



Can your flat roof make it through the winter?

If you're not sure, keep reading!

by Jill Cheff

It's always a little sad when summer ends and we start preparing our budgets and getting our buildings in shape for the long winter months ahead. One very important element in good asset management is making sure to get your flat roof inspected before the snow and ice cover appear. Once winter has set in, it's much more costly and complicated to do proper diagnostics and good permanent repairs....many of which could have been avoided.

Fact

A well-maintained roof will add years of useful life to your system, which equates into REAL savings. It will also minimize emergency calls and interior damage and gain you and your owner some peace of mind...priceless!

Where to start

If you have a capable on-site maintenance staff, a clean roof is a good place to start. It is amazing how much debris can collect on a roof. Trapped debris is the cause of many roof-related problems and should be removed on a regular basis.

Note: DO NOT let non-roofing professionals make repairs! (Or use ice picks!)

Call a professional

If you know a professional roofing contractor and have worked with them in the past, ask them if they can provide you with written maintenance reports on your buildings. The reports should be easy to read and include:

- Overall description of the roof and its components
- Detailed description of deficiencies
- Pictures corresponding with the deficiencies
- Cost to correct the deficiencies
- Summary of overall condition

Due to the cost to the contractor, some companies may charge for this service, so be sure to ask!

Report, what to expect

Most flat roofs will have some deficiencies. Depending on their age, system, and past maintenance you may learn of some major and/or minor problems that need correction. Any deficiency found that is letting water enter your system needs IMMEDIATE repair.

- A lot of debris is clogging drains/gutters
- Flashings and seams loose or open
- Parapet walls "bridging" and splitting
- Splits and holes in field membrane
- Edge metal, coping, pulling away/open
- Stacks and other pipes not capped properly, missing vents, etc.
- Etc.

How to find a roofing professional

BOMA is a good source to call and ask your fellow property managers for a referral. Also, the National Roofing Contractors Association (NRCA) is very consumer-friendly, and various top manufacturers, such as Firestone, will be glad to help you, too.



Jill cheff is the Sales Manager for Newton Crane Roofing and has been in commercial construction sales for over 12 years. Newton Crane is a commercial/industrial flat roofing company and is approved by major manufacturers.