References

321 West Sixth Street, Austin, TX



Uponor involvement

- Uponor AquaPEX® for In-Unit Plumbing
- ProPEX® expansion fittings and multiport tees

- Uponor Kitting Services (373 kits, 34 variations)
- Technical design support and collaboration

Mechanical Contractor Leverages Uponor PEX Piping and Kitting Services for Efficient Installation and Quality Control in Multiuse Tower

The second-largest high rise in Austin's central business district required a plumbing solution that delivered installation speed and unmatched quality. Austin-based The Porter Company chose Uponor PEX-a and Kitting Services to decrease overall installation time, speed up the planning process, and facilitate quicker construction start times.

At 670 feet in height, the tower at 321 West Sixth Street in Austin, Texas, is the second-largest high rise in the city's central business district. This luxury multiuse building houses corporate offices, retail space, residential units, garage parking, and an impressive, 3,000-square-foot clubhouse with pool deck, indoor/outdoor fitness, gathering and meeting spaces, media room, pet park, and locker-room facilities. In total, the residential wing consist of 370 units with 34 different variations.

For a project of this scale, developer Ryan Companies carefully considered and thoughtfully planned each detail to ensure the project would incorporate all the lofty design requirements while also meeting the construction schedule and staying within

budget.

Austin-based The Porter Company was chosen as the mechanical contractor for the project based on their commitment to speed, efficiency, and delivering exceptional results. “Our goal for this project was to be as close to a hundred percent efficiency as possible and being out in front of deadlines as opposed to struggling to meet them,” said Grant Thornhill, superintendent at The Porter Company.

Thornhill, a third-generation master plumber, worked his way from residential to commercial projects. From there, the scale of the commercial projects he worked on grew. He understands the amount of planning and accuracy needed to ensure a timely completion and efficient installation for a project of this size. Thornhill works closely on high-rise projects with his colleague, Jake Huizar, project manager at The Porter Company, who specializes in commercial projects like this new tower and has worked with them for much of his career. Together, they are well equipped to take on any high-rise project that comes their way.

Ryan Companies knew The Porter Company’s commitment to exceptional results paired with Thornhill and Huizar’s experience on high-rise structures was the perfect fit for this project, so they tasked them with installing the plumbing system for this complex, mixed-use, high-rise project. When analyzing different plumbing solutions that could have been used on this project, Thornhill leaned towards PEX.

“PEX, specifically Uponor, is by far the fastest installation that you could have with what codes allow right now,” said Thornhill. “Press with copper would be second, and soldering would come in dead last. Speed wise, Uponor is definitely the right choice for condos, apartments, things of that nature, especially for what we’re doing in this building, it worked great."

Uponor PEX-a decreases overall installation time and speeds up the planning process to facilitate quicker construction start times. “The fact that you don't have to have fire watch, and you don't need to get a burn permit inside the building, there are essentially no extra steps that you have to take for safety when using expansion fittings,” he explained.

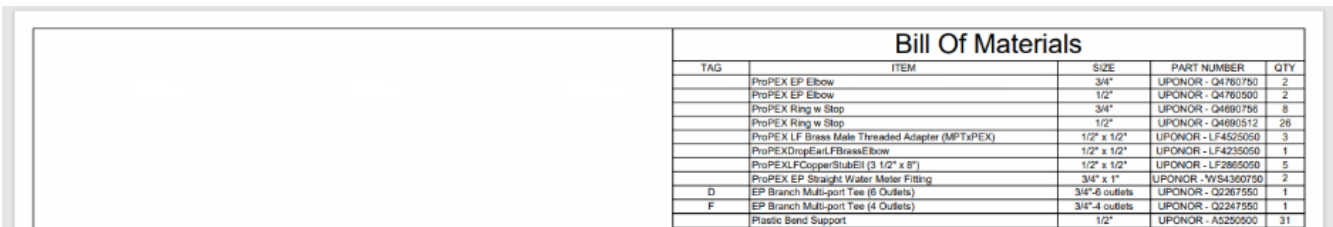
When they began installing the plumbing system, there was a learning curve. However, the learning period did not last long because of the easy-install qualities of PEX. “It took about two weeks on that first floor, and then it went down to a week and a half, then it got down to six days, and then we were doing it in five,” said Huizar.

As construction progressed, The Porter Company appreciated the flexibility of Uponor PEX-a pipe. “We don't have a lot of bulky, sharp-ended pipe that we're trying to install between metal studs. This pipe is much easier to bend, which makes it work for us in this project,” said Thornhill. It also made long days on the jobsite easier because of its lightweight qualities that were not only forgiving on the installers’ bodies, but easier to transport to the residential units situated high above the ground.

The Porter Company also utilized Uponor Kitting Services for this project. Kitting Services drive high-quality, efficient, installations. All components for each unit are organized ahead of time and conveniently bagged until installation, ensuring the correct number of fittings are used in each unit and nothing is lost along the way. This correlates to stable material costs for the building.

“Kitting Services helps improve efficiency, more than anything else,” said Huizar. “When you're talking about costs and quality, they run hand-in-hand. Being able to give the guys a package and say, ‘Go ahead and run with it,’ makes it that much easier, and it’s another way for us to maintain quality control as we’re installing.”

Another challenge The Porter Company faced was ensuring quality installations. Because of the large variety of unit



Bill Of Materials

TAG	ITEM	SIZE	PART NUMBER	QTY
	ProPEX EP Elbow	3/4"	UPONOR - Q4760750	2
	ProPEX EP Elbow	1/2"	UPONOR - Q4760500	2
	ProPEX Ring w Stop	3/4"	UPONOR - Q4690756	8
	ProPEX Ring w Stop	1/2"	UPONOR - Q4690512	26
	ProPEX LF Brass Male Threaded Adapter (MPTxPEX)	1/2" x 1/2"	UPONOR - LF4525050	3
	ProPEXDropEarLFBrassElbow	1/2" x 1/2"	UPONOR - LF4235050	1
	ProPEXLFCopperStubEll (3 1/2" x 8")	1/2" x 1/2"	UPONOR - LF2865050	5
	ProPEX EP Straight Water Meter Fitting	3/4" x 1"	UPONOR - WS4360750	2
D	EP Branch Multi-port Tee (6 Outlets)	3/4"-6 outlets	UPONOR - Q2267550	1
F	EP Branch Multi-port Tee (4 Outlets)	3/4"-4 outlets	UPONOR - Q2247550	1
	Plastic Bend Support	1/2"	UPONOR - A5250500	31

configurations, confusion is common as plumbers quickly move from one configuration to the next, causing a decrease in installation quality and an increase in installation time. To manage this challenge, Uponor Kitting Services includes a blueprint layout of the unit in each bag, so the installer knows exactly where the pipe needs to go and where to make the connections.

“Without using Kitting, it would just be very tough for the guys to understand each individual unit,” said Thornhill. “After they’ve seen the map three or four times for the same unit, it’s built into their heads, they have a system and rhythm, and they understand it. Without Kitting, I think they’d be shooting from the hip in a lot of ways.”

Thornhill and Huizar are strong believers in Uponor solutions — especially for high-rise projects like this tower — because of the pipe’s long-lasting quality and resilience in freezing conditions. While cheaper options are available, that cost savings can quickly dissolve when generic alternatives leak and fail.

“PEX is not the cheapest route, but it’s a lot safer route as far as the freeze factor,” said Huizar. “There are a lot of places we don’t even need to insulate it because PEX is such a durable and resilient pipe.”

The Porter Company appreciated the speed and versatility of the Uponor ProPEX® expansion fitting system paired with Kitting Services to deliver the results that matter. They are installed plumbing in one floor of the structure each week. Thornhill and Huizar were pleased with the speed of this installation, given the magnitude of the project. Uponor solutions will helped deliver an on-time completion to the developer with a plumbing system that will last throughout the life of the structure.

Project Facts:

Location	Completion
Austin, USA	2025
Building Type	**Number of floors**
Multi storey building	58

Address	Website	Project Type
321 W 6th St, Austin, TX 78701	https://atxtower-residences.com/	New building

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Partners

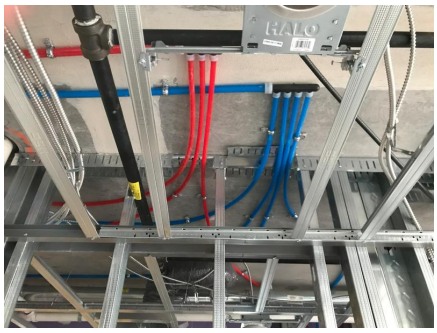
Ryan Comnpanies	The Porter Company

Image Gallery

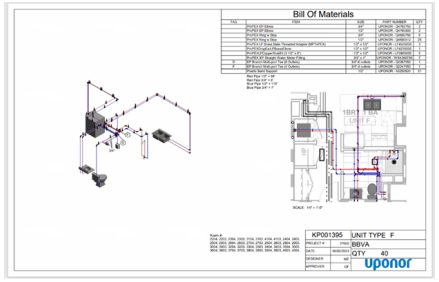












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-Grant Thornhill, superintendent at The Porter Company.

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