

Time is Money

Increase your bottom line and reduce job time with efficient, ZoomLock braze-free fittings



GREG FULLER

President
North Mechanical

317-610-2627
northmechanicalservices.com

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Time is a precious commodity, especially when it comes to your business. Estimating the time it will take to complete a given job is an art form — if you bid too low, the longer it takes your technicians, the less profitable the job. If you bid too high, you might not win the job in the first place.

One of the most time-consuming aspects of any HVACR installation occurs when one (or more) trained technicians are required to join the copper refrigerant lines through brazing. An oxygen acetylene torch kit, gas tanks, degreaser, fire extinguisher, permits ... the list of equipment is as long as the number of hours it takes to do the job.

That is, until Parker Sporlan launched the perfect solution — one that increases both productivity and safety.

The ZoomLock braze-free connecting process is based on exclusive, patented crimping technology. A technician only needs two hands and a few simple tools. With no need for brazing or technical expertise, joining refrigerant lines takes practically no time at all — and one technician can do the connecting job alone.

“We’re using ZoomLock fittings on a big VRF job right now and have had great success with it,” says Greg Fuller, president of North Mechanical in Indianapolis and president Elect of the Mechanical Contractors Association of America (MCAA). “It’s the first time we’ve used it in a large scale situation, having previously only used ZoomLock fittings for repair jobs.”

Zoomlock offers a solution that is easy to learn and has minimal setup, clean-up and most importantly, improved safety. It’s a flame-free process that produces highly repeatable connections with leak rates that testing proves are more reliable than brazed fittings.

HVACR Business spoke with Fuller about the time-savings advantages of ZoomLock braze-free fittings, as well as the safety factor involved.

How do the ZoomLock fittings save job time?

It’s certainly quicker than brazing the joints, as we would have to do with line sets. But the bigger key to us is the purging process — we don’t have to purge as much with ZoomLock, and that’s a big time saver.

That’s where we’re picking up just as much time as we are with not brazing the joints, so it’s a double blessing, so to speak, and we really are pleased with it.

It’s also an easier application — if we’re in a situation where we’re short technicians trained for brazing and purging, ZoomLock becomes a great alternative. With it, just about any technician can join copper tubes without the need to know about brazing.

Is there a safety factor involved?

Safety is always a concern. ZoomLock is a solution, because there’s no solder, no gas and no fire hazard. The fewer times you have to light up, the better off you are. It’s easier to be safe in a space that’s under construction than it is in an existing building or retrofit application.

We’re in the Midwest and there are some really old buildings around here — and there’s always refrigerant runs in the attic or wherever. When it comes to these old buildings, not lighting up is really good for safety and in general.

So you don’t need a hot work permit?

Exactly. Or fire watch. With some of the old facilities we work in, anytime you light up you have to have another person dedicated to watching that person with the flame, and being in charge of all the fire safety in that given area.

So a one-man job immediately becomes a two-man project. Sometimes that person is not a skilled technician, but he’s had at least some training and it’s still a cost of labor to have them be there as a fire watch. Using ZoomLock eliminates that extra person, and that’s a huge savings.

Do your technicians require less equipment?

Yes. They don’t have to drag around an oxy-acetylene outfit with them. They’re not taking purge bottles with them or moving those around so they can get the purge going, so I would agree that it’s less equipment ... especially in our service model. When we use it for service where we’re simply replacing one unit.

It’s a much quicker scenario when you don’t have to get out the oxygen-acetylene outfit, the purge tanks and get the purge set up versus simply change out the condensing unit, reclaim the refrigerant, cut the lines, change the unit, recharge the unit and get it going quickly. ♦