

Villas East storm damage at \$14 million

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Villas East, hit hard by a July hail storm that knocked out hundreds of windows, roofs and skylights across Green Valley, is facing a \$14 million insurance claim, according to the HOA board president.

That's more than double that of Villas West across the street, which said its insurance claim for the same storm is approaching \$6 million.

Villas East has looked like a construction site since the storm, with contractors, stacked materials and orange cones that will be there for months to come.

Villas East was the first large condo complex in Green Valley back in the 1960s and has 476 units in 128 buildings. Villas West has 672 units in 180 buildings.

"Of our 128 roofs, we'll have to completely replace 88 of them," Villas East Board President Mike Buswell wrote to the Green Valley News in an email. He said more than 100 interior repairs will begin "immediately after the roof is completed along with approximately 100 HVAC that will also be replaced."

"Our insurer (American Family Insurance) tells us that we are looking at over \$14 million in damage and ours appears to be the biggest claim they've experienced in Green Valley," Buswell said.

He said bad weather since the July 16 storm — including remnants of Hurricane Kay that came through after Labor Day — have hampered efforts to get the work done.

“Our contractor is now making good progress on the roofs and hopes to be completely replacing about four roofs per week until they're finished,” he wrote. “Interiors repairs and air-conditioning/heating systems are following the roof replacements and our insurer is providing some assistance there as well.”

He didn't mention whether there will be a special assessment and/or increase in HOA dues to cover costs, but several residents said they expect it.

Sandy St. Thomas is one of them. She has lived at Villas East for 22 years and was at home the evening of the storm. She watched rain come into her home after the roof was damaged by hail.

“It has never been replaced, it was just patch-and-repair, patch-and-repair” she said of the roof. “So you know every time it was repaired there's damage.”

Hers was the second building to get attention and still isn't finished. She recently moved back in after leaving for several weeks to allow for interior work. She's living behind a sheet of plastic in a bedroom and takes showers at her sister's home.

“What came out from the HOA, our management company and our board is that it was going to take two to three days. Of course, it didn't,” she said of the initial response.

Early on, management held a meeting and sent out emails collecting information and asking homeowners to contact their insurance companies as they assessed damage and made decisions. Then, according to St. Thomas, communication was highly curtailed or stopped altogether, adding to the frustration.

St. Thomas said on-site management “totally shut off the phones at our office here” and everything was forward to an off-site management company at one point. Getting information was difficult, though she understands it's a big job. It

just could have been handled better, according to her and other residents who did not want to be identified.

“I really can’t say enough for RestoreMasters and the people they’ve had working inside,” St. Thomas said. “They have done a wonderful job.”

She still has a pile of furniture covered in plastic and pushed to the center of the room and isn’t sure what condition her skylight is in, but she’s seeing the light at the end of the tunnel. But will it have been worth it?

“I think so,” she said after a pause. “I do love my neighbors and I’ve lived here for so long.”