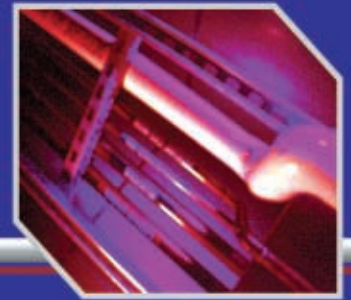




# LeDUC & DEXTER INC.

The Premier Plumbing Contractor In The North Bay



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## Message from LeDuc & Dexter

Our monthly newsletter is an opportunity to share information, education and promote our industry and customers. We feel that it is beneficial to provide a profile of the working relationships we enjoy with our customers and help to build new relationships for all of us in the construction industry. Bookmark our web site at [www.leducanddexterplumbing.com](http://www.leducanddexterplumbing.com) and click on [Subscribe to our Monthly Newsletter](#), then fill in name and e-mail address and that's it!

## Vintage Greens and The Color Purple

## RESIDENTIAL

Vintage Greens is true to its name, with a 4-acre park that features 2 large play structure areas, picnic tables and barbecues, a bocce ball court, a basketball court and lots of green grass. Add to that a separate soccer park with 5 playing fields, concessions facility, more picnic tables and barbecues and a parking area and you might call it a great place to play. Many people also think it's a great place to live. "Sales for homes are good – we have them priced right," states Martin Nelson, Vice President of Construction for Vintage Greens, Inc., builders of what will become 440 "Wine Country Homes", currently priced in the \$380,000 range.



Windsor's Vintage Greens community has a 4-acre park under construction with play structures in place. Homes in the background are occupied.

Vintage Greens is located in Windsor, west of Highway 101, bordered by Bell Road to the north, Windsor Road to the west and Windsor Golf Course is a neighbor to the south. So far 60 homes, with 4 different models, have been built and sold. 75 homes are under construction now. Completion of the entire project is a few years down the road.

Another unique feature of this community, aside from the park and soccer field, is the [irrigation program](#) set up by the Town of Windsor and Vintage Greens, Inc. Using recycled water from the Windsor Water Treatment Department, the park, the soccer fields and all of the homes that choose to participate, will be irrigated with recycled water. This will create a tremendous monetary saving to homeowners and water resource savings to the entire town. The recycled water is supplied free from the Town of Windsor.

LeDuc and Dexter's [residential department](#), managed by [Jim Kempers](#) is installing all of the plumbing for the homes, that includes water and sewer connections, rough plumbing, finish trim for toilets, tubs and sinks and installation of all gas lines. The recycled water lines for outside irrigation are separate from the potable water lines that LeDuc & Dexter are installing for in-home use. The recycled water pipes are clearly marked for safety, they are purple in color.

## Cool Caves for Wine

## COMMERCIAL / WINERIES

Radiant cooling in wine caves has two benefits according to Rob Main of [The Engineering Partnership](#). The tangible benefit is the cooling of air mass that allows even, low temperatures that discourage oxidation in the wine making process. The other benefit has to do with, in a roundabout way, marketing. Rob Main explains, "When a wine tour comes into a wine cave and they have a big noisy cooling unit overhead it kind of ruins the ambience. With radiant cooling it's all hidden in the floor and ceiling, it's a real wine cave." Caves are the rage in the winery industry for these two reasons, to keep the wine in a cool place and to keep the wine in, like, you know, a "cool place".

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## Cool Caves for Wine ... continued

It's really no joke. The very first thing that [Tom Toedter](#), Construction Manager for [Sonoma-Cutrer Vineyards](#), said when asked about their caves was, "When a tour group goes into the cave they don't know what to expect, then they see the barrels and the tour lights come up, it's really cool." There's that word again.

So how cool can a wine cave get, in terms of temperature. "We could set it up for a skating rink if we wanted to," says Main. When Sonoma-Cutrer decided to explore the cave idea they asked Main if he could make the temperature a steady 50 degrees, he said yes. "Then they asked if I could make it 48 degrees, I said yes, then they asked for 46 degrees and that's what they have." The steady air temperature with no air movement, which a cooling unit and fan produces, literally stops any chance of oxidation in the wine barrels and allows Sonoma-Cutrer to barrel age their Chardonnay for 2 to 3 years when they choose to do so. Sonoma-Cutrer's "cave" is actually an excavation down into a hill resulting in a subterranean environment with an 8 to 10 foot cover.

"Radiant Cooling is actually a simple system once you understand the science behind it," states Main, "you keep the air mass temperature constant without cold waves of air that cause temperature cycles, which in turn cause expansion and contraction that results in oxidation in the barrels." It sounds fairly simple, but what about the 30 miles of glycol piping, 14 pumps and the control units that LeDuc & Dexter's [commercial department](#) installed? All of the piping is now covered in the cement floor and ceiling slabs except the rather [sophisticated control area](#) in the west cellar, which doesn't look so simple.

LeDuc & Dexter's [Bill Zeeb](#) started this [design/build](#) project with Rob Main and The Engineering Partnership in 1995. The radiant cooling system was completed in 1996 and LeDuc & Dexter have continued working with Sonoma-Cutrer on their overall expansion project through this year.

LeDuc & Dexter have worked on radiant cooling systems with The Engineering Partnership at [Stryker Sonoma](#), [Nickel & Nickel Winery](#) and have recently completed the first phase of cave construction at Ladera Winery in Napa.



Sonoma-Cutrer's Grand Cru Cellar ceiling with radiant cooling pipes before the 8-inch concrete topping slab was poured.

## Safety Precedes Success

The ultimate success or failure of a business is determined by its profitability. There are many factors that determine profits and success. Safety is a big factor for success in the construction industry, but how much attention is given to safety on the job and what are the consequences? "Safety is a huge focus for us," states [Tom LeDuc](#). "If an employee is injured on the job it can affect their income, their personal life and family. They can't get the work done and then the customer is unhappy." In addition to these pitfalls there is the issue of Workers' Compensation costs. "In our industry the premiums have increased by 40% to 70% this year on the average. It's hurting everyone," says LeDuc.

On January 11<sup>th</sup> of this year, the North Coast Builders Exchange hosted its Workers' Compensation Trust Retreat at Paradise Ridge Winery in Santa Rosa. Workers' Comp Trustees were encouraged to invite field employees to attend in hopes of broadening the overall awareness of safety issues, claims, costs and resulting losses from injuries that occur on the job. Tom LeDuc, a Trustee, invited Kevin Delong, an employee since 1985, to attend with him. "I think it was a real eye-opener for him," reflects LeDuc. "I saw things from the employer's point of view," recalls Delong, a foreman, who is in the process of becoming an estimator in the [residential department](#).

This summer, LeDuc got what he was hoping for. After Delong had time to think over the opportunity, LeDuc appointed him Director of Safety for the company. Early on Delong asked LeDuc, "How far can I take this?" LeDuc answered, "As far as you feel is necessary." Aside from leading the weekly Monday morning Safety Meeting, Delong organized a Safety Committee. He selected key people from each department of the company: [Jim Hopper](#), Residential Superintendent; [Steve Garner](#), Warehouse Manager; [John Dunn](#), Commercial Superintendent and John "Zach" Zachensky of [Super Service](#). "Everyone on the committee moves around from job to job in their daily duties so they see what's going on from the safety standpoint also."

Some of the early goals that Delong and his committee have set for the Safety Program are: To understand and comply to OSHA safety standards, take safety suggestions from employees, report near misses on the job and make sure that employees look out for each other while working together on the job. An incentive program that rewards safety-minded employees with hand tools for personal use has been started.

LeDuc is adamant about safety on the job. At a recent Foreman Meeting he told those in attendance, "If you see a dangerous safety hazard on the job, I don't want you there. It needs to be reported and taken care of first." A safer company has a much greater opportunity to be a successful company.

## EDUCATION



Kevin Delong, with coffee in hand, goes over safety procedures during the weekly Monday morning LeDuc & Dexter safety meeting.