

# Mark Twain's top blown off by strong winds

CHRIS HEISEL

Senior Staff Writer

Three cars were damaged when pieces of Mark Twain Hall's roof were blown off on Wednesday afternoon by winds that reached 50 mph.

Around 5 p.m., pieces of the hall's roof fell seven floors to the adjacent parking lot. No students' rooms were damaged, and no one was injured. One car was seriously damaged, while two others escaped the incident with a few scratches.

Randy Conklin, an employee of MU maintenance, said the hall's "penthouse," the name of the room above the elevator shaft, was the only part of the building to sustain damage.

"The penthouse is the mechanics room that's on top of the elevator shaft," he said. "There's still concrete over all of the students."

Conklin also said the elevator was functioning properly but that the penthouse would need a new roof.

Frankie Minor, director of Residential Life, said he estimated the damage to the building could be as much as \$10,000.

"The university has insurance," Minor said. "We'll probably pay a \$1,000 deductible and let insurance cover the rest."

John Humlicek, associate director of Residential Life for facilities, said the penthouse still has a sub-roof for protection and the material that fell was mostly insulation and a rubber membrane. He said the roof, which is only seven or eight years old, is usually good for 20 to 25 years.

"I imagine the wind got under the lip of the roof," Humlicek said. "It happened fast, like a pancake flipper flipping an egg."

Third-floor resident freshman Michael Yates, who was inside the building when the roof came apart, said he thought disaster had struck.

"It sounded like the world was going to end," he said.

Lekha Hileman, a community adviser for the third floor, said there were few bystanders affected by the falling roof.

"There were two people outside when it happened,"



TOM GLAVE/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

**Fifty mph winds blew off parts of Mark Twain residence hall's roof onto a nearby parking lot Wednesday. Three cars were damaged by the falling debris. One was damaged severely.**

Hileman said. "They said they ran across the street when the roof fell."

The bulk of the debris landed on junior Ben Winfrey's Chevy Corsica. Winfrey, who lives on the second floor, said he was worried about his car until the maintenance crew removed the debris.

"I thought I'd come out and see how bad it was," Winfrey said. "I was really happy when I saw just a few scratches."

Sophomore Daniel Jackson's Dodge Ram suffered the most severe damage. Its roof was bent and the windshield split.

Jackson was unavailable for comment.

Students whose cars were damaged should seek an estimate from their insurance company and bring it to MU officials, Minor said.

When asked whether he would put his car in Mark Twain's parking lot on Thursday, Winfrey said he probably would.