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**Western Specialty Contractors Uses Pneumatic Stone Vacuum Lifter to Install 260 Imported Travertine Tiles to Capital One Plaza Facade**

(St. Louis, MO, March 9, 2016) - Constructed in 1982, the travertine panel facade of the Capital One Plaza building in Houston, Texas was showing signs of spalling and the sealants were failing from years of weather exposure. Western Specialty Contractors - Houston, Texas Branch (formerly named Western Waterproofing Company) was hired by property manager CBRE to restore the 22-story building's damaged travertine facade.

Western's scope of work included removing 260 travertine panels, each weighing 700 pounds, and replacing them with new tiles imported from an Italian quarry to match. Damaged panels were repaired by using a combination of re-pinning using Helical Anchors and performing Dutchmen repairs, a technique used to replace only the faulty portion of a stone with a new stone material that closely matches.

"One of the main challenges on the project was lifting the heavy travertine pieces to their places on the building's new facade without damaging them," said Patrick Sheeran, Western Houston Branch Manager. "Fortunately for Western, a stone fabricator located next door to our offices let us use their pneumatic stone vacuum lifter which is capable of handling stone pieces of up to 2,200 pounds."

All existing sealants on the building were also replaced including the CMU backup joints, travertine panel joints, window perimeter joints and glass butt joints. The entire building was

also cleaned and parged to create a continuous surface by filling surface air voids and bug holes in the masonry walls.

With a little ingenuity and use of the pneumatic vacuum, Western crews were able to successfully complete the project within 20 months. The project received a 2014 Pinnacle Award of Merit: Renovation/Restoration from the Marble Institute of America (MIA). The Pinnacle Awards recognize excellence in commercial, residential and renovation/restoration of natural stone projects worldwide.

### **About Western Specialty Contractors**

Family-owned and operated for 100 years, Western Specialty Contractors is the nation's largest specialty contractor in masonry and concrete restoration, waterproofing and specialty roofing. Offering a nationwide network of expertise, building owners, engineers, architects and property managers can count on Western to develop cost-effective, corrective measures that can add years of useful life to a variety of structures (industrial, commercial, healthcare, historic, educational and government buildings, parking structures, monuments and sports stadiums). Western is headquartered in St. Louis, MO with over 30 branch offices nationwide and employs more than 1,200 salaried and hourly professionals who offer the best, time-tested techniques and innovative technology. For more information about Western Specialty Contractors, visit [www.westernspecialtycontractors.com](http://www.westernspecialtycontractors.com).

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