

SERVICE WORKS

"UP ON TOP" NEWS

Roofing Maintenance From A Property Managers Perspective

On one level the practice of property management is the constant prioritizing and reassessing of which necessary property repairs warrant immediate budget expenditures. A commercial roofing contractor needs to understand this to effectively maintain and repair a property's roofing system.

The contractor must help the property manager walk the fine line between major repairs of older roofing systems and the minor repairs of new roofing systems that could become major repairs if neglected. The idea is to maintain the newer roofing system while, over time, bringing the older system into an acceptable level of repair and performance. It is also important for the property manager to understand when it is time to replace an older roofing system. Typically, that time is when too much money has been spent on the

repair of an older roofing system, while too little is being spent on the necessary maintenance of newer roofing systems to prolong their life cycle.

Eventually, every commercial roofing system must be replaced. With inspections, and maintenance and repairs, property managers and owners can extend a roofing system's life cycle to maximize their return on investment.

According to the National Roofing Contractors Association, preventive maintenance adds 30% - 100% service life to a commercial roofing system. That means repair costs could be triple the cost of a preventive maintenance program over the life cycle of a commercial roofing system.

Another property management factor to consider in maintaining roofing systems is energy management. Wet insulation in a roofing system loses energy. According to the Building Owners and Managers Institute, good maintenance practices and good energy management go hand in hand. Some of the highest rates of return on energy conservation are generated simply by performing maintenance.

The key element to an effective facility asset management process for property managers is having a roofing contractor inspect those assets on a regular basis. On a periodic schedule, determined with the building owner or manager, the following should be done;

- Document each inspection (roof plan, inspection forms, and photo documentation). Each technician should carry a digital camera to document noteworthy roof conditions. Digital photos can be included with inspection reports.
- Perform infrared testing as needed to provide thermal energy reports to identify moisture within a roof system.
- Remove all debris, clean gutters, leaders and drains.
- Make minor repairs at the time of inspection.
- Provide estimates for roof repairs (or replacement if necessary).
- Comply with and document compliance with the maintenance requirements of any roofing system manufacturer warranties in effect.

Physical rooftop inspections and color infrared camera surveys are the keys to the effective documentation and analysis of energy loss, roof repair and maintenance issues.

In addition to the information gathered during roof inspections, the importance of maintaining warranty, design, installer, as-built materials data, and repair history information should be emphasized. Contractors will benefit from assisting in the compilation of this additional data.

If this process is followed, the repair, maintenance and energy conservation of commercial roofing systems will be as cost-effective as possible. And with this process, property managers will know years in advance of when a roofing system will have to be replaced, and what its projected expense will be.



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- Inspect the entire roofing system including flashings, drains or gutters and leaders, masonry, etc.