RONALD McDONALD HOUSE AT ALDER HEY

ANDREWS R300 SERIES SUPA-HEAT AND SUPA-FLO UNITS KEEP RUNNING COSTS LOW FOR RONALD McDONALD HOUSE AT ALDER HEY

The Ronald McDonald House at Alder Hey Children's Hospital has doubled in size since it opened nearly 10 years ago and can now accommodate up to 65 families in a recently completed extension. The recent expansion programme cost in the region of £2m and the annual running costs of £400,000 are budgeted for. No funding is received from local or central government or NHS sources therefore all monies are raised by fund raising activities, voluntary contributions from families who have used the facilities and corporate sponsors, like Andrews Water Heaters. Two R302 Supa-Flo condensing water heaters, each linked to an ST66 buffer vessel, plus two R301 Supa-Heat condensing boilers were supplied to provide all the domestic hot water and central heating requirements for this extension.

Jan Thomas, House Director, recounts, "The house provides family accommodation totally free of charge for parents and siblings of the most critically ill children who are patients in the Hospital. There were 30 en suite bedrooms in the original house, together with a number of communal kitchens and laundry and toilets. The extension has added a further 35 en suite bedrooms, each with shower, bath and wash-hand basin and toilet, 12 domestic kitchens with further laundry and toilet facilities. A day centre for the parents of oncology and renal patients has also been added."
The most important specification criteria for the boilers and water heaters was that they should achieve the highest efficiency in operation so as to keep day to day running costs as low as possible whilst providing the required comfort levels for the occupants. Also in an effort to maximise the living space for the families the plant room area was finely calculated with nothing to spare so the equipment it housed had to be compact enough to pass through a standard doorway or had to be delivered in sections and assembled on site. We also had to consider the clearance requirements of equipment and accessibility for servicing.

The R300 Series Supa-Heat condensing boilers installed are the smallest size in the range giving 70kW output and using condensing technology achieving 104% (net) efficiency. Its downward firing blown gas pre-mix burner that modulates between 20% to 100% provides ultra low NOx and CO2 emissions, qualifying it for the Energy Technology List.

Using the same condensing technology, the smallest R300 Series Supa-Flo water heaters supplied can recover 1360 litres/hr hot water through a temperature rise of 44ºC. They owe this high efficiency to a very responsive finned stainless steel tube heat exchanger and even though water heaters tend to operate at part load for most of the time, the modulation of the burner controlling the optimum mix of gas and air at all times ensures the highest operating efficiency is maintained.

The plant room is something to marvel at because the way everything has fitted is reminiscent of how all the engine components of a car fit neatly under the bonnet. The R300 Supa-Heat boilers and Supa-Flo water heaters have one of the smallest footprints for the output but went in through the doorway without any trouble.

The consulting engineers for this project were Terry & Partners and the installers were A&B Engineering.

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