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SPRING CLEANING FOR ROOFS

AS WINTER NEARS AN END, property managers and maintenance personnel begin turning their attention to spring-cleaning tasks. High on the list should be roof inspections — especially in those areas where the roofs have endured a harsh winter.

All roofs require periodic inspection and maintenance in order to perform as designed and to provide a long and effective service life. Periodic inspection and maintenance are also typically required by roofing system manufacturers to keep roofing warranties in effect. Although all building owners should establish a periodic roof inspection program, inspection and maintenance of any roof should be undertaken only by qualified persons who are familiar with safe roofing practices, including all applicable occupational, health and safety regulations relating to the roofing and construction industries.

Although not all organizations have the maintenance staff to carry out semi-annual inspections of all their buildings, roofing maintenance should be a goal for all institutions. Routine roof inspections and maintenance can substantially increase the useful life of the roof. A recommended rule-of-thumb for annual roof maintenance is two cents per square foot of roof area.

THE BEST TIME for maintenance workers to get up on the roof and do those inspections is in the spring and in the fall.

All roofing deteriorates eventually, but organizations that conduct regular inspections are more likely to see their roofs reach their expected life span. Effective inspections will enable workers to discover obvious signs of trouble, such as standing water, that can't be detected without getting a close-up look.

A close inspection also can reveal early signs of damage and decay that can be repaired before too much water and moisture can seep undetected into a building. Unchecked leakage can lead to mold growth and structural deterioration that can exacerbate damage to a facility.

SPRING CLEANING INSPECTION GUIDELINES

ITEM	WHERE TO LOOK	WHAT TO LOOK FOR
Roof Traffic	Roof Access Points Walkways Mechanical Units	Roof Surface Cuts & Punctures Crushed Roof Insulation, Low Spots Trash & Sharp Objects
Contaminants	Mechanical Units Kitchen Exhausts	Oil Spills Cooking Fats & Grease
Drainage	Mid-Span Of Beams & Joists Large Rooftop Units Roof Drains Wall Scuppers Gutters & Downspouts	Accumulated Debris Visible Deflection Discoloration of Curbs & Walls Loose Sheet Metal Cracked Caulking Standing Water or Evidence
Wind Storm Damage	Roof Perimeter Roof Membrane Surface	Loose Sheet Metal or Equipment Loose or Deformed Surfaces Buckled Insulation Displaced Roof Gravel
Moisture Infiltration	Adjoining Walls & Parapets Large Rooftop Units Skylights	"Soft" Roof Insulation Discoloration Of Walls Loose Sheet Metal Flashings Missing Weather Seals Cracked or Sunken Caulking
Roof Membrane	Joints & Seams Angle Changes	Edge Cavitation or Curling Entrapped Moisture Blisters, Balloons, Fishmouths, Holes, Cracks
Attachments & Fasteners	Parapets, Walls & Curbs Roof Edge	Loose Equipment Loose Fasteners Loose Membrane or Flashing

- Remove all the debris, old equipment and soil buildup from roof drains, gutters and downspouts. Scupper wells, drain covers, overflows and the areas around these items must be clean to allow the proper drainage of all roof water.
- Walk the open portions and perimeter of the roof. Look for any standing water, open joints, or loose materials. Most roof leak sources can be traced to common-sense conditions where the protective roofing surface has been compromised.
- Look at walls, brick & stonework, window and door openings. Suspected roof leaks frequently are not actually due to roofing problems but to defects in related components. However, those leaks certainly can damage the roof system if not corrected.
- Inspect roof areas frequently subjected to foot traffic and maintenance activities. When changing filters or servicing compressors, a dropped screwdriver or spilled oil will damage a roof.

SPRING CLEANING FOR ROOFS



“THIS IS NOT A GREEN ROOF.”



“CLEAN ROOF DRAINS TO IMPROVE DRAINAGE.”