Work under way at the district bus barn

Work on the school district's bus barn this summer will provide extra protection during the winter months.

Contractor Rob Collins removed the existing roof, which only protected the front half of the bus fleet. Work will pause until new asphalt is installed on July 8, and then Collins will return to rebuild the roof at a steeper pitch and longer to shelter the buses.

Wayne Paxton, transportation supervisor, said the new roof will be a big improvement. The original roof's slope was so flat, he said, that snow would come off the main building and sit on the bus roof. During the hard winter two years ago, the snow load broke four main beams.

The roof will better suit the newer style of school bus.

“Our buses have gotten longer and bigger,” Paxton said.

The roof will also be higher to make room for the communication antennas. Paxton said he spends about $250 each year to replace antennas broken by hitting the edge of the roof.

The asphalt will replace gravel, and will also be sloped so snow and ice that melts off buses will drain away from the vehicles, rather than freezing into puddles of ice. Paxton said this will be safer for the drivers when they perform safety inspections.

“It's going to be a lot better,” he said.

During the construction, most of the district buses are parked near Baker High School.