
CONSUMER ADVISORY B U L L E T I N

Maintenance: The Key to Long-Term Roof Performance

Roofing professionals generally agree that a good roof requires proper design, quality materials, and quality application in order to perform successfully. Yet once the roof is installed, nothing is more critical to its long-term performance than establishing a program of regular inspections and proper maintenance.

The National Roofing Contractors Association (NRCA) believes that the most effective way to keep a roof performing for a long period of time is for the building owner to have a formal, long-term relationship with a professional roofing contractor. A professional roofing contractor:

- Understands local building practices.
- Understands different roof systems, and can make recommendations concerning which type of system is best for a particular building.
- Has a trained and experienced workforce.
- Can respond quickly should a problem arise.
- Is well established in the community, so the owner understands who he is dealing with.
- Works in, and gives back to, his local community.
- Best understands the local business environment, and knows how to complete the work.

NRCA has expressed concerns regarding the long-term warranties offered by many roofing material manufacturers, because warranties do not necessarily provide assurance of satisfactory roof performance. Warranties often contain provisions which significantly limit the warrantor's liability and the consumer's remedies in the event that problems develop or damage occurs to the roof system.

Instead, NRCA believes that the best way for a building owner to ensure satisfactory post-installation roof performance is to have a formal, long-term maintenance agreement with a professional roofing contractor. Maintenance programs typically offer the following advantages:

- A maintenance program is proactive rather than reactive. It can help to identify problems at their early stages, while they can be corrected and *before* they become catastrophes.
- Regular maintenance can reveal and address sources and causes of leaks *before* they occur. Too many owners have their roofs examined only after a roof leak occurs.
- A maintenance program allows for a planned, organized approach to management of a roof asset—and allows for responsible, timely preparation of long-term capital expenditures.
- Response time to address leakage problems is greatly improved. Warranty repairs, on the other hand, can take time to be processed—while the problem remains unresolved.

Building owners should take care in selecting the roofing contractor who will perform the maintenance work. Additional information is available from NRCA, or from an NRCA-member professional roofing contractor in your area.