

Tarco ROOFER'S REPORT

Asphalt-Saturated Polyester Underlayment Gains Popularity in the California Tile Market

106 Multifamily Units Benefit from High Tensile Strength of EasyLay

Condo owners can be tough customers. Ask Scott Olsen. His company, Specialized Roofing Services, specializes in the roofing and re-roofing of multiple-unit housing.



Using EasyLay as a tile roof underlayment, a work force of 10 to 14 roofers reroofed these multiple unit buildings at a pace of about 12 to 16 buildings per month. The total number of units was 106.



The high tensile strength of EasyLay is an important advantage when working with tiles.

"As part of a group of owners, condo owners can thoroughly investigate not only the reputations of prospective roofing contractors but also the products that they use – right down to the underlayments," he says.

And yet, Scott thrives in this niche because he takes the time to get to know the condo owners and meet

their needs. He started his company 27 years ago, and for the past 12 years has catered almost exclusively to condo owners, Homeowners Associations (HOAs), and multi-family housing. Perhaps it is because he enjoys the challenge of serving tough customers and their roofing expectations.

An Easy Sell

EasyLay asphalt-saturated polyester from Tarco was an easy sell to Scott. After trying out the product on a few projects, he began to use it more and more because it offered obvious advantages over traditional asphalt saturated organic felts, which are more commonly applied beneath tiles in California climates.

"We found that EasyLay behaves and performs much better than traditional felt or synthetic underlayments," he says. "Everything Tarco says about it is true: It lays flat, it does not tear and it is easy to walk on. Unlike with organic felts, I do not have to worry about the felt warping or oil residue coming off at night. And EasyLay has a very high tensile strength. That's a major advantage when working with concrete tiles."

He adds, "The non-slip surface is a big advantage. Synthetic underlayments do not have the walkability of EasyLay."

Easy to Demonstrate

When specializing in roofs for multiple-unit housing, it is often necessary to work constructively with Homeowners Associations (HOAs). "Typically the HOA members are very concerned



The roofing systems are installed on four to six buildings at any given time. Here are three units at various stages of production.

about roofing materials and practices and they tend to be conservative," says Olsen. "It is not enough for a roofer to be sold on a product. The roofer in turn must sell the product to the HOA or he does not get the business."

In the case of re-roofing the condos at University Canyon West in San Diego, California, the homeowners' association was very much involved in the product selection. Olsen was already sold on EasyLay but had to sell the product to the HOA.

"The main selling point was the tensile strength," said Olsen. "I brought a sheet of EasyLay to the HOA meeting and offered \$100 to any member of the HOA who could tear it. Of course, nobody could because it was made of polyester. It looks and handles just like organic felt except that it is very easy to tear a sheet of organic felt. After that demonstration, when I then asked the HOA members which they would rather have underneath their tiles, EasyLay was the obvious choice."

However, according to Olsen, even that is not enough in some cases. "One HOA asked us to bring in many different underlayment products for testing. We did. As most roofers know, there has been a proliferation of underlayment products in the marketplace in recent years," he explained. "We tested and demonstrated ten or twelve different

products and ultimately that HOA was sold on EasyLay as the best value."

Easy to Compete

University Canyon West (UCW) is a middle class, family-oriented community located about five miles from the University of San Diego. The multifamily units were originally built in mid-1980s. After 25 years of service, re-roofing of the tile roofs was required.

In the case of the UCW reroof, Specialized Roofing Services competed against several other contractors. The re-roof project involves a total of 3500 squares installed on 106 multiple unit buildings. That's 350,000 square feet of tile roofing, or 33.5 squares per building on average.

Specialized Roofing Services won the job. According to Olsen, in the long run, even though HOA members can be tough customers, it is worthwhile dealing with the grilling because the total job can be quite large.

Easy to Schedule

The roofing systems are installed on four to six buildings at any given time and about one-and-a-half weeks is required on average from start to finish for each installation.

Roofers install two layers of Tarco EasyLay underlayment to the plywood deck. The underlayment is mechanically fastened to the deck with

round cap nails. One team typically completes a 3300 square foot roof with two layers of EasyLay and then moves on to the next condo. A different team would then transport the tiles onto the roof and eventually install the tiles.

The sequence is to install the underlayment and then load the tiles on the roof. Any needed wood repairs are then made, the building is then painted and the tiles are installed. "With EasyLay, it is much easier to manage the projects because the underlayment can remain exposed for long periods without damage," says Olsen.

That's a pace of about 12 to 16 buildings to per month with a work force of 10 to 14 roofers. The project was started in May 2011 and is scheduled for completion in 2012.

Specialized Roofing Services installs all types of roofing on condominiums and other multi-family housing throughout California and in neighboring states in cities as far east as Denver and as far north as Seattle.

A Winning Combination

Scott Olsen continues to recommend EasyLay to the HOAs on many of these projects. EasyLay helps him to win the business because it allows him to compete on quality against other contractors while at the same time being easier to install. Now that's a winning combination that any homeowner can smile about.

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