

Working smarter, faster, and maintaining quality is the focus of this column. Each month I'll be introducing construction product innovations that are intended to help contractors install with quality, install with time saving, and sometimes install in difficult or tight circumstances. This month's focus is improving the quality and shortening the installation time of metal conduit.

Although, metal conduit (EMT, IMC, RGC, RAC) have been around for years there is still room for improving installation methods.

Three readily available innovations that improve the quality and speed of conduit installations include:

***Use twenty-foot (20') conduit lengths instead of the traditional 10' lengths.***

Twenty-foot conduit lengths may not be suitable for all installations, but where the contractor has long runs with few bends this may be something to consider. This can improve quality by making it easier to have straighter runs. Labor savings can be 30% to 50%, not only because of you're making half as many connections, but also because you're moving half as many pieces on your scissor lifts and other equipment. There is additional material savings due to reduced use of couplings.

Projects where twenty foot lengths work well include: projects with long runs and projects with elevated conduit installations.

Some of the challenges with twenty-foot conduit lengths come in logistics. Moving the material to the job-site and handling the conduit at the jobsite. These can be overcome with a little planning.

Wheatland has an App that can help calculate the savings you would experience using 20' lengths instead of 10' lengths for your specific project.



***Pre-installed couplings.***

Another innovation, that has been around for a while are pre-installed couplings. There are various of type of couplings that come pre-installed including raintight, swivel couplings, and set screws. The focus of this type of innovation is primarily time savings and ease of use for the installer. Since the coupling comes pre-installed, there is not an additional set of items to carry to the job-site and ½ the job of installing the coupling is already done since it is already installed on one side of the connection. The use of swivels and set screws further add to the ease and quickness of the installation.

***Colored EMT Conduit.***

Colored EMT conduit is being used to improve circuit identification. This simple innovation provides its own built-in labeling system for critical systems and ease of future maintenance. Multiple colors are typically available.

I hope this column has been helpful and helps improve the quality, timeliness, and profitability of your current and future project.

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