

## Annual Roof Maintenance: Taking Care of Your Roof

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Annual preventative roof maintenance is the easiest way of taking care of your roof, to protect the most valuable physical asset you own – your home. A wellmaintained roof system on the home not only keeps the family dry, but can increase its energy efficiency as well.

Over time, even a minor roof leak can cause a catastrophic failure during harsh environmental conditions, which can eventually promote the growth of harmful organisms including mold and mildew. When left untreated, a small leak in the roof can eventually degrade the home's structural

integrity and quickly deteriorate its interior and/or exterior.

### Maintenance Is a Necessity

Property owners often recognize how important HVAC maintenance is to the comfort level of the home's interior. However, most homeowner's give little thought to roof system maintenance until a serious problem occurs. Waiting until a leak appears in the roof is often referred to as reactive maintenance, which often costs significantly more to repair than the price of an annual or biannual inspection to catch a small roofing issue.

Unfortunately, a small leak in the roof system can often create more serious problems than a major hole in the roof. This is because moisture will continuously come in contact with wood, gypsum, flooring materials, insulation, and other building materials causing deterioration and potential structural failure.

When insulation becomes wet, it quickly eliminates its Rvalue, or its ability to insulate against the heat of the summer, and the cold of the winter. In addition, wet insulation promotes the growth of harmful contaminants on organic surfaces while increasing the roof's structural load. It also has the ability to rust roofing fasteners and cause significant damage to structural components including stucco, brick, concrete and wood on the building's exterior.

### Preventative Maintenance Program

To ensure that you are properly caring for your rooftop, you should consider implementing an annual or biannual roof maintenance program to safeguard the home and minimize the potential of costly repairs.

A preventative maintenance program involves:

- The Inspection – This program often starts with an inspection where the contractor walks the roof surface, looking for any signs of deterioration, holes or damage, at least once every year. The inspector will evaluate wall flashing, the perimeter edge, terminations (termination bar, counter flashing, metal coping, etc.), stack

and pipe flashing, curb flashing, fasteners, seams, caulking, etc.

- Documenting Deficiencies – Building a repair checklist, the inspector will detect and note deficiencies and take photographs of the top and underside of the roofing system, while marking any defective or disintegrating material that requires repair.
- Perform Repairs – Part of the maintenance program includes performing repairs, using quality materials and proven repair methods, to increase the roof's longevity and minimize the potential of developing serious roofing issues.

Annual or biannual preventative maintenance by a licensed roofing contractor is an easy solution for taking care of your roof. Avoid reacting to serious roofing issues when they arise. Instead, incorporate an affordable, preventive maintenance program to protect the home against outdoor environments while maximizing the value of the house.

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