

# PROJECT PROFILE

**Application/Building Type:** Entertainment Facilities

**Name:** Wilderness at the Smokies

**Location:** Sevierville, Tennessee, USA

**USG Levelrock Applicator:** Laxton Tile, Inc.

**Featured Products:** USG Levelrock® 2500 Floor Underlayment, USG Levelrock® CSD® Early Exposure™ Floor Underlayment, USG Levelrock® SRM-25™ Sound Reduction Mat



## USG LEVELROCK® 2500 AND USG LEVELROCK® CSD® EARLY EXPOSURE™ FLOOR UNDERLAYMENTS WERE KEY COMPONENTS IN KEEPING THIS LARGE SMOKY MOUNTAINS ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX ON TRACK.

Nestled at the foot of the Great Smoky Mountains is a construction site featuring one of the largest series of contracts for poured flooring in all of North America.

A total of 472,000 square feet of floor underlayment was installed at Wilderness at the Smokies, a resort development in Sevierville, Tennessee. It features condominiums, hotels, water parks and more. A part of the Bridgemont Development Project, which also includes restaurants and shopping, Wilderness at the Smokies is expected to top all Tennessee tourist destinations in attendance except for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and Dollywood.

“It has been a ton of work,” says Craig Laxton, president and owner of Laxton Tile Inc., Mascot, Tennessee, which was contracted to pour underlayment at several Wilderness at the Smokies structures. “We used more than 5,000 bags of underlayment mix on just one hotel alone.”

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Craig Laxton,  
president and owner,  
Laxton Tile Inc.

### SOLVING PROBLEMS

Like many projects, Wilderness at the Smokies had a fast-track construction schedule, placing tough demands for speed and quality work upon subcontractors such as Laxton Tile. Laxton, however, was up for the challenge. He has been in the flooring business for 28 years, installing ceramic tile, stone, marble and poured floor underlayments.

“The big jobs are sweet because you get to stay on them and make good use of your time,” says Laxton, who had a 12-man crew and sand piles strategically located throughout the site. “This is the largest job I’ve ever had in my life.”

It may also be the most fulfilling job Laxton has ever done. His underlayment pours solve several key problems for the project’s general contractors, who include Welbro Building Corporation and Kraus-Anderson Construction Company.



Here are some of the underlayment's benefits:

**Sound Control:** The Events Center Hotel which has 234 rooms, was framed with wood studs and OSB (oriented strand board), and features USG Levelrock® 2500 Floor Underlayment and USG Levelrock® SRM-25™ Sound Reduction Mat. The system, which is offered by USG, is designed to reduce footstep noise significantly.

A second hotel project has condominium units and is even bigger than the Wilderness Events Center Hotel. The structure used more than 10,000 bags of underlayment and, of course, sound control is a hallmark of this facility, too.

**Speedy Installation:** Two mid-rise condominium buildings, part of the Wilderness-Wyndham Timeshare, feature light-gauge steel frame construction, corrugated steel decking and USG Levelrock® CSD® Early Exposure™ Floor Underlayment. One building is 151,000 square feet, while the other measures 177,000 square feet in size.

For these pours, Laxton subcontracted Worthington Integrated Building Systems (WIBS), which is contracted to Welbro. The schedule called for two to three pours per week, which was easy for Laxton to fulfill. The typical set time for USG Levelrock CSD Early Exposure Floor Underlayment is two to three hours. The underlayment normally dries completely in 10 to 14 days versus the 28 days required for poured concrete. It also weighs up to 55 percent less than three inches of concrete.

"What makes the product unique is that you get a lot more square footage per day," says Laxton. "It's a good-working product. I got the cube tests back, and we had some great results. The pours all exceeded the minimum rating of 3,500 psi."

#### EXPOSURE ADVANTAGE

USG Levelrock CSD Early Exposure Floor Underlayment incorporates an innovative hybrid cementitious formulation that provides high early strength and outstanding resistance to moisture. As a result, it can be poured up to 60 days before a building's permanent windows and doors are installed in areas not subject to freezing conditions (up to 30 days in areas subject to freezing conditions). This speeds and streamlines construction trade scheduling.

The underlayment was the perfect choice for the Wilderness-Wyndham condominiums because of how the buildings were erected. Each building was constructed one side at a time. That is, one side – a full six stories – was erected and roofed in, and then work commenced on the building's other half. Because Laxton poured an entire half-floor every two to three weeks, his crew stayed ahead of schedule and did not worry about the elements.

Nothing can compete with the Great Smoky Mountains for beauty and awe. But the work completed at Wilderness at the Smokies is impressive nonetheless. The project proceeded on schedule, thanks in large part to the floor underlayments used there.

"The GCs are pleased," Laxton points out proudly. "They're pushing everybody, which is no problem for me. They can't give me the floors fast enough."

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Craig Laxton,  
president and owner,  
Laxton Tile Inc.



IG5209-A-USA-ENG/rev. 7-18  
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