

Written by Administrator
Wednesday, 02 February 2011 00:09 -

“The safety of our guests is a top priority for us, and we're so glad that no one was hurt,” [David Stewart](#), chief executive officer of

[Cherokee Nation](#)

Businesses, said in a prepared statement.

Fewer than 100 guests were gambling in the casino during Tuesday morning's ferocious snowstorm when a casino staff member noticed Sheetrock in one of four areas of the 170,000-square-foot casino appeared to be showing signs of stress, said [Amanda Clinton](#), communications manager for Cherokee Nation Businesses, which operates the casino.

The employee notified the general manager, who was staying in the adjoining Hard Rock Hotel. The general manager ordered that portion of the casino closed after looking over the situation, she said.

The roof collapsed about 9 a.m., after everyone had been evacuated, she said.

Clinton said the single-story casino section had a flat roof, but declined to speculate on whether the weight of foot-deep snow caused the collapse.

Clinton said she was unsure how large a section of the roof failed and didn't know how long repairs might take or how much they might cost.

“We've got a company that specializes in that type of damage looking at it,” she said.

Stewart said the damage was confined to a portion of the casino's original structure, built in 1992.

That section is located in the north half of the sprawling structure and housed a poker room, slot machines and small food service areas, Clinton said.

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Stewart said the damaged section is the only part of the hotel-casino complex closed at the current time.

“Our restaurants, concert venue “The Joint,” convention center, hotel towers and retail operations were not affected and continue to function normally,” Stewart said.

The Hard Rock Hotel and Casino is located east of [Tulsa](#) on the northwest corner of Interstate 44 and State Highway 167 in Catoosa.

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