

Free Roof

San Diego RCA Donates a Re-Roof Project to Charity

by Gary Gilmore, Roofing Supply Group

Over 25 years ago the San Diego Roofing Contractors Association (SDRCA) banded together to donate a free roof to charity. They have done this every year since 1985 for different charities as the needs arose. This year was no different, except we ended up back on a project we did 23 years ago, with the Western Service Workers Association (WSWA).

WSWA is all-volunteer and takes no government funding. WSWA members organize a free-of-charge, self-help 11-point Benefit Program including emergency food, clothing, preventive medical care, a membership newspaper, legal benefits, and more. Over the years we have been monitoring the performance of the three roof types, Elastomeric, APP (smooth) w/aluminum coating, and BUR (mineral surface) that had been installed on the WSWA building here in San Diego. Apparently, I was the one name that was kept in the file for roofing and have been called out when there's been a need. Preventative maintenance in Southern California is pretty much non-existent as it never rains in California. *Western Roofing* was on-site to report on the original reroofing project for the July/August 1987 issue, and then printed a follow-up report exactly ten years later on the condition of the three-roof system in the July/August 1997 issue.

Early this year was like no other, when WSWA asked me for help they had just completed a major interior remodeling project, all of which was donated, and the rains were causing damage. I quickly pointed out the obvious problems, all not related to the roof systems; plaster, neighbors siding common walls, and the list went on. The community came together and fixed these problems which now left the aged roof systems. I knew that

the SDRCA had yet to find a project for this year, so I presented the WSWA project it to the BOD. It was approved to pursue the project.

It's amazing to me how the doors open when an opportunity presents itself. To me single ply was the answer and I thought about doing three different systems again so we could monitor their performance. Then I thought about the name on file to call, me, and quickly decided one system one manufacture was the answer. The size of the project was a little over 3,600 sq. ft. plus parapets, not a small task. I looked to our manufacturer members of the SDRCA. GAF said they would submit for the complete project with the exception of the roof board and fasteners. Randy Swank and Michael Kearney with GAF were granted approval as well as Tom Littell with Secrock and Jeff Reinke with OMG to provide the materials needed.

I presented the complete package to the SDRCA BOD and it was decided to try this as a thermoplastic polyolefin (TPO) training course. I mentioned this to Swank and the possibility of getting the Center for the Advancement of Roofing Excellence (CARE) involved was now in motion. Jason Joplin with CARE was on board and excited about the project. They usually train around a mock-up in the classroom. I think Joplin's excitement was the fact he was going to get to work outside. All kidding aside, Joplin and everyone involved in the training are at the top of their game. It was an honor to work alongside them.

Additional contributors to the project were Assembly Supplies, Co. (Leister Varimat); Thunderbird Products, Inc., fabricate clad metal; Hawthorne Rent-It Service, generator; RSG San Diego, dumpster and misc.; and Progressive Focus Photographic, production photographs.

Class Begins

We had structured the training around two four-hour shifts per day, which would include six students in each shift. Class starts with safety first

and then the objective for the shift. Our goal was to have everyone that attended have hands on experience with each phase of the application, which was to overlay the existing system with Securock mechanically attached and to mechanically attach GAF Everguard 45 mil TPO. Let me tell you if you are one of those that takes the tools of days past to the game you will lose. OMG put it to the test. "Machine versus Man," Accutrak and one man, versus three men setting screws and plates and running a screw gun. The men were still, shall we say, "screwing around" while the Accutrak was headed to the bank. The Accutrak also out performed with the membrane attachment.

All was going well until we were to put the Varimat into production. I had no idea there are so many types of electrical connectors. It appears every time I pick up a generator, a new plug type has been designed. Did you know that with a Leister Varimat and ideal conditions, you can weld membrane at 39' per minute? I cannot say enough about having the right tools for the job.

The WSWA provided lunch both days as well as cold drinks and for this we are grateful. However, this might be why we didn't finish the project on time. After settling down to enjoy a full meal, it was difficult to kick it back into high gear.

I would like to thank the contractors that supported our project: Award Roof Services, ARC Roofing, California Roof Services, Promark Roofing, RSI Roofing, Sully-Jones, and Top Line Roofing with a total of 15 students. Finally, I would like to extend a special thank you to David Susi, RSI Roofing. At the last minute, he sent his crew to complete the project. This was truly a roofing community effort, and in that spirit, I would like to close by saying, "Remember those that support your industry by supporting them."

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