



Wetwall™
— A WILSONART COMPANY —

WETWALL CASE STUDY

Colorado Mesa University Residence Hall Bathrooms | Grand Junction, CO

With their modern aesthetic and ease of maintenance, Wetwall™ Waterproof Wall Panel Systems proved to be the ideal solution for bathrooms in a new residence hall.

When Grand Junction Junior College first opened its doors in 1925 in a small high-desert town nestled between the Colorado River and the world's largest flat-topped mountain, it enrolled just 39 students and offered seven classes.



COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY

PROJECT TYPE

University Residence Hall Construction

LOCATION

Colorado Mesa University
Grand Junction, CO
coloradomesa.edu

ARCHITECT

Design West Architects
Salt Lake City, UT
designwestarchitects.com

GENERAL CONTRACTOR

FCI Constructors
Grand Junction, CO
fciol.com

INSTALLER

Seitz Trim Company
Grand Junction, CO

PRODUCT

Wetwall™ in Larisis Marble

When Colorado Mesa University constructed its new residence hall, it turned to Wetwall™ Waterproof Wall Panel Systems for a modern aesthetic, high durability, and ease of maintenance.

Grand Junction Junior College, as the university was known at the time of its opening, first welcomed students in 1925. Located in a small high-desert town nestled between the Colorado River and the world's largest flat-topped mountain, it enrolled just 39 students and offered seven classes.

Over the last century, the school has grown considerably in both campus size and student body.

Enrollment first exceeded 1,000 students in 1961. The school rebranded itself to Mesa State College in 1988, then did so again in 2011 when it achieved university status, updating its name to Colorado Mesa University—CMU—as it is now known.

Today, 10,000 students and counting matriculate on CMU's 141-acre campus in Grand Junction, CO, with roughly 2,000 living in residence halls.

As the institution has grown, so has the need for on-campus housing to better serve the increasing undergraduate population. New college housing construction cannot be the spartan block-wall dorms of years past. Prospective students and families desire modern amenities that provide comfort and wellbeing on the educational journey. But university maintenance teams also have practical needs of these facilities: durable, resilient materials that offer longevity, utility, and easy upkeep.

CMU's recent addition of an apartment wing to its residential Wingate Hall, offers a first-hand look at how the Wetwall™ Waterproof Wall Panel System serves both of those needs as a material that is luxurious and attractive, yet rugged and easy to maintain.





① PREP

Prepare existing wall surfaces and remove rough plumbing and fitting.

② DRY FIT

Perform a rough dry fit for each panel, mark seam locations and mark drill plumbing locations.

③ ADHERE

Apply adhesive to the panel and work from back wall panels to wing panels to finishing and trim if needed.

④ SEAL

Apply the color-coordinated sealant to all corners, seams between panels, and gaps between top and bottom panels.

For more detailed instructions, see our [Wetwall Installation Guidelines](#).

KEEPING WATER AT BAY WITHOUT THE GROUT

Wingate Hall's expansion features a new four-story wing that serves 140 second-year students across 42 apartments, each equipped with its own bathroom designed to serve up to 4 students living in each apartment.

Architects know when it comes to building materials specification, they're often left with a choice: aesthetics or performance. Prioritizing looks often comes at the sacrifice of some performance qualities, or vice versa. This doesn't have to be the case, however.

Wetwall is the modern alternative to tile. This waterproof panel system is designed specifically for high-moisture and high-traffic areas, like residence hall bathrooms. The panels feature dozens of design options, a tongue-and-groove seaming system with no grout needed, scratch and scuff resistance, antimicrobial protection, an easy-to-clean surface, and a lightweight

construction that makes installation fast and easy.

"Wetwall checked all our boxes," said Jamie Cox, CMU's Capital Projects Manager. "Cleanability is our number one priority in college dorms. One of the issues we had with previous installations in residence hall bathrooms was simply that the more seams and joints we had, the more opportunity there is for water to get behind the shower walls and cause problems."

Cox and the university's decision-makers knew they wanted to avoid tile or stone products to reduce the number of seams in the shower surrounds and prevent maintenance issues and potential mold growth. The original specification for the project, however, did not include Wetwall but rather a different solid surface material.

Larry Hepworth of Salt Lake City-based Design West Architects, the architectural team on the project, was familiar with Wetwall and suggested it as an alternative.

“What drove us was looking for a product that could meet the demands of several criteria,” Hepworth explained. “First of all was durability. Second was looks. And third was being watertight. You have four students using the shower and typically not wiping it down or regularly cleaning it. So we wanted to make sure it wouldn’t cause water penetration issues with mold.”

Cox and her team were impressed. “It’s an interesting construction,” she said, “and we had never seen anything like it. It’s a little bit more of a modern-looking approach to a residence hall bathroom. In our opinion it was a far superior product.”

They selected Larisis Marble, a classic Italian marble-look finish with low contrast and gray veining, for a clean, modern shower surround aesthetic.

SPEED AND EASE, WITH LOOKS THAT PLEASE

The performance features and clean looks of Wetwall were the primary appeal. The fact that it is readily available with a lead time of just two weeks, and that it installs significantly faster than tile, were also both key considerations for the project’s tight timeline.

“We were able to construct this apartment building in 14 months start to finish,” said Cox. “That was an incredible feat, and the short lead time for Wetwall played a part in that.”

For installation, Wetwall can be quickly and easily cut and adhered with standard tools and supplies. It can even be installed over existing tile or solid surface, without the need for messy and time-consuming demolition.

“We liked the fact that you can cut the product to the shape and size of each shower and be able to make that work that way,” Hepworth said. “The speed of the installation helped keep the project within budget, and the installation subcontractor did a really great job—the shower surrounds look really clean and attractive.”

Nate Seitz, owner of Seitz Trim Company, a custom millworker based in Grand Junction, handled the installation of all shower surrounds.

While Seitz employed an assistant to help speed his process, he noted that Wetwall installation is easily a one-man job.

“With Wetwall, I can do one shower in less than an hour,” Seitz said. “If you’re tiling, it’s a day-and-a-half job. It’s significantly faster.”



CONCLUSION

The successful implementation of Wetwall at Wingate Hall underscores its value as a versatile and reliable alternative to traditional tile and stone, not to mention a superior over other solid surfaces that don't offer the same level of moisture protection. Its waterproof, grout-free design simplifies maintenance while meeting the demands for durability and aesthetics.

For CMU, Wetwall was not just a material choice but a strategic investment in the long-term quality and functionality of its facilities. It is proving to be such a success that Cox noted the school is considering it for another campus project—the renovation of a tiled locker room.

As schools like Colorado Mesa University continue to improve accommodations for student populations, the need for innovative building solutions will only increase. Wetwall's performance in the Wingate Hall expansion demonstrates that it is well-equipped to meet these demands, providing a perfect blend of beauty, durability, and ease of maintenance.

In doing so, it helps create living environments that enhance the student experience, ensuring that the university's facilities are as resilient and forward-thinking as the institution itself.

Wetwall Features & Benefits



PATENTED WATERPROOF PANEL SYSTEM

Installs seamlessly with customizable tongue and-groove panels & color-coordinated sealant.



DARING DESIGNS

Looks like marble, stone or wood—including abstract patterns—and weighs a lot less.



SCRATCH- AND SCUFF-RESISTANT AEON™ TECHNOLOGY

Does double duty: works hard in busy bathrooms & looks luxe longer.



ANTIMICROBIAL PROTECTION

Inhibits the growth of bacteria, mold and mildew, cleans easily and won't wash off.



SPEEDY INSTALLATION & DELIVERY

In hand in 2 weeks, in the bathroom in 2.5 hours. Plus, exceptional, reliable service.



Learn how Wetwall can transform your commercial project at www.wetwall.com/inspired-ideas

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