

TORNADO NO MATCH FOR DURO-LAST IN PIERCE CITY, MISSOURI

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-Thistle owner
Norma Bacarisse

When a tornado pierced the quaint downtown area of Pierce City, Missouri on May 4, 2003, almost nothing was safe from the destructive forces of the F4-rated storm that packed winds up to 260 m.p.h. Although the storm ravaged the business district, The Thistle, an arts and crafts shop, suffered only minor damage compared to surrounding structures.

Building owner Norma Bacarisse believes the Duro-Last roofing system, installed on The Thistle by McDowell Roofing Company, Inc. of Joplin, Missouri only a month earlier, helped prevent more serious damage.

According to Bacarisse, large debris from the storm struck the front brick façade, close to the roofline. The impact caused the roof to collapse into the attic space, allowing the front edge of the roof membrane and decking to lift slightly.

“There was only minor damage to the Duro-Last roof and that was from flying debris and not the roof system failing,” noted Bacarisse. “Some surrounding roofs and decking were completely torn off as well as back walls blown out.”



Photo by Bob Linder, Springfield (Missouri) News-Leader

Michelle Bacarisse inspects The Thistle following the tornado that struck Pierce City, Missouri on May 4, 2003. Michelle's mother, Thistle owner Norma Bacarisse, believes the building's Duro-Last roof helped prevent more extensive damage.

She believes the Duro-Last roof system prevented the high winds from rushing through and lifting the decking as well as blowing out the back walls of the shop.

Claude McDowell, president of McDowell Roofing, agreed.

“Because of the way the Duro-Last membrane is manufactured at the factory (membrane is laminated with a high-density weft insertion knitted scrim), I believe that helped to keep the roof durable and together during the tornado, with little damage to the actual roof,” said McDowell.

(Continued on reverse side)



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Duro-Last attributes the roofing system's success to its patented two-way breather vents, which act as a relief valve, alleviating building pressure from weather forces such as tornados.

The Thistle sits on the west side of the downtown area between the old General Store and the historic Lawrence County Bank building. Built around 1896, the structure is Georgian brick with a row-type commercial storefront. The two-story shop also has apartments on the top level.

The building's previous roof had leak problems and needed to be replaced. Bacarisse, who chose Duro-Last after researching several roofing systems, wanted a reliable system that would provide watertight protection, and be backed by a comprehensive warranty.

"I looked into other built-ups, foam systems, and single-plys," Bacarisse recalled. "But those systems did not compare to the Duro-Last roofing system; some of the others required re-coating every three years and provided only a 10-year warranty."

Authorized Duro-Last contractor McDowell Roofing installed 3,000 square feet of the

Duro-Last thermoplastic single-ply roofing system on the shop.

"Norma wanted a maintenance-free roofing system," said McDowell. "Once I install a Duro-Last roof, I am confident that there will be no leak problems when I leave the job site or in the future."

"The result was a clean, durable, and completely leak-proof roof," said Bacarisse. "Plus, Duro-Last offered a comprehensive warranty. I was very satisfied."

Duro-Last's ability to withstand the May 4 tornado turned out to be icing on the cake for Bacarisse.

"Duro-Last was definitely the best value for The Thistle," concluded Bacarisse.



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