

SUN CITIES INDEPENDENT

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Weak Roof forces Sundial closures

by Bret McKeand

It appears Sun Citians will have to do without the Sundial pool and craft rooms this summer.

Due to a badly deteriorated roof -- and the potential safety hazards it presents -- the Recreation Centers of Sun City Inc. have been forced to close down the south half of the Sundial Recreation Center.

The board of directors first learned of possible problems with the Sundial roof in early May, and decided at that time to close pool area.

At a special meeting of the board, held May 15, directors were told the roof over the entire south half of the building had failed and may have to be replaced.

The board immediately voted to close that half of the Sundial Center until all repairs are made.

Along with the pool, the closed facility also includes the craft rooms, shuffleboard area and Sundial Men's Club room.

The auditorium and social halls, in the northern half of the building, will remain open.

Patrick Welch, president of Pegler-Welch, Inc., conducted a study of the roof and told the board that the roof had deteriorated beyond repair. Welch believes that excessive moisture in the building may have caused the materials to rot away.

Welch says further tests will need to be conducted in order to determine the actual cause of the "structural failure" and the extent of the damage.

After suggesting that the building immediately be closed to the public, Welch recommended removing all of the building's air handling equipment from the roof.

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"We need to reduce as much of the load off of the roof as possible," says Welch. "We don't want the air handlers ending up in the swimming pool."

Welch says any amount of additional weight on the roof could possibly cause a collapse of the roof. He urged that all equipment be removed from the roof before summer rains move into the Valley.

"The roof drainage system does not work at the present time. This summer's monsoons could cause problems and we could have a catastrophe," says Welch.

Welch feels the roof is so unsafe that he has recommended that all Sundial employees not be allowed to walk on the roof.

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Welch says, depending on the extent of the damage, a new roof could be installed by this fall. The board unanimously voted to allow Pegler-Welch to conduct a "thorough" study.

"We want to explore this to a maximum," says Doris Timpano, president of the board.

Because the extent of the damage is not known, and because some of the materials may be reusable, Welch was not able to provide accurate estimates regarding the cost of the project.

He does feel, however, that some of the cost may be covered by the Rec Centers' insurance policy.

Welch says his investigation of the roof **revealed a truss failure, which may have been caused by moisture and chlorine vapors.**

He says rainwater gathering on the roof, as well as the heavy equipment load, may have also caused the failure in the material supporting the roof.

"The **air handling equipment** now being used is **not getting the moisture out of the building,**" says Welch. "We need to determine why this is happening and design a new system to make sure it doesn't happen again."

After inspecting the roof, Welch says 33 percent of the roof shows signs of sagging and "appreciable settlements."

He commends Henry Schwartz, centers operations manager, for removing a number of Sundial ceiling panels earlier this year. Schwartz had the panels removed to prevent further gathering of moisture in the roof.

"It was a godsend that this man took the stuff out when he did," say Welch. "Otherwise that roof **would have** come down."