

FiberTite®

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Orange County Convention Center – Orlando, Florida

Massive Roofing Project Poses Unique Challenges At Convention Center In Orlando. At almost 1.5 million square feet, in terms of big roofing projects, the size alone is more than a little impressive.



The installation challenges were plentiful, including the huge domed entrances that necessarily transform roofers into mountain climbers.

And, as if a year in the blazing Florida sun doesn't pose enough challenge from nature, the partially installed roofing membrane got an early test in the form of a nasty Central Florida windstorm.

But then, there never has been anything common about the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida. One of the premiere trade show destinations in the world, this is where the industry giants come to showcase their best products and finest services in intense global marketing wars. A place where building managers take construction seriously; where what some people call "good enough" simply isn't.

That's because, to compete against Las Vegas, Chicago and other big cities for major trade shows, the Orange County Convention Center has to serve up the best facility possible. Failure on the roof or anywhere else cannot be tolerated.

Phase V was the most recent addition to the convention center, which has grown continuously over the last 13 years. Enormous by anyone's standards, there are almost 22 acres of high quality, wide-open display area under roof. The center addition has 222 miles of electrical conduit, over 900,000 concrete blocks and almost three times as much steel as it took to build the Eiffel Tower.

(Story continues on the back of this sheet)

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INTELLIGENT
ROOFING SOLUTIONS

As you might expect, selection of the roofing membrane to protect this structure required considerable research, a thorough analysis of the intricate roof design details and a precise plan for installing the huge membrane system.

In the end, FiberTite® Roofing Systems by Seaman Corporation was chosen, and Sunshine Roofing and Consulting, Inc. of Orlando, now known as One Source Roofing, was awarded the roofing contract.

To fully understand the intrinsic value of FiberTite, key members of the construction team met with Seaman roofing and manufacturing specialists at the Seaman plant facilities in both Wooster, Ohio, and Bristol, Tennessee. Attending those meetings were Alice Johnson, owner of Sunshine Roofing and Consulting, Inc.; Kathy Rutkis of Roofing Technology, FiberTite's Orlando sales representative; and Terry Young and TJ Wright of Hunt Clark Construction Group, the construction manager for the project. Quarterbacking these meetings was Ben Smith, FiberTite's most experienced Sales and Technical Associate.

To accentuate the aesthetic goals of the convention center's design, Seaman formulated special custom colors of FiberTite, including "Everest White," a light gray membrane for the flat roof area.

A darker custom "Colonnade Gray" covers four entryway domes. Safely installing the membrane on these domes required a unique approach. Sunshine Roofing & Consulting, Inc. designed a system that incorporated special climbing gear, cables and safety harnesses.

The overall, proven performance of the membrane was crucial to the selection process. Notably, the roofing material would have to be proven to resist the effects of rooftop foot traffic as well as Florida's challenging weather – the constant pounding of UV rays, scorching heat, tropical storms and ponding water.

FiberTite's ability to withstand strong wind uplift was another important consideration that got an early test. About six months into the installation, in the early summer of 2002, a strong weather system came through Orlando and directed severe winds through the construction area.

Partially constructed walls created an additional "tunneling effect," thereby intensifying the wind forces.

Although the membrane was exposed to flying debris, it was easily repaired and, true to its reputation, there were no failures.

The FiberTite Roofing System formula is the same core formula since it was first introduced nearly a quarter century ago, according to Jerry Beall, Product Manager at Seaman Corporation for FiberTite Roofing Systems.

"FiberTite is truly unique to the industry," he said, "it's a densely knit polyester membrane that integrates a proprietary coating, using DuPont Elvaloy KEE flexible terpolymer as its foundation. As a result, in over 20 years of rooftop exposure, the FiberTite membrane continues to meet or exceed all of its design service life expectations. It will take about anything the Orlando weather can deliver."

To install 1.5 million square feet of mechanically fastened .45-mil membrane on schedule, a rigid material delivery plan had to be developed and adhered to. This involved weekly deliveries of several truckloads of FiberTite membrane and insulation.

Ben Smith, FiberTite Regional Specialist, along with Larry Rautkis of Roofing Technology, and technical staff from Seaman Corporation made weekly scheduled site visits to expedite deliveries and support Sunshine Roofing & Consulting, Inc.'s efforts, involving multiple shifts and dozens of rooftop workers.

"By the time the roofing job was completed, we made at least 50 job site visits to the convention center," said Jonathan Pierson, Seaman Technical Specialist.

"It was a project that involved hundreds and hundreds of people, from planners and manufacturers to contractors and subcontractors, for more than two years. An awful lot of people can point to the finished project with a lot of pride."



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