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Case Studies**

**Best Practices  
for Installing  
Skylights**





After

# DOING IT ALL — AND DOING IT RIGHT

Contractor Mobilizes to Reroof an Entire  
Housing Complex After a Storm

BY CHRIS KING



## **E**MMONS ROOFING AND SIDING

recently completed a major roofing project for Cardinal Group Management at The Cottages at Lake Tamaha, a housing and apartment complex in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The massive project included reroofing all 288 homes and three clubhouses on the property after massive storm damage.

The Cottages at Lake Tamaha consists of lakefront rental properties designed in the craftsman style. The majority of residents are college students from the University of Alabama. The scope of work included the tear-off and reroofing of more than 580,000 square feet of roof area. The project was a complex logistical puzzle, but Emmons Roofing and Siding was in the perfect position to tackle it.

The team at Emmons Roofing and Siding used their procurement expertise to win the competitively bid project, and their operations team did the rest, mobilizing to complete the project in just six weeks. According to Matthew Kelly, president of Emmons Roofing and Siding, his company had a crucial edge on the competition: his background and experience in procurement, project management and student housing. "We are headquartered in Williamstown, New Jersey, and we do roofing and

siding across the country," Kelly says. "Originally my history is in multifamily and student housing particularly, and I have commercial roofing background as well. We were able to leverage that expertise to become the most competitive bidder."

Emmons Roofing and Siding deployed up to 15 crews – approximately 100 roofers – on site every day to ensure the project went quickly, efficiently, and safely for the tenants of the occupied homes. "The total amount of square feet replaced was approximately 580,000 – which is more than 10 football fields," Kelly says. "We specified Heritage Shingles from TAMKO, which has a factory in the same town, and Beacon did a great job delivering everything for us, too."

### **DELIVERY AND INSTALLATION**

After removing the old roof systems, crews installed Tri-Built Ice and Water Shield, Tri-Built Synthetic Underlayment, and the TAMKO Heritage Shingles. Tri-Built Ridge Vents were also installed.

"TAMKO's outstanding reputation, especially in the multifamily sector, combined with a very aggressive pricing structure and the ability to fulfill this order with deliveries of up to 250



Emmons Roofing and Siding replaced the roofs on all 288 homes and three clubhouses at The Cottages at Lake Tamaha, a housing complex in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

squares daily for six weeks was crucial," Kelly says. "Having their manufacturing plant right in Tuscaloosa sure helped."

Crews proceeded block by block, with Beacon handling the deliveries. "We did it house by house, so we had 288 different orders," Kelly says. "We preloaded maybe 50 houses at a time, because we were doing about 20 a day.

It was wild."

Managing debris was critical, as dumpster locations were limited and dumpsters had to be replaced multiple times per day. "We shipped two Equipters down, which gave us the ability to get this project done with this type of speed," notes Kelly. "When you are doing 20 houses a day, that's

basically a whole city block of debris a day going to one dumpster location. The Equipters were instrumental in efficiently moving trash. We would probably have had to double the schedule without those two Equipters."

Making sure all of the crew members were on the same page every day was critical. "While weather is always a problem on a project of this size, our biggest issue was managing 90-plus men daily working on up to 20 houses per day," Kelly says. "To accomplish this, we had two superintendents who were traversing the sites constantly. In addition, foremen on each crew on each roof were charged with ensuring quality and safety."

#### **KEEPING CREW MEMBERS AND RESIDENTS SAFE**

The most important safety concerns on the project included not only worker safety but the safety of the residents. "The biggest challenge of this project was that these buildings were occupied – and occupied by students who've probably never dealt with something like this," Kelly says. "We accomplished



worker safety with typical OSHA fall hazard protection, but resident movement in and out of houses was of paramount importance.”

Kelly’s experience in multifamily and student housing was crucial in developing the scheduling plan. Emmons Roofing and Siding’s system included notifying the tenants of their scheduled roofing at least two days in advance. Another notice posted on their door the day before work was to begin included a phone number residents could call if they had to enter or exit the houses during the day of the project. “The phone number on their front door was forwarded to our foreman’s cell phone, and the foreman would walk right over to the house to make sure it was safe for them to enter or exit,” Kelly says. “We caution taped everything. Again, that was really the biggest challenge – making sure it was safe for tenants inside these units. This system worked flawlessly, and no injuries, either resident or employee, occurred.”

Feedback from residents was overwhelmingly positive. The key,

according to Kelly, was communicating with residents and getting the roofing work on each house completed and the area cleaned up in less than one day. “To our guys’ credit, we were so fast that sometimes the kids didn’t even see us,” Kelly says.


Staying on schedule was crucial, but just as important was ensuring quality workmanship on every structure. “Our experienced team at Emmons knows how to perform, and we strictly follow all manufacturer’s warranted installation requirements on all projects,” Kelly says. “We know how to keep employees and residents safe. We only use high-quality materials like synthetic underlayment as opposed to 15-pound generic felt that was specified. This upgrade cost us on our bottom line but led to a better job for the client and, most importantly, a safer job for our installers. Another example is upgrading pipe collars from specified generic plastic collars to pre-painted aluminum flashings with a lifetime warranty. These will never have to be serviced for the life of the roof. Again, this was costly, but in five to ten years,

Crews reroofed of more than 580,000 square feet of roof area, installing TAMKO Heritage Shingles.

the client won’t be worrying about their pipe collars needing to be replaced.”

#### A SUCCESSFUL RESULT

Kelly looks back on the project with pride. “The Cottages at Lake Tamaha apartment complex is now equipped with a high-quality roofing system that will provide protection from the elements for years to come,” he says. “This project sums up the value we provide to the customer – and our great relationships with our manufacturers and distributors. We developed a customized solution and got it done in the least invasive way possible. We were able to do it profitably, efficiently, safely – and most importantly do it in a way that minimally disrupted the residents.”

Kelly sums it all up this way: “As with all projects we are on, we left the property cleaner than when we found it, and we followed our motto: Do it right, do it once.” 

## THE COTTAGES AT LAKE TAMAHA

TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA

### TEAM

**ROOF CONSULTANT:** Terracon, Birmingham, Alabama, [terracon.com](http://terracon.com)

**ROOFING CONTRACTOR:** Emmons Roofing and Siding, Williamstown, New Jersey, [emmonsroofing.com](http://emmonsroofing.com)

### MATERIALS

**UNDERLAYMENT:** Tri-Built Synthetic Underlayment, Beacon, [becn.com](http://becn.com)

**ASPHALT SHINGLES:** Heritage Shingles, TAMKO, [tamko.com](http://tamko.com)