

Columbia River Roofing tackles enormous roofing challenge using Leister tools.

A Roof Done Right

The massive 420,000-square-foot roof atop Food Services of America's (FSA) Woodburn, Oregon, distribution center was falling apart. Seam failures on the ballasted roof were tearing as fast as 50 feet per week. The building, essentially a giant cooler that consistently hovers around -8 degrees Fahrenheit, needed a new, reliable roof to battle rising cooling costs and ensure the safety of materials and people inside.



The massive 420,000-square-foot ballasted roof atop Food Services of America's Woodburn, Ore., distribution center had seam failures tearing as fast as 50 feet per week.

FSA made the decision to replace the ballasted roof with a single-ply roofing membrane, and enlisted Columbia River Roofing of Gresham, Ore., to do the job. Once installed, the new roof would benefit FSA with a guaranteed long-lasting, waterproof roof.

No Simple Feat

Easily the largest job that 14-year-old Columbia River Roofing has implemented to date, taking on a 7.5-acre roofing project is no simple feat.

When choosing the tools to complete the job quickly and efficiently, Eric Finnerty, president of Columbia River Roofing already knew where to look – Columbia River Roofing has used Leister products exclusively for more than 10 years. "Production is the name of the game in this business," said Finnerty. "Every contractor pays the same amount for the single-ply PVC roofing membrane, so you make your money in how efficient you can be. With Leister tools, we are able to put the roof on better and faster, guaranteed."

Due to the scale of the project, the roof was divided into 50,000- to 100,000-square-foot sections. One at a time, a each portion was vacuumed, prepped and cleaned before the PVC roof was placed and welded down. The process was repeated until the entire roof was complete.

Race Against the Clock

The major concern on the FSA roof was to ensure that any roofing membrane laid down was secured daily. Unpre-



Columbia River Roofing was able to complete the new Food Services of America roof in less than two months due to the reliability and efficiency of Leister tools.

dictable Oregon weather could cause rain delays, and a leak through an unfinished or poorly welded roof segment would cause serious consequences – especially since the building was fully operational and contained about \$15 million worth of product on any given day. Therefore, anything laid down had to be welded and watertight before wrapping up for the day.

“On a project like this, if we had a piece of equipment go down, it would be catastrophic,” said Finnerty. “With normal maintenance of Leister products, I don’t have to worry about that happening.”

With the use of Leister tools, Columbia River Roofing was able to put down and secure 22,000 to 25,000 square feet of roofing per day. All seams were welded using the Leister VARIMAT V walk welder.



With the VARIMAT V walk welder, Columbia River Roofing was able to weld 22,000 to 25,000 square feet per day.



Hot air welding machine VARIMAT V from Leister.

Relying on Leister Tools

Finnerty touts the engineering and design of Leister products as what really sets them apart from other roofing tools he has used in the past.

“The way Leister equipment is put together actually helps us put the roof together, especially with the VARIMAT V,” said Finnerty. “The tools are easy to use, easy to understand and easy to set to roof manufacturer specifications. If we had a seam failure from incorrect speed or temperature, it would have been a disaster.”

Including removal of the ballasted roof, the entire job was completed in less than two months, thanks to the hard work of everyone involved and the reliability and efficiency of Leister tools.

“The deal with Leister is that the quality of their equipment makes our job easier,” said Finnerty. “That’s the bottom line.”