



The Buzz

E-Newsletter

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The sign says it all. At the very top of a list of lifestyle features, geothermal heating and cooling is listed as Woodland Creek's main attraction. For many, it's a sure indicator of what the future holds in new home construction.

Located within the thriving community of Sooke, BC, Canada, phase five of Woodland Creek offers a temperate rainforest climate, stunning scenery and three geothermal holes per home – homes that are built with Mother Earth in mind.

"It's so important for today's developers and contractors to use sustainable practices and offer homeowners green energy saving options, like geothermal heating and cooling," says Blair Robertson, of Totangi Properties Ltd., who initially conceived the concept of Woodland Creeks 10 years ago. "Until very recently, it seemed that they were only available to developments with big price tags. Being able to create both an Earth-friendly and affordable neighbourhood, like Woodland Creek, has been a long term goal for us."

For real estate developers, geothermal can certainly offer a unique attraction for potential buyers but, in some cases, it also comes with its share of challenges – all depending on the ground below. In the case of Woodland Creek, the drilling began with a conventional mud rotary rig which encountered extremely difficult conditions. This resulted in only one hole being drilled in a three week period. GeoTility, the geothermal provider, then made the decision to engage Sonic Drilling Ltd. to complete the drilling program.

While it's common for the sonic drill to be called in as a "rescue rig," its performance at Woodland Creek became a project life saver. The sonic was able to drill three to four 115 ft. holes per day, making it many times faster and allowing the project to actually be completed. Without the sonic rig, there was no economically viable way to drill at this location which would have prevented the completion of the geothermal installations. In this instance, the contractor opted for the newer smaller-sized, track-mounted sonic rig which allowed for easy access in a restricted space.

"Sonic drilling technology allows the drilling industry to take advantage of more opportunities," says Ray Roussy, developer and patent holder of the now-famous sonic drill head and president of the Sonic Drill Corporation. "By reducing on-site costs and increasing profit margins, more companies are able to grow their geothermal divisions and, most importantly, drill in areas that were impossible in the past because of challenging terrain."

Sonic Drill Lost in Japan's Tsunami



A specialized horizontal sonic drill rig, manufactured by Tone Boring, was lost in Japan's recent tsunami. There were no reports on any loss of life associated with the drilling crew.

Tone Boring is licensed by the Sonic Drill Corporation to serve the Asian marketplace. It manufactures the same patented drill head as those manufactured by its developer, Ray Roussy.

The photo above shows the aftermath of the tsunami which damaged Tone Boring's Sendai City facility and office vehicles but did not cause any loss of life amongst the staff. Tone Boring has indicated that it will be involved in the rebuilding of the area, using a sonic drill rig, especially in regards to infrastructure, water supply protection and geotechnical applications.

All of the staff at Sonic Drill Corporation and Sonic Drilling Ltd. extend their deepest condolences to the people of Japan over the loss of life in this devastating disaster.

New Track Rig Already Hard at Work



Sonic Drilling Ltd.'s new track-mounted rig has been hard at work since it arrived in January, 2011. Clients, from various industries such as geothermal installations and environmental investigations, have welcomed the rig's ability to access difficult locations and work on soft soils.

Bill Fitzgerald, general manager of Sonic Drilling Ltd., says the new track-mounted rig has already completed a dozen or so projects and will soon be headed north for an environmental project in Kitimat, BC..

In the photo above, the rig is pictured working in the Woodland Creek geothermal community, located in Sooke, BC. Sonic rigs are a preferred choice for geothermal installations due to their case, loop and grout in one operation. Sonic rigs are also known around the world for their speed, especially in hard-to-drill overburden conditions.