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Main building roofs to be replaced by December



[Photo Credit: Eddie Gaspar](#)

Published on September 10, 2018 at 12:06 am

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Coming back from summer vacation, students may have noticed the jungle gym of scaffolding climbing the edges of the Main Building. They are a part of UT's Project Management and Construction Services' efforts to replace old roofs of the building surrounding the Tower.

Jill Stewart, director of PMCS, said a campus-wide building evaluation noticed the 22 aging roofs were leaking in some places. None of the roofs have been replaced since the 1980s, and for

others, it has been much longer. This made the roof replacement a top priority for PMCS, Stewart said.

“Some of the roof materials are original to the building, particularly under some of the tile roofs, and some were changed in the mid-to-late ‘80s,” Stewart said. “In the ‘80s, the quality and construction methods were a little different and so those roofs don’t have the longevity as roofs we install now, and that’s consistent across campus. It was not in any way unusual that these roofs were at the point that they needed to be repaired.”

Stewart said the construction started after spring commencement and she is surprised at the construction’s quick progress. Construction should be finished by December.

“It’s been a pleasant surprise to (see) the progress that’s been made,” Stewart said. “I am overwhelmed at the improvement that this is making for the roofs. Some of that’s not seen. Most people don’t pay attention to the roofs, but the improvement we can bring to the building as a whole is really pleasant.”

The Main Building includes the Tower, 34 departmental offices and the Life Sciences Library. The construction is focused on the base of the building, not on the Tower. Daily activities in the building have not been interrupted, which means hundreds of employees and students still work and visit the building every day.

The building’s Life Sciences Library still remains open during construction for students such as psychology freshman Aryssa Cruz, although it might not be as easy to find. Cruz said the construction made the Life Sciences Library harder to locate the first time she went.

“It was very hard to get here, (I was) probably looking for it for 30 minutes,” Cruz said. “I had to go around (the construction) to find another entrance.”

Suzi Deem, executive assistant to the senior vice provost for enrollment management, works on the ground floor and said the construction has not impeded any of the work inside the Tower.

“It’s been fine. They haven’t been intrusive at all,” Deem said. “They’ve done a wonderful job actually of trying to stay out of the way and keep things clean and safe.”

Kay Gil, a temporary employee in the Office for Enrollment Management, said she is glad construction services is addressing the roof.

“I’ve come and gone from this building for the last month and there hasn’t been any issues,” Gil said. “It’s been very well managed. But also, it’s inspiring to see the university is upkeeping the building but also holding onto its historical heritage. It’s like we’re taking care of something really special.”