



COLORADO

Department of Personnel
& Administration

Colorado Capitol Dome Exterior Restoration Project Fact Sheet

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The Capitol Restoration Project:

The project's goal is to repair and restore damage to the exterior painted circular tower above the roof of the capitol, and re-gild the famous gold dome atop the century-old historic landmark. The architectural structure and exterior detail was originally manufactured out of cast iron - not out of stone as many believe. The original gold first used to gild the copper-clad dome was donated by Colorado miners. Restoration includes re-gilding of the dome with 65 ounces of gold - again donated to the state from the same Victor & Cripple Creek sources - by AngloGold Ashanti. This restoration and repair project includes examining all of the exterior architectural details that decorate this part of the building. The work area essentially has been "shrink wrapped" in a fire retardant plastic scrim. The scrim is adhered to a scaffold, protecting workers and the work area from the elements while allowing for year-round progress on the project. The scaffold and scrim rises in sections as work progresses.

The Need for the Work:

More than a century of water infiltration coupled with Colorado's freeze/thaw cycle caused extreme rusting and deterioration of the metal on the exterior of the cast iron tower and dome. Not easily visible from the ground, this corrosion includes the metal fasteners holding the architectural details in place. Hundreds of pieces of the assembly have been affected by the weather over the dome's history.

The damage to the dome is not apparent from inside of the capitol. However, the outside observation deck has been closed to all visitors since 2006 when fasteners holding a portion of the cast iron detail failed and part of the structure fell. Fortunately, nobody was injured as a result of the failure.

The General Timeline:

A forensic investigation of the dome's state of disrepair was completed and restoration began following the legislature's passing a package of bills in 2010. Because much of the damage is hidden, verification of the condition of the metal structure and detail continues as an ongoing process throughout the project. As paint is stripped and the bare metal sections of the exterior are exposed they are evaluated and repaired, or re-cast and replaced as needed.

Phase I: Scaffold /scrim rising to the upper balustrade was completed in February 2012.

Phase II: Scaffold/scrim rising to the bottom of the dome was completed in October 2012.

Phase III: Scaffold/scrim wrapping the entire dome and lantern was completed May 2013.

Dismantling of the scaffold and completion of the job is scheduled for the end of summer 2014.