

Reroofing Yellowstone

Old Faithful Lodge Kitchen Gets a New TPO Roof

by Marc Dodson, editor

In 1872, this country had not yet to see its first centennial, yet a small group of visionaries lobbied Congress and succeeded in establishing Yellowstone as the first national park in the world. It was an entirely new concept... set aside public land for the American people to preserve and protect for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.

Yellowstone National Park is huge. While the majority of the park is located in Wyoming, it also spreads into Idaho and Montana. The park encompasses 3,486 square miles, larger than the states of Delaware and Rhode Island combined. Best known for its wildlife and geothermal features, Yellowstone also offers vistas, mountain ranges, valleys, forests, lakes, and rivers.

Half of the world's geothermal features can be found in Yellowstone. Perhaps the most famous is Old Faithful Geyser, discharging 3,700 to 8,400 gallons of boiling water 105 to 185 feet into the air every 60 to 90 minutes. Quite an attraction... and the reason that the Old Faithful Lodge sits just east of the geyser, offering a spectacular unobstructed view. Originally built in 1923 with major additions in 1927, the lodge is part of the Old Faithful Historic District.

Regular maintenance is a must for these old buildings. Situated at over 7,300 feet in elevation, the winter temperatures can drop below 0° and several feet of snow routinely accumulate on the structures. These roofs take a beating.

When it can time to reroof a portion of the lodge, Quality Roofing, Bozeman, Mont. was contacted. Quality Roofing is no stranger to Yellowstone, having reroofed numerous structures within the park over the

last 30 years. K.C. Barnhardt of Quality Roofing states, "Working in the park is great, but it can be a real challenge. You better plan everything and check your supplies. If you're missing a screw, it's three to four hours to get to a hardware store and back."

The reroof project this time was the kitchen area, a later addition with a low-slope roof, attached but located behind the main structure. The 7,500 square foot area was reroofed using Firestone 75-mil Reinforced EPDM. Additionally, there were seven grease fans that required special attention. Each was flashed with a 60-mil sacrificial Firestone TPO Sheet with an additional five feet around each one to protect the EPDM roof system. Quality Roofing crews also installed copper flashings around the chimneys.

The insulation was fully adhered with Firestone insulation adhesive, as was the roofing system. During the winter, the roof is accessed by maintenance crews with snow shovels to keep the snow load under control. Snow shovels might catch on a screw plate, and fully adhering the insulation along with the roof system will help eliminated that problem.

Barnhardt notes, "This was a well-coordinated effort and everything worked out fine. We completed the job on time and there was no interruption of kitchen service." The kitchen complex of the Old Faithful Lodge should remain secure and watertight for years to come. ●●●