



Construction Video Enforces Accountability, Safety on Rooftop HVAC Installation

Project Owner: Saint Mary's College of California, Moraga, CA

Project: Install a new energy efficient HVAC system for McKeon Pavillion

Cost of video: \$3500

Money saved: Contractor, \$150,000; Client, \$200,000 for new roof and floor



It's raining, just a week before the Saint Mary's Gaels return home for a nationally televised game, and the roof at McKeon Pavilion has sprung a leak.

But what is the source of the leak? Repairs were hung up in a four-way dispute over who was responsible: The general contractor, or the roofing, electrical or HVAC contractor.

Time was of the essence. If the rains and leakage continued the roof and gymnasium floor would be damaged beyond repair within 7-10 days. However, heavy rains made an investigative roof climb impossible.

Normally, the construction manager would face two choices: wait for a dry day and go up on the roof with a hose and perform water testing, or just start trying repairs and see if any of them work. Waiting risked the loss of the roof and floor, while the latter option could cost as much as \$100,000 for a week of trial and error repairs, none guaranteed to work.

Fortunately, in this case there was a third option, as the project manager had contracted for video on

demand of as-built conditions for pre-construction support. He had also taped the entire installation of the rooftop units and waterproofing and the ductwork.

The video had already proved its worth. The cameraman had incidentally caught an HVAC worker dangling from the roof on rope tied to his belt loop, a potentially fatal construction safety violation. Of course the project manager took immediate action, and the grateful contractor put his whole crew through a round of remedial safety training.

Now video would come into play again. The evidence was there and it was clear—the roof was fine, but the seismic restraints installed by the HVAC contractor were not.

When the HVAC contractor refused to accept responsibility, the project manager gave him the link and showed him the evidence. Compliance was immediate.

The problem was solved in one day and fixed by the next, saving the roof, the floor and the big game.



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