

# DAILY JOURNAL OF COMMERCE

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February 12, 2001

## Pickup at the Federal Building

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The Henry M. Jackson Federal Building was the site of a small tornado on a recent Sunday, as a Sikorsky S-64 helicopter replaced an 18,000-pound cooling tower atop the 37-story building. Operated by Erickson Air Crane Co. of Central Point, Ore., the Sikorsky navigated between the Federal Building and First Interstate Center to drop off the defunct cooler and pick up its 12,000-pound replacement.

"It was placed with surprising accuracy on its new supports," said project engineer Dick Geoghegan of Notkin Engineering.

Notkin calculated that the helicopter crane lift was the most efficient method of taking the cooling tower and piping off the roof, and then transporting the new cooling tower from the street back to the roof. Taking the tower in pieces through the freight elevator was too cumbersome, and a conventional land crane would disrupt downtown streets for several days and cost an additional \$30,000.



A Sikorsky S-64 "flying crane" lifted the Evapco cooling tower with ease, and placed it atop the Federal Building Feb. 4.

The Sunday morning operation took only 20 minutes once the helicopter arrived from Boeing Field and descended on Second Avenue for the pick. The Sikorsky's rotors extended wider than Second Avenue (curb-to-curb) as it hovered 75 feet above the flatbed truck with the new Evanco cooling tower. The helicopter dropped the old cooler with such "amazing precision" that Geoghegan said a forklift wasn't needed to adjust it on the truck bed.

Similarly, he said, the drop-off was nearly flawless, with the exception of a few minor bumps that slightly damaged the insulation on pipes. A more delicate operation involved removing 35 communications devices from the roof to make way for the lift.

"We essentially put a tornado on top of that roof," said Mike Shinn of Shinn Mechanical, the mechanical contractor. "Something with that lifting capacity has quite a downwash."

The total project cost was \$289,000. Howard Berglund, project manager with the General Services Administration, the building's owner, said the old cooling tower had been maintained to last beyond its normal useful life.



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"This replacement is necessary to do before it fails and leads to a disruption in service," he said. He added that the new tower would improve the building's energy efficiency. A majority of the cost for the project was covered by a rebate from Seattle City Light for a previous mechanical systems project.

Shinn joked that, when other project managers around town got wind that the Sikorsky would be in town for the lift, they inquired about borrowing it to move materials at their job sites. But aside from the usual street permits, the lift required Federal Aviation Administration approval and additional insurance, Shinn said. National Barricade was hired to fence off the stretch of Second Avenue on the east side of the Federal Building, and Seattle police were hired for security.

Despite winds gusts of 15 to 20 mph, Geoghegan said the morning was fog-free and flawless. "When it flew away, we all breathed a great sigh of relief," he said.

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