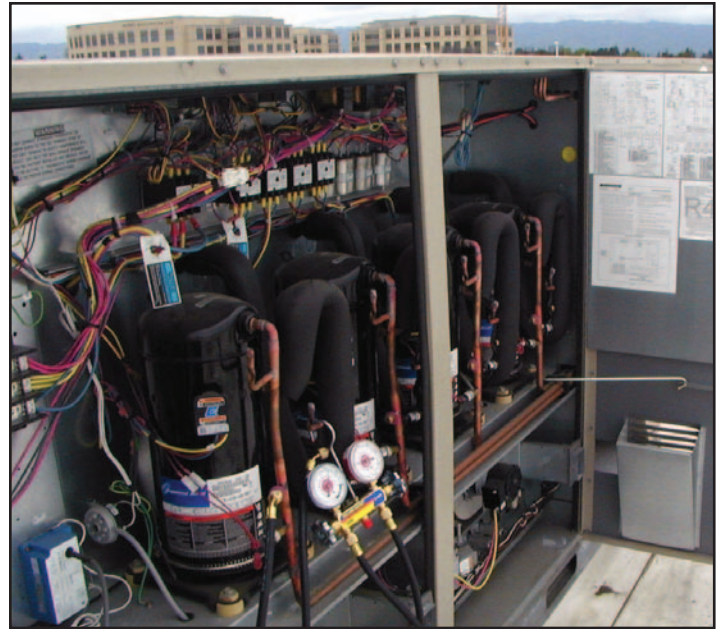
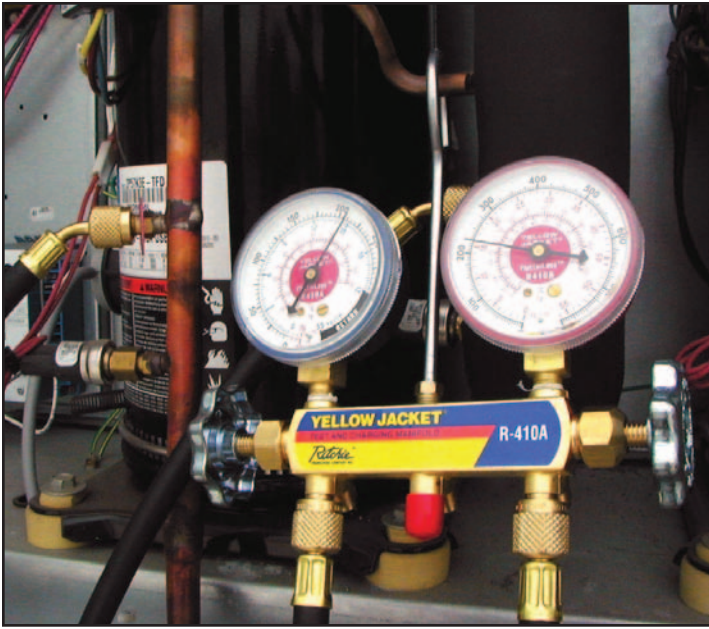
For its latest three stores in California, Ikea decided it wanted to install rooftop units containing R-410A.

Joseph Roth, director of ex-pansion public affairs — Ikea North America, Plymouth Meeting, Pa., said, "Ikea is a global company, and we certainly try to be good environmental stewards no matter where around the world we're opening stores. We own the land that we build on, and we spend millions of dollars constructing these new stores, so we want to make sure that cutting-edge technology is used in the stores. We also want to do something that's environmentally friendly that we know will be the standard moving forward. It's just the smart way to do business."

Lennox national account manager Curt Picard initially contacted Ikea about installing the regular L Series rooftop units on their new stores in Covina, Costa Mesa, and East Palo Alto. However, the absence of an R-410A unit in the Lennox line prevented any immediate sale.



**Top:** Ikea is known for being socially responsible, so for its latest three stores in California, the company decided it wanted to install rooftop units containing R-410A. **Above:** Cal-Air employees Mike Camper, area foreman, and Guy Booten, field operations manager, perform the preventive maintenance on the rooftop units.



Accessories for the rooftop units are installed at the factory, so the self-sealed units are fully configured and ready for installation.

“When I originally approached Ikea construction project manager George Ferrara, he said he would only consider the L Series rooftop units if they had R-410A,” said Picard. “I then went to our engineers at the product development and research facility and proposed trying to get R-410A units manufactured for clients such as Ikea.”

At the time of the request, Lennox had been testing its equipment with R-410A, and there were some pilot projects under way. “The challenge was getting the rooftops designed in a pretty short time frame,” said Picard.

### Construction Begins

Construction on the Ikea store in East Palo Alto began in November 2002 and finished in August 2003. Marelich Mechanical, Hayward, Calif., a commercial-industrial contractor that specializes in new construction, was the firm that provided the rooftop installation.

“The Ikea job took about 7,000 man-hours and included hanging duct 40 feet in the air,” said Don DuFosee, executive vice president, Marelich Mechanical. “Our shop spent about 2,000 hours for the prefabrication and fabrication of the ductwork.”

He added that it was a challenge to get the numerous rooftop units to the jobsite on time, but noted, “Lennox took on this task and worked feverishly to design and build these units and get them there in accordance with the job schedule. Due to great effort and work by Lennox, the units are no different in regards to preparation and installation than their predecessors.”

Picard said that thanks to factory-installed accessories, the self-sealed units are fully configured and ready for installation. “All the contractor has to do is put the curb on the roof, drop the ductwork, and everything’s done. When you land our units onto the roof, basically they’re ready to go.”

The rooftop units had to be lifted by helicopter onto the roof of the Ikea store. In three hours, Marelich’s sheet metal team oversaw and aided the helicopter subcontractor in 46 air lifts of mechanical equipment.

All units came complete with factory-installed, non-fused disconnect switches, 115-V GFI outlets, smoke detectors, economizers (some with gravity and some with power exhaust), and Novar controls.

Cal-Air Inc. will be providing the East Palo Alto store with HVAC preventive maintenance and service. “The preventive maintenance program is currently a quarterly inspection program,” said Jay Warner, statewide account specialist, Cal-Air. “Our field technicians have been trained on the pressure differences with R-410A and how to safely handle the new refrigerant.”

Said Picard, “Customers need to begin thinking about purchasing new R-410A units if they plan on being in their building for any length of time. In six years, there will be no more standard R-22 units manufactured, and in 17 years, there will be no more R-22 available for older units.”

It’s a good bet that those six years will be up before you know it. ☺



Reprinted from

Air Conditioning | Heating | Refrigeration

the **NEWS**

Copyright 2004