



When designing the electrical room for the Packard Building, SME had to account for conflicts from exposed plumbing lines serving the apartments above. Photo courtesy of SME Inc. of Seattle

Electrical Construction

► Packard Building SME Inc. of Seattle

General contractor: Marpac Construction

Architect: Johnson Architecture and Planning

Engineers: Coughlin Porter Lundeen; Bush, Roed & Hitchings

Owner: Packard Building LLC

ABC members: Pacific Fire and Security, Prestige Communications, Platt Electric Supply, Sprint

The Packard Building, a design-build project on Seattle's Capitol Hill, has seven levels containing 56 apartments, 4,600 square feet of office, 5,000 square feet of retail, a parking garage and a rooftop garden. The project retained the historical north and west facades of the original 1911 building, known to locals as the Foley Sign Co.

A big challenge was routing the slab-on-grade and pressure-treated deck piping around the temporary steel that supported the historic facade while permanent structural components and upper floor levels were being built. SME used the facade to support overhead conduits for the temporary 480-volt service, which was out of the way of future construction activities.

Just prior to the rough-in of the second level post-tensioned deck, the owner was considering changing the use of the second floor from dwelling units to office space. To maintain some flexibility, SME proposed a plan that would facilitate either type of occupancy, and maintained the construction schedule. In the end, the space was used for offices with all electrical provi-

sions being used.

The owner's original budget required that SME find Energy Star fixtures that were available with a short lead time. Doing this provided an additional benefit to the owner by also meeting guidelines of the Seattle City Light Built Smart program — with savings estimated at more than 44,000 kilowatt hours per year for the building.

Placing the large electrical service gear and the un-fused service conduits throughout the building was complicated by the fact that the electrical room was one level up from the in-building Seattle City Light vault, and one level below the residential units.

SME concealed the un-fused service conduits in the parking garage with a concrete encasement similar to the structural columns. Its location between parking stalls did not impact or remove parking spaces.

Designing the layout of the 360-square-foot electrical room for the 2,500-amp switchboard, 68 meters, house and lighting control panels, standby service and communication backboards was tricky due to code clearances and conflicts from exposed plumbing lines serving the living units above.

There were no recordable injuries during the 19,885 hours worked on the project.