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Rittling Fan Coil Plays Role in a Green Home Competition

Rittling Aids Santa Clara University to a 3rd Place Win in Solar Decathlon

(Washington, D.C., October 2007) – With the incorporation of the Rittling fan coil in their solar home, Santa Clara University brings home a bronze in the U.S. Department of Energy’s third Solar Decathlon held on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. Hydro-Air Components’ donation of the Hi-Cap Fan Coil helped to heat and cool the 650 sq. ft. fully sustainable home and win over the judges at the event held October 12-20, 2007.

The Solar Decathlon is a unique competition in which 20 college- and university-led teams from around the world work to design, finance, construct, and operate the most energy-efficient, solar-powered homes imaginable, according to a brochure published by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) for the U.S. Department of Energy. The teams were evaluated in a number of areas encompassing architecture, engineering, livability, comfort, space heating and cooling, water heating, and powering lights and appliances. Each team built the house on their campus and transported it to Washington, D.C. for the competition.

Santa Clara University was drawn to Rittling’s Hi-Cap Fan Coil for its heavy-duty construction and custom application capability; a result of years of research on the latest hydronic coil and fan technology available. Through the use of this hydronic unit and revolutionary absorption chilling technology, the hot water from the Santa Clara solar panels was collected in a thermal storage tank, moved through the chiller to bring the temperature down and then put through the Rittling fan coil. Water from the thermal storage tank that went directly to the fan coil unit was used in heat mode. These methods were used to directly heat and cool the house, reducing the need to use more conventional, but inefficient heaters and air conditioners.

After some internet research into fan coils and other heating and cooling products, Santa Clara ran across the Rittling fan coil units on www.Rittling.com. With a small budget and high hopes, they contacted Hydro-Air Components to discuss the use of these products in their solar home. Clark Zacaroli, VP of Sales and Marketing for Hydro-Air, got involved with the project knowing that the green focus of the Rittling products was a natural fit for this competition.

“The Rittling product line touts its renewable energy efficiency so this was a good application for our product. We value getting involved with a competition that focuses on green technology, the benefits of using renewable energy and improving awareness regarding alternatives to conventional equipment,” said Zacaroli.

Zacaroli introduced the Santa Clara representative to Hydro-Air Senior Account Representative, Peter Jankowski, to make the donation possible. “They chose our unit not only because of its efficiency and size, but also because our response time was so fast,” said Jankowski. “Augustin Fonts, the Santa Clara Electrical/Construction Manager and individual assigned to overseeing the HVAC portion of the house had only positive things to say regarding working with us.”

Jankowski was able to visit the Santa Clara house along with the others in the Solar Village on the National Mall. “Their house was different than most. While some were very contemporary and high-tech looking, this one was warm and inviting.”

The Santa Clara team used a prototype solar thermal unit that was used for space and water heating as well as air conditioning. This worked in conjunction with PV panels integrated into the siding of the house to run the fan coil and other components. The Rittling Hi-Cap Fan Coil was able to heat and cool the home to comfortable temperatures while maintaining high energy efficiency.

The home's integrated controls system monitored the structure using a myriad of sensors which examine and adjust the temperature, lighting and humidity of the building to maximize energy efficiency in relating to the outdoor weather conditions. Santa Clara used a unique sustainability meter that quantifies the power used for heating and cooling and measured the amount of carbon emissions the house saves. One of the goals of the competition is to raise awareness about the benefits of renewable energy and energy efficiency and what technologies are available today to help people reduce their energy usage. The Rittling Hi-Cap Fan Coil is an example of this technology at work.

Based in Buffalo, New York, Hydro-Air Components, Inc. operates and manufactures the Rittling product line from a 160,000 sq. ft. manufacturing plant and office facility. Rittling was founded in 1946 and has a current product line that includes hydronic heating and cooling products and a full line of fan coil units. Further details about the company and product line can be found at www.Rittling.com.

If you would like further information about this topic, please feel free to call Leah Marchewka, Marketing Coordinator at 716-827-6510 or email Leah at LMarchewka@Rittling.com

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