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LOCAL NEWS

## Workers rappel to wrap up the Colorado State Capitol dome restoration project

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Workers rappelled the Capitol dome Wednesday morning, touching up spots on the building as they wrap up a \$17 million restoration project.

The workers, who climbed out a window in the "lantern," a section that sits atop the dome, used ropes and harnesses as they installed small pieces of gold leaf while giving the colorful dome an up-close, visual inspection.



Workers put the finishing touches on a restoration project of the Colorado State Capitol dome. (Provided by the Colorado Executive Director's Office)

A grand reopening of the dome, which will include public access to the observation area atop the stately building, is scheduled for Oct. 2, officials said.

"People will be thrilled to get back up there," said Sabrina D'Agosta, a spokeswoman with the Colorado Executive Director's Office. "It's really nice."



The Capitol dome restoration is nearly complete, and the final touches to the gold are being applied this week by workers who rappel from the lantern section atop the building, wrapping up a \$17 million project. (Steve Nehf, *The Denver Post*)

Work inside the building included replacing exposed concrete along the observation deck with tile.

The project was born after a piece of cast iron fell from the ceiling above the interior of the observation deck eight years ago and crashed to the floor.

The deck was closed to the public because it was deemed unsafe.

As part of the project, workers removed gold leaf from the exterior of the dome to repair and replace copper sheeting beneath, along with a cast iron overhaul under the copper sheeting.

The gold dome has been regilded three times before, D'Agosta said, but it's the first time the dome substructure has had a complete makeover.

The Capitol was built in the 1890s, and the gold dome was added in 1908.

Over the years, the dome has been pounded with hail, winds and rain and has been struck by lightning at least three times, D'Agosta said.

Another part of the construction project is installation of a discreet lightning rod atop the dome, designed to eliminate, or at least minimize, damage from strikes.

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