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Thermique heated glass is a UL-approved technology that met the restaurant's aesthetic requirements.

Restaurant Patrons Toast to Heated Glass

CHALLENGE: Patrons of the Durango, Colo. Mahogany Grille appreciated the view, but not the drafty tables by the restaurant's windows.

CRITERIA: The front windows of the establishment provide an excellent view of the city's scenic downtown. Unfortunately, they also created problems when it came down to keeping the restaurant warm and comfortable, especially in winter. Customers would regularly request a table away from the windows, despite the view. Even so, cold air from the windows would often find them. "We had a real problem with drafts," admitted Rod Barker, owner of the Strater Hotel and Mahogany Grille.

INFLUENCES: Since the Grille is in an historic building, originally built in 1887, a retrofit project could not alter the authentic period appearance of the window or building. Adding fans, motors or ductwork was not an option.

SOLUTION: Thermique heated glass was the UL-approved technology that could meet the aesthet-

ics requirement. There was absolutely no change in the appearance of the building.

Operating the heated windows is a one-step process. When employees turn on the lights to the restaurant, they also flip on the heated glass with an ordinary wall switch. In addition to the on/off switch, there is a controller concealed behind a small wall panel. Floor managers can use the controller to raise or lower the temperature of the glass as desired. Based on the controller setting, glass temperatures can range from 70°F to 105°F.

The heated glass eliminated chilly air and cold drafts caused by the old, leaky windows. Barker was skeptical, but soon realized his new windows were a complete success. "If we didn't have heated windows, we'd have to turn up the heat to the entire restaurant," Barker noted. Twelve months after the installation, Barker says it was a wise investment for the restaurant. Eliminating the uncomfortably cold area near the windows has increased the floor space available to customers for dining.

In addition to keeping customers warm, the glass offers the added benefit of condensation control. The Grille's front windows will never fog up or frost while the heat is on, so guests will always have a clear view through the glass.

All complaints—about the draft, anyway—have disappeared, and patrons no longer shy away from the restaurant's front windows. The staff even takes pride in showing off the windows to new customers, and they are now the most requested seats in the house. "We've taken a negative and turned it into a positive," said Barker.

Mahogany Grille was the first restaurant in North America to adopt heated glass technology for windows. Installation was complete in a single morning before the restaurant opened so the project did not have any effect on normal business hours. According to Barker, heated glass technology has performed exactly as promised. "The glass has been perfect," he said. "Any new restaurant in a cold climate would be crazy not to plan for it and get it done." Visit www.thermique technologies.com or Circle 374.