

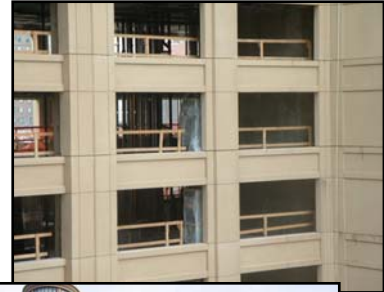
Managing Water Damage in a Dorm

The Problem

The University Center is an 18-story “Superdorm” that houses 1700 students from four colleges, Columbia College, DePaul University, Roosevelt University and Robert Morris College. It is a \$151 million multi-college residence hall, the largest in the nation, located in the heart of Chicago’s educational corridor.

During the construction phase, a shipment of fan-coil units arrived at the site before the building exterior was completed. They were subjected to the elements, and unfortunately became wet during a storm. Chelsea Group was called in to determine if the units could be salvaged. Concern was also voiced regarding the possibility that the interior lining would support microbial growth after it had been exposed to rain.

After students moved in, a water-line break caused flooding in an occupied part of the building. Chelsea Group returned to assess damages and provide a plan for remediation.



Chelsea Group’s Intervention



Over 200 fan-coil units that had been exposed to the storm were inspected for remaining moisture and the condition of the fiberglass lining. Chelsea Group collected tape-lift samples to determine the presence of microbial growth. The lining of the units with microbial growth and excessive water were removed. The units that were only slightly wet were allowed to dry based on the Principals of Drying set forth by the IICRC (Institute of Inspection Cleaning and Restoration Certification) Standard and Reference Guide for Professional Water Damage Restoration (S500).

Immediate results: All 200 fan-coil units were salvaged either by drying or replacement of damaged lining, saving the subcontractor from replacing the units and keeping them on the construction schedule.

Chelsea Group provided a customized plan to properly protect and store the undamaged units, which included storing the units off wet concrete with pallets, and covering them with tarps that allowed them to breathe but protected them from the weather on floors that were unfinished. As the shipments of fan coils-units were received by the subcontractor, Chelsea Group randomly inspected the condition of the lining and ensured that they were properly stored.

Immediate results: Further shipments of units were installed undamaged. The general contractor retained Chelsea Group to oversee the future shipments and storage of the units. In following the customized plan the Chelsea team made sure that no other units were damaged.

Chelsea Group was called back after the building was occupied by students. The water lines to two fan-coil units on the third floor ruptured due to thermal expansion when the system was switched from chilled to hot water in the winter. Although the facility management team caught the leak fairly quickly, the water flooded four dorm rooms on the third floor and leaked down to the cafeteria area on the second floor. Surface moisture measurements and tape-lift samples were taken to determine the extent of water damage to drywall and carpeting.

Chelsea Group provided a plan to dry salvageable material and remove water-saturated insulation. Since this was Category 1 – Clean Water, materials that usually have to be removed were salvageable. There was no padding under the carpet, so the carpet was successfully dried. During the inspection the Chelsea team found that the drywall was hung a half-inch off the floor slab. This installation protected most of the drywall from absorbing water and supporting microbial growth and minimized the amount of drywall that had to be replaced.

Immediate results: The rupture happened during winter break so there was minimal disruption to the students. Chelsea Group was able to complete the oversight of the restoration and repair in time for students to return to their rooms after the break. We were able to document that there was no mold growth, alleviating parents' concerns.

Final Results

- University Center realized a financial savings by not having to replace fan units.
- Chelsea Group intervention helped the subcontractor stay on schedule.
- Drying out materials rather than replacing them after the water-line break allowed for a faster recovery time, so students could return to their dorm in time for the beginning of classes.
- Based on the quick response by building management and Chelsea Group's support, students' and parents' concerns regarding mold and health were effectively handled.