

Nashville Business Journal - March 24, 2003

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## Nashville Business Journal

# Frierson venture seeks to replace aging industrial roofs

Nashville Business Journal - March 21, 2003 by [Philip Nannie](#) Nashville Business Journal

Design Systems Builders Inc., a division of Nashville-based T.W. Frierson Contractor Inc., has partnered with a Missouri company to create a roof division that aims to grab up to 10 percent of the reroofing market in Nashville.

"Many of the area's industrial roofs were built in the late 1960s and 1970s and will soon be, or already are, in need of repair or replacement," says Del Hickman, vice president of Design Systems Builders.

Hickman says the partnership with Butler Manufacturing Co. will sell seamless metal roofs to replace the aging rubber and asphalt roofs now prevalent around town.

Frierson and Butler have worked together since 1976, with Frierson using Butler's pre-engineered materials for construction projects. Now, Frierson sells and installs the Butler product as part of its construction offerings to the building public.

"They came to us when we were thinking about getting into the reroofing business and since we'd worked with them before, it seemed logical to start this new division," Hickman says.

Frierson has named Matthew Howell manager of roof solutions. The company has submitted about a dozen bids for work since the beginning of the year, but none have been accepted.

Hickman isn't worried about competition, although some of the contractors Frierson employs do similar work.

"Most of the roofing contractors out there install rubber or asphalt roofs. Most conventional roofers don't like to mess with a metal roof," Hickman says.

Chuck Perry is one of those contractors. A vice president and co-owner of Perry Roofing Co. Inc. in Springfield, he has worked with Frierson in a subcontractor capacity for several years.

"We subcontract for them, but not with the Butler stuff. We only do the single-ply rubber roof," says Perry.

Perry says that, when Frierson constructs a Butler building, it's prefabricated so the roof comes with it.

"Pre-engineered work like that comes along when a building is being built from the ground up and it's all one package," Perry says.

Perry doesn't see Frierson's new venture as competition.

"We've bid on jobs with them where they would install some Butler work. When the client needed something else like a rubber roof, we'd install that," he says.

Kansas City-based Butler produces pre-engineered building systems and supplies architectural aluminum systems and components along with construction and real estate services for the nonresidential construction market.

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