

Retrofitting Existing Ribbed Metal Roofs: The Latest Profit Center

By D.V. "Red MC-1" McConnohie and Dale G. Nelson
Roof Hugger Inc.

We contractors and erectors never realized that the millions of sq. ft. of metal structures we sold and erected in the 1950s through the 1990s was also creating our own retirement income opportunity.

Special ■ Emphasis

Retrofit Case Studies

Contrary to the fond wishes of all building owners, roofs do not last forever. Great strides have been made in the past 10 years in developing systems and materials to make retrofitting over degraded, worn out, ribbed metal roofs a simple, economical method for clients to obtain a new roof.

Buildings, particularly their roofs, age and deteriorate at a predictable rate. An actuarial table, much like the life insurance business uses, can be established to project the reroof demand in any area for the next 10 to 20 years based on the year of completion.

Why not "tear off"? There are numerous reasons. Why add the high cost of labor and disposal when it is seldom necessary? Why open the structure to possible damage from elements? Why destroy existing roof insulation and moisture barrier creating further costly replacement? Today's modern businesses and inventory may well be expensive, high-tech and fragile items subject to damage from dust and debris falling from removal operations.

Additionally, the savings in labor of workers applying the new "roof-over" from the platform of the old roof rather than open purlins is a major dollar consideration.

The following chronology and pictures of recently completed jobs in St. Petersburg, FL, and Tampa, FL, graphically illustrate the huge advantages and versatility of retrofits to both contractors and owners where such is a viable option.

Project 1

The 36,000 sq. ft. home of television production studios for Channel 22, St. Petersburg, needed not only a new roof but also much more insulation and a minimum 50% decibel noise reduction during heavy rains.



Norm England

The studios chose the long established contracting firm of England Bros. Construction Co., Largo, FL, to provide the solution. Norm England, president, selected the Webtherm sub framing system by Roof Hugger Inc. from a list of alternatives and began the job in early August 2000 and completed it in mid-September 2000 with a six man crew.

Phillip "Flip" England was in charge of the field erection.

"We are extremely pleased with an approximate decibel reduction of some 70% in noise level, a considerable reduction in air conditioning run time, no more leaks and our work was never interrupted. It was a great job for us and we hardly knew they were

there," said Jack Jarvis, manager of channel 22.

Norm England said, "In spite of the system being new to us the job went exceptionally well and produced a very happy client."

"Once we got the hang of it, the job was a snap," said "Flip" England.

Project 2

As mentioned previously, we, as metal building contractors, have created our own future job security. The Tampa East Industrial Park, Tampa, was one of two 80,000 sq. ft. buildings we designed and constructed in the early '70s.



Steve Kruse

The retrofit was designed by the prestigious Law Engineering Co., Tampa, FL, who specified the standard low silhouette, "nesting" Roof Huggers as the attachment system with no extra insulation required. The job was bid out and awarded to Nu-Tec Roofing Co., a statewide roofing contractor with main offices in Tampa.

Steve Kruse, vice president of Nu-Tec, chose Fabral, Lancaster, PA, to furnish the special standing seam panels of 105' lengths, no endlaps, made possible with an on-site roll former. The panels were formed of 24-gauge material with seamed ribs at 16" on center.

The Fabral machine operator stated, "Roof Huggers are the slickest, easiest way to do a retrofit that I have ever seen."



Directly above is the existing roof on Channel 22 with the Roof Huggers attached. The photos to the right and above right illustrate how Roof Huggers reduce insulation compression. Below is the finished Channel 22 building.

This series of photos shows the Tampa East Industrial Park project while under construction.



“This system went together far faster than we anticipated and even faster than Dale Nelson, president of Roof Hugger, had advised us that it would. Both our company and Law Engineering Co. are extremely pleased with the results and expect to use the Roof Hugger attachment system on many more future jobs,” said Kruse.

McConnohie, inventor and director of Roof Hugger Inc., said, “We couldn’t be more pleased with the rapid growth and trade acceptance of our little ‘niche’ products that have become so valuable to our industry in the reroofing of metal buildings.”

“Every one of our thousands of customers have been enthused about how easy we have made their job. That alone is what has propelled us to national and international recognition as being the very best attachment system on the market for retrofitting ribbed metal roofs, walls and facias,” said McConnohie.



A closer view of a Roof Hugger after installation.

