

Business Profile: McDermaid Roofing & Insulating Co.

By [Chris Linden, managing editor/web editor // Spring 2014](#)

For this small, family-run business, opportunity knocks in many ways. Discover how it filled a new niche and satisfied a significant new customer.



Bill Naretta, Nick Naretta and Paul Naretta, of family-owned McDermaid Roofing & Insulating Co., in Rockford. Their business recently completed work on Illinois Tollway facilities. (Chris Linden photo)

Paul Naretta is no stranger to publicly financed construction and smaller commercial roofing jobs, but he never expected to someday work for the Illinois Tollway.

Since the 1930s, Naretta's third-generation family business, McDermaid Roofing & Insulating Co., 1229 Kishwaukee St., in Rockford, has been installing roofs and pipe coverings for all sorts of locations, from public high schools and all three Rockford hospitals, to shopping centers and manufacturers.

When the Illinois Tollway launched its Small Business Initiative last year, to support small-scale contractors, Naretta jumped at the opportunity. Not only was it a good contract – almost

\$300,000 in work – but it also encouraged “green” technologies already used by McDermaid, such as reflective white roofing, “green” vegetative roofs and Energy Star conservation ratings.

“We saw an invitation to bid, and these were all commercial-type applications,” explains Naretta, company vice president. “We figured we might have a niche opportunity there. We thought, ‘Can we do this? We’ve got the expertise, we have the technology, we have the equipment.’ We figured we could do it, so we took a crack at it and got the job.”

Through fall 2013, McDermaid crews kept busy on five projects in four locations, repairing Tollway buildings in Rochelle and DeKalb, reroofing an office in Dixon and replacing a roof at the Hampshire maintenance garage. Poor weather forced some improvements to wait until spring.

The job itself wasn’t without challenges. The Tollway held rigorous rules and site-specific regulations, including additional safety controls on certain steep roofs. Working around the Tollway’s road crews also meant a few extra logistical concerns, especially as winter approached. Continuous communication, says Naretta, was essential when working with such a client.

“Always try to be sensitive to how your work is going to affect their operations,” says Naretta. “You want to let them know that today we’re going to be tearing off this part of the roof, over here, and let them know way in advance, so that they have time to react to how it’ll affect their operations. Keep them in the loop at all times. Otherwise, they may say, ‘Sorry, you can’t do that today,’ and you already have a crew in place.”

McDermaid maintains a small team of 45 people, many of whom are second-generation employees. Naretta’s father, Bill, maintains the pipe-covering side of the business, while his son, Nick, helps out when he’s home from school.

The Tollway contract kept the McDermaid team extra busy. “It kept a lot of people working, right up through November last year, and we were able to get people working right away, as soon as we hit the spring thaw,” says Naretta. “We had a 10-man crew for a month or so, to get it finished – that’s really good.”

Given the chance, he says, McDermaid will happily work with the Tollway again.

“We’re a team committed to customer service and satisfaction,” he says. “We accomplished that with this job. They’re happy with us. The degree of difficulty in Hampshire was high, because it was really steep, and required a lot of safety and stringent rules. But, we came through with flying colors.”