



Commercial Roof Inspection Guidelines

Commercial Roof System Inspection Guidelines:

Roofing systems are valuable assets that must be maintained and protected. Successful property management depends on periodic inspection and regularly scheduled maintenance of your roofing system. Periodic inspection will help you extend the life of the roof as well as reduce the potential of water damage to the interior of the building. Roof surfaces do not wear evenly due to weathering and other environmental exposures. This holds true for different sections of the same roof surface.

To reduce the potential for damage it is recommended that commercial roofing structures be inspected at least twice a year. The suggested times for routine inspections are in the spring after the winter season, and late fall after the hot summer but before the winter weather arrives. Inspections are also warranted following a major weather event such as wind and /or hail storms.

Roofing systems may fail due to a number of factors:

1. Poor workmanship during installations
2. Poor design of the roof system
3. Faulty materials
4. Weathering or weather events
5. Trapped moisture or mechanical damage
6. Neglect and lack of maintenance
7. Foot traffic on the roof surface

A roof maintenance program should be a systematic approach similar to that of any other mechanical system requiring maintenance. Your HVAC systems for example require regular inspections and routine maintenance to keep them in operational condition. As with any other maintenance program, management should assign this duty to a competent and trained person.

The maintenance program should include documentation (inspection forms, photographs, notes, repair invoices, etc.) to identify and record the issues noted during the routine inspections and to provide guidance to the contractors who will complete any needed repairs. The goal of a roof maintenance program is to identify problem areas and complete repairs before they become major issues.

Commercial roofing systems include:

- The roof membrane
- Flashings
- Roof decking
- Roof insulation whether it is below or on top of the roof deck
- Masonry parapets and copings
- Penetrations to the roof surface (HVAC systems, drains, vent pipes etc.)
- Roof support system

Establishing a roof maintenance program:

During the initial phase of establishing the roof maintenance program, the responsible individual should document some basics:

1. Establishing a file for each building roof.
2. When was the roof installed?
3. When was the last time roof repair or updates were completed?
4. Is there any current leakage?
5. Are there any regular roof inspection maintenance procedures in place? Do they include documentation (inspection reports, photos, etc)?
6. Who administers the roof maintenance program: maintenance staff or contractor?
7. How often are the inspection/maintenance procedures completed?

Interior Roof Inspection

When completing the initial observation as well as routine inspection, note any evidence of roof problems such as:

1. Water stained ceiling tiles
2. Discoloration of interior walls surfaces
3. Deformation in the wall surface (raised or deteriorated areas).
4. Evidence of leakage around window frames (deterioration or the frame and/or discoloration of finishes).
5. Rust or other deterioration or roof structural supports or components such as roof decking raised or lowered structural supports
6. Mold on building surfaces.

Exterior Roof Inspection

Items to look for include:

1. Water standing on the roof surface. There should not be standing water on the roof surface two or more days after the most recent weather event.
2. Discoloration of the roof surface.
3. Storage of material on the roof surface. If any they should be removed
4. Flashing – loose, buckled, pulling away from building or any other damage
5. Vegetation on or in contact with the roof surface.
6. Rusting metal pipe venting or other metal roof penetrations.
7. Gaps or cracks in the caulking around roof penetrations; i.e. vents, HVAC units, skylights, drains, etc.
8. Roof surface drains and gutter system free of debris.
9. Missing domes on roof drains.
10. Roof surface-cracks, blisters, punctures, or any other deformities
11. Cracks in masonry parapets or caps
12. Damaged, defective, or missing joints in masonry along roof edges.

When any of these conditions are noted, the inspector/maintenance person should include this information in their report to management while also including photos to further detail. Management should then address the issues found during the roof inspection.

Suggested checklist follows:

Roof Inspection Checklist				
Property Name:	Property Location:			
Roof Area Inspected				
Season Weather Conditions				
Inspected by				
	OK	Minor	Major	Observation
I. Supporting Structure				
Exterior and Interior Walls				
Expansion/Contraction				
Settlement Cracks				
Deterioration				
Moisture Stains				
Physical Damage				
Other				
Exterior and Interior Roof Deck				
Securement to Supports				
Expansion/Contraction				
Structural Deterioration				
Water Stains				
Physical Damage				
Attachment of Felts/Insulation				
HVAC Equipment				
Facia Condition				
Other				
II. Roof Condition				
General Appearance				
Debris				
Drainage				
Physical Damage				
Any blisters, splits, buckles, punctures				
General Condition				
Other				
Surface Condition				
Any evidence of ponding				
Other				