

Hospital continues operating after major hurricane

...thanks to Cotton's elaborate containment systems

Background

Valley Baptist Medical Center (VBMC) sustained extensive wind and water damage when Hurricane Dolly made landfall as a category 2 storm along the South Texas coast. The storm's powerful winds caused roof and expansion joint failures and broke nearly 200 windows at the Harlingen, Texas hospital. Rainwater invaded every part of the hospital's two million-square-foot facility. As a result, the hospital suffered approximately \$20 million in property damage.



Challenges

As the flagship hospital of the Valley Baptist Health System and the largest hospital in the Rio Grande Valley, VBMC had to remain open. What about hidden water damage? How could the hospital's 2,000 plus employees work safely and under the proper environmental conditions while cleanup was underway? And how would hospital restoration advance if other hurricanes threatened to strike?



Restoring the World



Solutions

The Cotton team – 400 strong – converged upon VBMC the day after the storm. Working 24/7, they provided cleanup, restoration and reconstruction services while the hospital continued operating. Cotton restored the entire hospital interior including the emergency room, labor and delivery, 12 operating rooms, six patient floors occupying 12 wings, sterile processing area, lab, cafeteria, office areas and more. Cotton's rapid response included:

- Immediate use of drying machines to control humidity and dew points
- Moisture mapping the entire hospital using thermo imaging cameras and moisture meter readings to detect water damage
- Removal of damaged sheetrock; drying, cleaning and encapsulating affected areas; and installation of new sheetrock

As VBMC released designated areas for cleanup and reconstruction, Cotton erected construction barriers and elaborate containment systems performing all work under negative pressure. If the hospital suddenly needed areas under construction for its patients, Cotton stepped up the pace to deliver the finished areas.

Proven Experience, Powerful Results

Cotton facilitated daily briefings with VBMC administrators and staff, including its infection control department, to schedule work according to hospital priorities. In just eight weeks after the storm, Cotton had all patient areas fully restored. Even when two new hurricanes entered the Gulf, temporarily halting work, Cotton exceeded client expectations by working overtime to restore important areas of the hospital.



Restoring the World

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"Cotton's responsiveness and communication were outstanding. They provided detailed Gantt charts, met our timelines, and participated in daily status meetings. Their ability to bring in an abundance of resources helped us minimize our business interruption claim. They also worked hand-in-hand with our infection control department to eliminate any patient safety concerns by ensuring proper containment of work areas and thorough inspections upon completion."

Matt Wolthoff

Vice President of Operations
Valley Baptist Medical Center-
Harlingen

