

Check Your Roof Now



With Spring bringing warmer temperatures and storms, it is time to inspect your roof to be sure your building remains watertight. Your building's roof is not impervious to damage and, if not maintained, will deteriorate, which increases the risk of water-related damage to your building and the valuables contained within.

By completing routine roof inspections, you will be able to detect and repair little problems before they become big problems. While it is important for church staff to periodically do visual inspections from the ground, rooftop inspections should be carried out by a roofing professional at least twice a year (spring and fall). The roofing professional should provide a report that evaluates the current condition of the roof covering/membrane, the flashing and seams, and the eaves and downspouts. If any damage is discovered, immediate action should be taken to repair/replace the damage before water can penetrate, and should be completed by a professional roofer with adequate commercial general liability and workers compensation insurance.

The following items should be included in any roofing inspection.

- Examine the underside of the roof deck, if possible, and the outside of the building. Look for cracks, stains, rusting, watermarks, wet spots, chipped mortar or other damage.
- Identify any debris to be removed.

- Check to be sure areas with louvers, ridge vents, roof vents, and soffit vents are clear.
- Check for cracked and worn rubber boots around vent pipes.
- Check for damaged chimney cap.
- Inspect all caulking and flashing.
- Check for flashing around roof drains and vents for deterioration, as well as damage to capping at parapets and expansion joints.
- For pitched or sloped roofs, check: granular erosion on asphalt shingles; deformed edges; curled or missing shingles; missing or loose tabs; loose, slipped or missing slates or roof tiles; and masses of moss and lichen, which could signal the roof is decaying underneath.
- For flat roofs, check: surface condition of the roof for punctures, blistering, granular loss, cracking or shrinkage; seams for open joints, ridging or the opening of lapped edges; areas where adhesion is lacking or deteriorating on fully-adhered roofing systems; ensure that no fasteners are popping or backing out on a mechanically-fastened roofing system; the weight and depth of the stone against the specifications in a Ballasted Roofing System; accumulation of water in certain areas, this can be caused by an insufficient slope to roof drains, building settlement or even structural movement.

In addition to the semi annual roof inspection, the following tasks should be routinely performed:

- Trim overhanging tree branches to prevent leaves, small branches and other debris trapping water on the roof or in downspouts.
- Make sure gutters and downspouts are working and securely anchored to the building. Clean regularly.
- Check that the roof space/attic is adequately ventilated throughout the year which ensures that heat and moisture do not build up in the attic. It prevents water from accumulating at the bottom of the roof and freezing, which can cause ice damming and further damage to your building. Improper ventilation of attic spaces can also result in curling, blistering and buckling of asphalt shingles.

Preventive maintenance and repairs can extend the life of your roof and prevent water damage to your building and its contents. Engaging professionals will bring you peace of mind.