



Expert Craftsmanship

High-End Residence Gets New Slate and Copper Roof After a Tornado

WRITTEN BY
CHRIS KING

The Preston Hollow neighborhood in North Dallas is renowned for its high-end homes, but after a tornado tore through it in November 2019, many of them were left with substantial roof damage. Precision Construction & Roofing, headquartered in North Richland Hills, Texas, was tapped to replace almost 27,000 square feet of slate and copper roofing on one residence.

According to CEO Eric Hunter, Precision Construction was perfect for the job. The company specializes in complex projects and storm restoration work. “Our focus when we started the company 12 years ago was high-end residential, mainly historic,” he says, “We do all types of roofing but focus on slate, tile and copper. We’re doing more and more commercial work as the years go by, and we’re planning to launch a commercial division, so we’ll be doing a lot more commercial work in the future.”

The company is well-known for

its work on historic homes featuring Ludowici tile. “We’re the Ludowici Contractor of the Year for four years running, and we’ve won Ludowici Roof of the Year for five years in a row,” notes Hunter.

This slate and copper roof was one of the biggest residential projects the company has ever tackled. “It’s a monster,” says Hunter,

The existing roof was comprised of copper panels and Chinese slate, which was installed by the home builder. “We tore that off — or I should say the tornado tore a lot of it off for us,” Hunter recalls. “It had extensive tornado damage. All that copper standing seam you see on the roof at the top was completely gone.”

One of the company’s salesman found a section of the copper roof draped over a power line two blocks away.

Precision dried in the damaged roof and completed the roof replacement as part of an insurance claim. After the claim was approved and slate arrived,

the actual installation took about six weeks from start to finish.

One crew worked on the slate sections while another handled the copper work. “It was kind of a combined effort,” Hunter explains, “Naturally, we started with the slate, but there were parts of the standing seam we had to do before we could continue with the slate. I would say the slate was about 85 percent done, and then we did all the copper. We had to go back and actually put on the remaining 15 percent of the slate after the copper was done. There was a lot of coordination involved in that.”

SLATE AND COPPER

For the slate sections, crews installed ice and water shield from PABCO along the eaves, valleys, hips and ridges, as well as Precision’s private labeled

synthetic underlayment.

The slate roof combined products from of two different suppliers. North County Black Slate was blended with a Vermont Slate Unfading Green. "I think that North County Black is the nicest slate in the world," Hunter notes. "It's amazing stuff. We took that and blended it in with the Vermont S1 Grade Unfading Green."

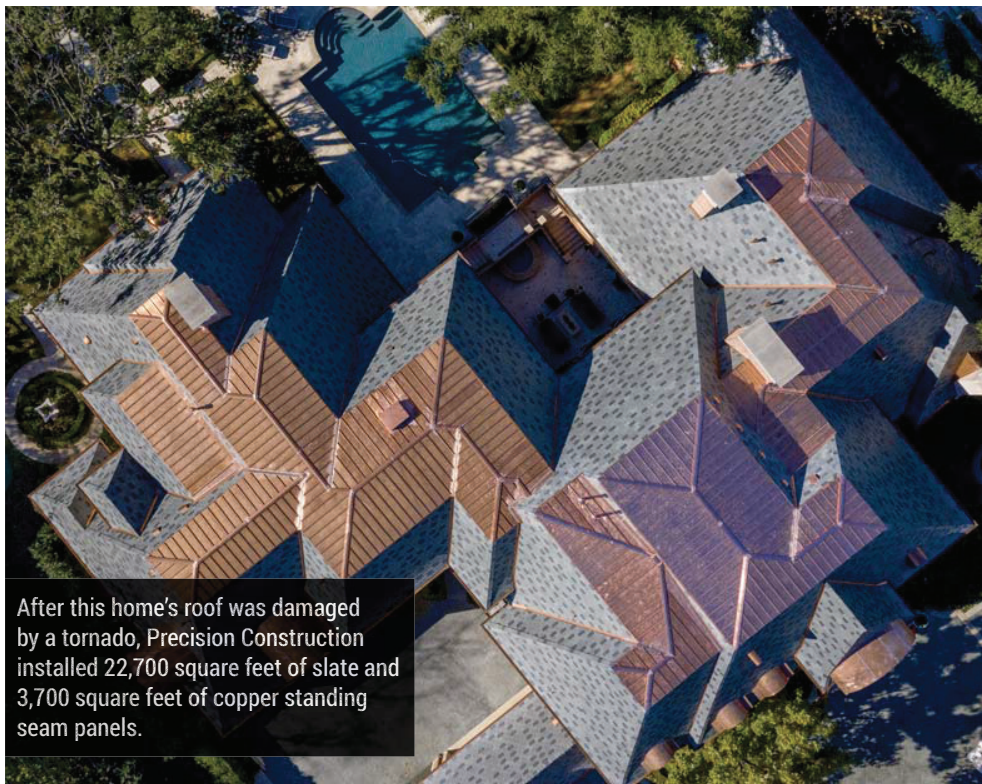
Slate can have natural color variation, and proper blending is essential. Hunter estimates that the blending process took 60 man-hours to complete. "The blending is all done on the ground," he says, "We took one piece of slate from every single palette of the North Country Black and blended that together. We did the same with the Unfading Green. That was all blended, and then we blended the two colors together to come up with the percentages on the roof. When that slate was brought up on the roof and put on the toe boards, it was brought up there to be put on in that order."

The slates had been hand punched at the quarry with two nail holes. Approximately 22,700 square feet of slate was installed using copper nails

Copper was the only option considered for the low-slope roof sections and details. "Copper should be used, in my professional opinion – if not lead – on every single slate roof in the country, no matter where it is," Hunter says. "Copper is the only metal that can withstand freeze-thaw, the elements, and the heat for hundreds of years. In Texas, lead isn't popular because, believe it or not, squirrels love lead. It's like a snack to them."

Flashing, gutters, downspouts and other details were fabricated from scratch. "Any slate or tile project we install, no matter what, has copper everything on it – drip edge, valley metal, step flashing, counterflashing," Hunter says. "Every one of the pipe jacks you see on that roof was hand made from copper. All of the gable vents, dormer vents and any other vents were fabricated by us either on site or in our warehouse."

Approximately 3,700 square feet of double-lock copper panels were



After this home's roof was damaged by a tornado, Precision Construction installed 22,700 square feet of slate and 3,700 square feet of copper standing seam panels.

fabricated on the site. "Those panels were taken up, and if any modifications needed to be made, we had our bender, our breaker and our cutter up there at the very top," Hunter notes. "We hand crimped and hand bent every one of those panels up there on the roof. We made sure those double locks were nice and tight. It probably took about two weeks to do all of the copper."

Hunter credits his experienced crews for their expert workmanship. "Where there would be a hip or a valley, everything was soldered," he says, "Soldering is very time consuming. You've got to really know what you're doing."

Challenges included notorious Texas weather and steep terrain at the back of the house that made access difficult. The slate could only be delivered in the front and had to be carried to the back. "This house was hard because in the back the scaffolding went up three stories," Hunter says. "There's a patio area in the back that actually drops down a story."

Crews were tied off 100 percent of the time for fall protection. "That roof is so steep that you have to be very careful and use every safety measure you can," Hunter says. "Those standing seam roofs are 45 or 50 feet up in the air."

The completed project shows off the craftsmanship that is the hallmark of the company, according to Hunter. "It was a very, very time-consuming job, but it was not rushed," he says. "Our slogan at Precision is 'We Build Pretty Roofs.' It's kind of spread. People will say, 'You're the guys who build the pretty roofs!' That's been our hashtag and our motto for years. We just really take pride in our work." **R**

PRESTON HOLLOW RESIDENCE DALLAS, TEXAS

TEAM

ROOFING CONTRACTOR: Precision Construction & Roofing, North Richland Hills, Texas, precisionconstructionandroofing.com

MATERIALS

SLATE: North Country Black, North Country Slate, ncslate.com, and Vermont Unfading Green, Vermont Slate Company, vermontslateco.com

COPPER: Double-lock standing seam copper panels