

Seeing Is Believing

New Ductmate Observation Access Door Offers Larger Viewing Area



Many new healthcare facilities are coming on line offering specialized care unheard of just a few years ago. The new James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute, part of the OSU Wexner Medical Center Columbus, Ohio, is one such facility, and will expand access to world-class cancer care in central Ohio.

The new cancer facility is expected to help meet a projected 21-percent increase in patient admissions over the next 10 years. The facility features fully equipped rooms that allow patients to receive nearly all of their care in the comfort of their own rooms, and include adjoining areas where loved ones can stay, sleep and shower, keeping families together.

The new cancer center is 1.1 million ft² and 22 stories tall. It will cost \$1.1 billion and has an expected completed date in 2014.

Bard, Rao + Athanas Consulting Engineers, LLC (BR+A) headquartered in Watertown, Massachusetts provides state-of-the-art integrated and coordinated mechanical services for state of the art health facilities. They have responsibility for the specification of the facility's mechanical system and are aiming for LEED Silver Certification on this project.

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The OSU Wexner Medical Center in Columbus, Ohio is a 1.1 million square foot facility. It has been outfitted with over 200 Ductmate Observation Doors.

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**Jim Zeigler - Sheet Metals Trade Manager
The Limbach Company**

Kurt Scheeren, Principle at BR+A said their goals for the ducting are to keep leakage to a minimum and simplify ongoing maintenance once the project was completed. "The specifications called for humidifiers, smoke and fire dampers and other equipment in specific locations throughout the facility ductwork," said Scheeren. "Since the equipment is located within the ductwork, it is impossible to make inspections short of removing the access doors. Scheeren said that each time a duct access door is removed it opens the possibility of introducing contaminants into the duct system, and that presents a danger for a healthcare facility.

To solve this problem Scheeren specified observation type access doors to allow fast and easy monitoring without the need of shutting the air handler down. He said the observation access doors specified on their projects are those from Ductmate Industries.

Carr Supply, Inc. in Columbus Ohio is a distributor for Ductmate products, and the supplier for the OSU Wexner Medical Center. Chris Brandt, Commercial HVAC Division Sales Manager for Carr said this project is the first time the new 16" by 12" has been used for a duct project. "Ductmate has been selling an observation door with a smaller viewport for many years," said Brandt. "The duct designers wanted a larger observation door and we brought the request to Ductmate." Brandt said Ductmate agreed to research the request, eventually coming out with a larger observation door. The unit successfully passed the leakage test to 10" W.G. with minimal leakage.

Ductmate's Double Paned Observation Access Door measures 16" x 12" with an extra-large 8" x 8" viewing port. It consists of two layers of precision stamped hot-dipped 22 gauge galvanized steel with double pane safety glass. A closed cell neoprene gasket with a service temperature range of -20°F to 200°F is used for the near air-tight seal. The gasket is permanently bonded to the inside of both panels to eliminate leakage.

Ductmate has seen the need grow for inspection of internal high pressure ducting by customers and engineers. This is specifically true for IAQ critical applications like hospitals, clean rooms, pharmaceuticals and laboratories to eliminate the danger of dust contaminating the inside of the duct. The larger viewing port makes it convenient for inspections, and the door can be removed quickly should access be needed.

Jim Zeigler is Sheet Metals Trade Manager for The Limbach Company, the mechanical contractor for the facility. He said Ductmate Industries was selected as the supplier for observation doors as well as other sandwich access doors. "Historically we have used Ductmate products for all types of ductwork installation," commented Zeigler. "They make superior duct products that are easier to install than other types. Their new observation access door has virtually no leakage while providing a larger viewing area." Zeigler said many of the observation doors on this project are located on medium to high pressure duct runs. He has used other observation systems but most are difficult to make leak proof.

Zeigler is also partial to Ductmate access doors because of their fast installation. "We are a union shop so our cost of labor is high and a critical factor in maintaining our profitability," said Zeigler. "We are always looking to new processes and equipment that can minimize our labor cost, and Ductmate's access doors, including the observation door, reduces our installation time by 25%." Zeigler pointed out that other access doors require more steps and higher worker skills to install their doors properly. With the Ductmate door you simply attach the adhesive template, make the required cuts, slip the sandwich assembly in place and tighten the knobs.

In all over 200 of the double pane observation access doors were specified, and all have exceeded performance expectations.

