

# SERVICE NOTES

F R O M N A T I O N S R O O F

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## TIPS FOR PREPARING YOUR ROOF AND YOUR BUILDING FOR THE WINTER MONTHS

*by*

**PATTY DONOHUE**

*President, Nations Roof New York*

*—and—*

**MIKE SPACH**

*Vice President of Technical Services*



None of us really look forward to the winter months. Sure there are of few of us that for some reason like to be cold. These people like wearing extra clothes, dealing with the hats, coats, and gloves. They like the cool brisk feelings that accompany cold wind rushing around in cold morning and evening hours. Sure the winter months bring us the holiday season with Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day – and for that reason, some of us like the thoughts of 20 degree weather.

So with winter fast approaching, we felt that it was an appropriate time to cover some details about winterizing your buildings. As many of the residents in the northern sections of the country plan to head down for warmer weather, we are reminded that the winter weather can take quite a toll on our homes and even our commercial properties as well. So as the old adage reminds us – we were thinking that one ounce of prevention might be worth a pound of cure.

## Tips to Help Your Roof Through Winter



- Check exterior walls for leaks, stains, and cracks in brick and missing mortar. Taking time to seal these types of open conditions will provide a much more weather-tight seal for the building, keeping the warm conditioned air in and the cold harsh weather out.

- Check ceiling and interior walls for signs of leaks (stains). Take the time to seal all roof leaks possible before the weather gets too bad. For when the rooftop becomes covered with ice and snow it will be nearly impossible to find those little annoying roof leaks.

- Check roof deck and fascia/coping for any signs of deterioration. Check expansion joints for signs of excessive movement and splits, or thin sections of membrane, and deteriorated caulking of loose metalwork.

The cold weather will have a tremendous effect on loose mortar or composite building materials. These materials will contract and if the materials are already loose, these materials may separate, forming water or wind access points into the facility.

- Check the operation of the HVAC units. Make sure all supply lines are free to keep warm air moving in the building. Check your HVAC ductwork, housings, condensation lines and pipes; make sure the condensation lines are draining properly so that the lines are free from water. Empty the condensation pan on all HVAC units, removing all excess water. Make sure HVAC doors are not rotted/rusting and are secured tightly and check the flashings. The condition of your HVAC equipment will have a tremendous impact on the ability to keep the facility properly conditioned. These components need to be ready for the hard months ahead in order to receive the maximum benefit.

- Check all penetrations on the roof, i.e., pitch pockets, vent pipes and pipe boots. Check the reglets areas for flashings for any areas of deteriorated caulking, or voids in the caulking. Check chimney flashings, brick and mortar joints. Any point of air or water infiltration needs to be checked and restored to a properly sealed condition to avoid contamination.



- Check and clear all gutters, downspouts and scuppers. Clean out all drains, making sure that all drains are working properly. Check all strainers and clamping rings. Drainage problems in the winter months become a harbinger of future roof failure. Plus, the weight of water in an improperly functioning gutter system can loosen the attachment of the guttering to the structure. It is important that all drainage water moves freely.





- Check the field of the roof membrane and redistribute all ballast across any bare spots. Check for tears and/or holes in the membrane and have them repaired promptly.
- Before the snow comes, flag any low curbs less than 10 feet tall in height off the roof deck with a corner post. This will prevent damage when removing the snow load. Low curbs may be damaged if they are not seen during the snow removal process.
- Check all base flashing and counter flashing attachments. When snow accumulates on the roof up and over the flashings, the roof can leak.
- Paint any rusted metal penetrations and check all metal copings. Make sure that all coping joints are intact and the caulk is not showing signs of deterioration.
- Remove all loose debris from the roof surface. Remove all unattached walk pads so that they will not become an icy slip hazard as water freezes around and between them. This also helps prevent damage during snow removal.
- Some areas of the rooftop must be accessible at all times. Therefore be prepared and have several thick brush brooms available at a moment's notice to removal ice or snow if a trip to a rooftop machine has to be made.

• Inform all personnel that walking on a membrane roof, or modified roof, is dangerous during the winter. Ice forms on the roof surface and can create fall hazards. Inform the crew that under no circumstances should the personnel walk on the rooftop after dark. Also inform personnel that walking on the roof before 10:00 am may also be extremely dangerous.

• Remove all hosepipes from the roof area.

• Remember as colder temperatures arrive, the membrane roof system will become harder and less flexible and therefore more acceptable to damage by puncture or sharp objects.

• Remember only trained roof technicians should remove the snow from the rooftop; they are trained in how not to damage the roof surface.



*For more information, please call toll-free*

**1-800-444-ROOF**