

VILLA PLUMBING AND HEATING HAS WORKED FOR CLIENTS ACROSS THE VICTORIA REGION

**Quality & Professionalism
Keys To Plumbing Firm's
Success**

NORTH SAANICH – Providing a consistent level of quality workmanship in a professional manner is at the heart of every job **Villa Plumbing And Heating Ltd.** undertakes – whether at a multi-storey residential development, or for the owner of a single family home. For company President **Rich Castillo** the size of the job isn't what matters, what does is doing the job right every time.

"You'd have to say that I've come to this business quite naturally as my father was also a plumber. In fact I believe his father was also a plumber back when he lived in South America, which was long before my time," Castillo explained.

"I was told that back in his native Uruguay a plumber also had to be an engineer, so he had been in school a long time just to become a plumber. My father took that experience and immigrated to Canada, first to Toronto where I was born and then later here. We moved to Victoria when I was 12, so I really grew up in this area."

While coming from a long line of plumbers, Villa Plumbing And Heating is not the continuance of an entity started by his predecessors, but a wholly new firm Castillo launched in 2006. Prior to opening his own business he had worked for about nine years for another plumbing contractor, where he learned the business quite literally from the ground up.

"I became a Red Seal certified plumber and eventually a foreman for my previous employer, where I learned a great deal about the plumbing business. It was a terrific experience as I ran a



Rich Castillo is the President and founder of Villa Plumbing And Heating which was first launched in 2006

"My employees are the heart of the company, but it's also very important to have a happy crew."

RICH CASTILLO
PRESIDENT, VILLA PLUMBING AND HEATING LTD.

number of large jobs for them, such as on many different multi-family developments. This really allowed me to learn about the commercial side of the industry, which of course has helped me operate my own business," he explained.

For Castillo owning his own business had always been a long term goal, but he recognized that he needed to gain practical experience, and to develop fundamental business skills before launching his own venture. "I knew when the time was right, but really needed to learn the business in detail before feeling confident enough to take that final step," he said.

"In reality I did it at the worst time possible, I had just had a new



Key to the success of Villa Plumbing And Heating is the skills and experience of its team of plumbers and technicians



Villa Plumbing And Heating works throughout the Capital Region, for everyone from homeowners to developers

baby, had just bought a house and had no income. But someone told me that if you weren't willing to quit your job right now

and commit 100 per cent to your business you're never going to do it – so I actually quit that night and started Villa Plumbing. It

was very much a leap of faith, but one that I've never regretted." Presently located in **West Sidney Business Park** in a



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Villa Plumbing And Heating has had a tremendous amount of experience working on large scale condo projects

combination workshop and administrative centre, Villa Plumbing And Heating has been the featured plumbing and heating contractor on a wide variety of projects located throughout the Greater Victoria area during the past 12 years. The company currently has a staff count of eight, supported by a small fleet of service vehicles.

“The hiring of people to work with is very important to me. I always try to hire guys who I think will properly represent the company, in a way they are my ambassadors so I want them to be able to present themselves well when in the public,” he said.

“My employees are the heart of the company, but it’s also very important to have a happy crew. I want people who can work well together, who enjoy working together. If I hire someone and they don’t get along with everybody then they’re not going to last very long. If the guys are happy they’re going to do good work and the customer will be happy. That’s how you build a business.”

The firm has employed its specialized services for everything from high end custom homes, to multi-unit condominium and townhouse projects, working in concert with most of the city’s top builders and developers, including **Yushi Developments**, **Lotus Project Management** and **Hughes Construction Ltd.**, just to name a very few.

“I decided to go out on my own about 12 years ago now, with a real focus on entering the local condo market. At the time this sector offered a lot more work than the residential side did. Our first job as Villa Plumbing was at The Promenade which is a 12-unit mixed development built by **Casa Projects Inc.**, with **Scott Davies** (Cube Project Management Ltd.) which I still work for today,” Castillo said.

“We worked in the small condo market for a while, then suddenly I was finding myself busy looking after residential houses, so you’d have to say that we’ll work anywhere, for anyone. It’s very much the case of no job too small or too large.”

Since opening its doors in 2006 Villa Plumbing And Heating has earned a solid reputation for its skills and ability to handle jobs of any size. One key to the company’s success has been a willingness to service both the residential and commercial markets with equal professionalism. During 2017 for example Villa Plumbing worked on no less than 83 houses.

“Because of my background, which involved working on both light commercial and heavy residential projects, we’re not afraid to tackle any sized job. Wherever the work takes us we’ll go. Three years ago for example we completed a 56 unit condominium project called The Boulevard for **Kang and Gill Construction** which was certainly one of our bigger projects,” Castillo explained.

Thanks to its flexibility and experience Villa Plumbing And Heating has become the ‘go-to’ plumbing and heating contractor for a number of the city’s leading general contractors including Lamont Land Inc., an Alberta

based development firm with holdings all across Vancouver Island. “We’ve been working for them for over 10 years now. In fact right now we’re working on a 90 unit townhouse project in Sooke,” he said.

“We’re also working on Latoria Rise in Langford, which consists of 48 distinctive new homes, which is essentially a designer community modeled after similar developments in Vancouver. We’re working with **Langdon Weir Construction** on this project which is a very important assignment for us. **Adam Weir** and **Chris Langdon** are really doing an exceptional job there,” he said.

Working in concert with larger developers on major projects for extended periods is the preferred business model for Villa Plumbing. For Castillo, knowing he can keep his crews busy and fully employed removes some of the pressure that comes from operating a business in a market as busy as Victoria’s.

“I enjoy working with the bigger builders and developers on multi-family projects. While we definitely do residential work, especially for our builders and developers if they ask us to, we don’t do a lot of regular plumbing service work. That’s not to say we won’t but we definitely don’t go looking for work of that type,” he said.

“When you have so many guys you need those anchor jobs to keep them working, typically we could have three or four jobs of this type on the go at any one time. We also work for a number of builders who do custom single family homes, so we can have one or two guys leave the major worksite, take care of that job and then return to the condo project or whatever. That way I know I can keep my guys working.”

A third generation plumber with the trade part of his genetic makeup, the owner of a successful contracting business for the past 12 years, Rich Castillo looks forward to what the future and the busy Victoria market has to offer. Having built his company to a size that he finds comfortable to operate, he has no immediate plans to expand his business or

to open an office outside of the Capital Region.

“You know I’m pretty happy with the size of the company as it is now. It’s the right size to be easily controllable and we’re not so large that quality and customer service will suffer. I honestly think if we got too much bigger the whole thing would become too cumbersome,” he said.

“At present we get to work on 80 to 90 houses a year which is plenty to keep us busy so I’m happy with that. Whatever combination works best, a condo project and fewer houses, or more houses and less multi-family. Thanks to our experience and the skills of my guys we can take on any size or scale of project so we can always keep working.”

Another of the keys to the success of the company, especially after having been in business for 12 years, is the increasing number of repeat and referral projects it takes on – work that is becoming an ever more important part of Villa Plumbing’s regular workload.

“We certainly get a lot of work through word of mouth – we seldom do much in the way of advertising. So having someone recommend us, or ask us back to do something else really is high praise, and I guess a sign that we’re doing our job right. After all that’s what it’s all about,” Castillo explained.

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