

Western States Roofing Systems, Inc.

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Are Your Roofs Ready for Spring?

When warmer weather begins to tempt Southern California with promises of spring, it's time once again to visually assess the condition of your roofs and determine how they have fared since your last inspection. This, of course, is best done with a handful of notes documenting your last visit - but it's never too late to start! Even if this is the first time you've seen your roofs, you can start by noting their general condition and observing what housekeeping measures and repairs are necessary. Regular visual inspection of your roofs will help you identify and correct problems before they cause disruption to interior operations, or cause permanent and costly damage to the roof assembly.

What should I look for?

Roofs should be inspected on a regular basis. Generally, you should see a uniform surface that is lying flat. Signs of trouble vary with the type of roof system. If you have a conventional, built-up roof system, look for ridges and tears. If you are inspecting a single-ply roof system, look for signs of shrinkage, cracking or crazing, and tears. Any of these defects can allow moisture to enter the roof system long before it manifests as a leak in the building interior. Whatever the type of roof system, make sure that the roof surface, roof drains, scuppers and gutters are clear of debris and in good condition.

The goal is to eliminate as much ponding water as possible. Consider a 100 sq. ft. area of roofing (10' x 10') with a 2" pond of water. This "pond" holds approximately 125 gallons of water weighing over 1000 pounds! Clearly, that can't be good for your roofing system. It isn't good for your interior either - a leak in the roof area of this pond could drain all 125 gallons into your building! If penetrations on the roof or depressions in the roof surface cause ponding which last more than 48 hours, make a note of each and its cause. Would installation of an additional roof drain eliminate the ponding? Or does the ponding need to be addressed at the time the roof is replaced?

As you walk the roof surface, look for indications of trapped or hidden moisture. A soft or spongy feeling underfoot is usually a good indication of damaged or wet insulation. As a rule, all wet or damaged insulation and roofing should be removed and replaced. The perimeter edges of your roof will generally end with a sheet metal termination. The termination should be uniform in appearance and firmly attached. Loose, wrinkled or damaged sheet metal indicates damage. In addition to improving the aesthetic appearance of your roof, the perimeter sheet metal contributes to the wind resistance of the roofing assembly. If the perimeter edge to the roof system has been compromised, the system may be susceptible to wind damage.

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Page 2

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Repairs/Replacement

If your rooftop visit turns up some problems, the time to address them is before spring rains begin. At the very least, temporary repairs can be made until a permanent solution can be managed. That permanent solution might be final repairs by a commercial roofing contractor, or a total roof replacement. If you inspect your roofs on a continuing basis, the need for a new roof won't catch you by surprise. Regular roof inspections will allow you to chart the condition of your roofs and anticipate when replacement is needed.

Professional Assistance

Don't be afraid to get professional help with your roofing needs. Your roof is often the largest single component of your building's shell. Yet because it's out of sight, and takes effort just to get there, it can be an overlooked component. Western States Roof Systems, Inc. has trained specialists on staff - individuals specifically trained to assist you with all aspects of roof maintenance and roof replacement. Call 800.805.ROOF (7663), or (818) 773-9471 for expert assistance!