

THE WHOLESALER

News of Plumbing • Heating • Cooling • Industrial Piping Distribution



Since comfort is quintessential to any heating system, radiant floor heat simply can't be beat. But proper installation is critical, so every link in the supply chain must be competent. Here Dave Yates (foreground) and Scott Barnett of heating contractor of F.W. Behler Inc., York, Pa., lay Watts Radiant's modular SubRay hydronic flooring panels sourced from full-service plumbing/hvac wholesaler York (Pa.) Corrugating Co.

At 13 locations

Ferguson buys some Builder's Group assets

NEWPORT NEWS, VA. — In late January, Ferguson completed the acquisition of certain assets of the Builder's Group of Companies, based in Addison, Ill.

Distributors of residential and commercial plumbing products, Builder's Plumbing & Heating Supply Co., together with Glendale Plumbing Supply Co., Inc., Southwest Pipe & Supply, Inc., and SPESCO, Inc., formed the Builders Group of Companies. The Builders Group, owned by the Kogan (Turn to *Some Builder's...* page 27.)

Cont'r groups decry reverse online auctions

WASHINGTON — Two contractor trade associations have taken positions against reverse auction bidding.

Web-based (electronic) reverse auctions, which have been growing in popularity among owners, are "live" (i.e., real time), online bidding auctions in which the successful bidder submits the lowest price to the owner or owner's (Turn to *Online...* page 27.)

Ex-USFlow talent landing safely

Weakening dollar bodes well for U.S. industrial pvf sector



BY MORRIS R. BESCHLOSS
Contributing editor

THE AMAZING RESILIENCE OF THE PVF distribution sector recovering from a deep recession is best typified by the aftermath of the greatest distribution failure in the past 20 years — USFlow.

In the early 1980s the crash of the worldwide oil industry put an end to such pvf distribution giants as Grant & Wallace Supply and

led to the sale of Vinson.

At the time of the USFlow liquidation late last September I anguished about what would happen to the many fine employees of the four outstanding USFlow component companies: Bertsch, Mutual Manufacturing & Supply, Plotkin Brothers and P&E Georgia Corp. All were great operations in their own right and would have continued as industry leaders had they remained independent entities. But their last vestiges of identity disappeared with a liq-

uidation sale in early December.

However, I'm exhilarated by reports that most USFlow employees quickly found positions with other pipe/valves/ fittings distributors in their respective areas, with one exception: P&E Georgia.

P&E Georgia president Rick Mousa headed a team that joined Home Depot-owned Apex Supply in Atlanta, which will add to Big Orange's incursion into the industrial and com- (Turn to *Industrial pvf markets...* page 69.)