



In With the New At LAX



Plumbers Michelle Payan and Albert Colin.

■ **LAX's new Construction Division builds new bathrooms during Terminals 1 project.**

Story by Carlos Gomez and Gary Arso, LAX Construction Division; Photos by Alive! staff

AIRPORTS — A little over a year ago, Airports established a new Construction Division. Superintendent India Griffin hired us -- Gary Arso and Carlos Gomez, both Construction and Maintenance Supervisors Level 2 -- to manage this section. Although the Construction Division has been busy during 2007 with many projects throughout the airport, the primary focus has been

on Terminals 1 and 6, which are part of the CTA (Central Terminal Area) Rehabilitation Program.

During the past 12 months at Terminal 1, nearly 40,000 square feet of carpet was replaced; more than 16,000 square feet of travertine was honed and polished; and more than 60,000 square feet of ceiling tile was replaced. The construction crews have been extremely busy at Terminals 1 and 6 repairing, replacing or adding plumbing lines, plumbing fixtures, air conditioning ducts, flooring (both ceramic and carpet), lighting, painting and remodeling the men and women's restrooms. When we talk about remodeling a restroom, we are talking about completely demolishing the old and starting from the ground up. The Construction crew makes safety its number one priority, followed very closely by hitting the set deadline.

The first phase of remodeling a set of restrooms was the demolition. Foreman Adan Gonzalez and his demolition crew started by removing the existing partitions, walls and ceilings, and they busted out the floor by using several jackhammers. The demolition crew can usu-

ally complete this part of the job in about a week. It is amazing to see how rapidly this crew can go into demolition mode and have everything hauled out in such a short period of time.

Hauling the material out was one step, but hauling the material away was another project in itself. The Construction Division depended very heavily on the assistance of Airports' recycling section, run by Superintendent Thomas McHugh and Airport Maintenance Supervisor Dave Takemoto. During the demolition phase, it was not uncommon to have a 40-yard trash bin hauled out full every day.

After the demolition was completed, the plumbers came in and removed the old fixtures. All the restrooms needed to have the old sewer lines replaced; this was accomplished by using a jackhammer to break up the concrete to expose the old lines, and replace them with new cast-iron lines. Plumbing Foreman Robert Bustamante and his crew also replaced the hot and cold water lines, installed new valves, and replaced fire sprinklers. The urinals, toilets and sinks were replaced with automated valves and



One of the beautifully renovated bathrooms in Terminal 1.



From left: Construction and Maintenance Supervisor Gary Arso; Construction and Maintenance Supervisor Carlos Gomez; and Angel Gomez, Club Member Services Manager.



Construction and Maintenance Second Level Carlos A. Gomez points out a design element to Club Member Services Manager Angel Gomez (middle) and Construction and Maintenance Second Level Supervisor Gary Arso (left).



From left: Carpenter Foreman Adan Gonzalez; Carpenter Foreman Martin Morton; and Electrician Foreman Kirk Nelson.

low water consumption fixtures.

Airports construction crews also relied on the assistance of Plumber Supervisor Hart Brauer and his crew. Hart knows the plumbing system better than anyone at LAX, and his expertise on knowing what valves to shut off or what model of a fixture to use made the Construction Section's job run very smoothly.

Carpenter Foreman Marty Morton and his crew were responsible for framing the restrooms as per the blue prints. The crew removed the old studs and replaced them with new ones, added backing for partitions and counter tops, and framed openings for items including baby changing stations, trash receptacles and automated paper towel dispensers. After they set the tile, they installed all the accessories and made sure everything was ADA-compliant. Bill Vasquez, Senior Carpenter, was a key element in assisting the newly formed Construction Division. When the Construction Division first started out, he was our go-to guy because he knows who all the vendors are and where everything is, and the operational practices used at LAX. Billy assisted us in getting material on short notice and went above and beyond what anyone could expect.

Kirk Nelson, Electrical Foreman, and his crew had the task of installing several conduit runs to supply power to all the automated fixtures. The

electricians also replaced the old lighting with new energy efficient lighting systems. Instrument Shop Supervisor John Dever worked very closely with the Construction Division electricians in installing as well as having the Fire Life and Safety strobes tested and inspected.

Construction Paint Foreman Robert Louis and his crew were responsible for taping all the joints, and laying down the primer and finish coats of paint. The paint crew took tremendous pride in the work that they accomplished, and it shows in their quality of work. Paint Supervisor Michael D'Avirro was very beneficial in assisting the Construction Divisions painters. Mike and his staff helped in correctly identifying the standard colors used at LAX, which was a tremendous help to the Construction Division.

Airports Construction Division is very fortunate to have three fantastic Tile Setters -- Jose Franco, Florenzo Casarez and Martin Patin, who were assisted by a core of helpers who prepare

the walls and floors for the new ceramic tile. The tile setters and helpers had a very grueling task. On average, each set of restrooms uses 300 94-pound sacks of "mud." This "mud" had to be mixed and hauled to each restroom via a wheelbarrow. It took about four weeks to complete the tile installation.

On any given day, the amount of materials ordered for these projects to run smooth was pretty incredible. We could not meet the deadlines if not for the support we received from our Purchasing Department.

Gwynn Menefield, Graciela Almada, and Patresea Buckley assisted in generating all the paperwork needed to keep us running smoothly.

It took a complete team effort for the Construction Division to succeed, and we would like to thank everyone here at LAX for allowing us to be part of the Airports family.



In one of the renovated bathrooms in Terminal 1 are (from left) Jose Franco, Tile Setter Foreman, 2 years of City service; Carlos Gomez, Second Construction Maintenance Supervisor, 24 years of City service; and Adan Gonzalez, Carpenter Foreman, 1.5 years of City service.

