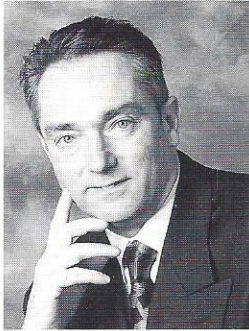


# NEW ENGLAND REAL ESTATE JOURNAL

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## ROOF MAINTENANCE IS NOT COSTLY COMPARED TO MAJOR REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT

by Dennis Kulesza

A properly executed maintenance program will not only

add years to the life of your roof, it detects minor problems before damage is widespread, and will avoid interruption of the internal functions of the building.

A roof should be treated as a capital piece of property, and be conscientiously maintained to function properly, protecting your investment.

Unfortunately, too many times the roof is taken for granted until it begins to leak. We should remember that the roof is exposed to many stresses which can shorten the life of the roofing system.

The key to obtaining the maximum useful life of the roof is a program of periodic inspection and preventive maintenance.

A roof inspection should be performed at least twice a year, in the early spring to note and correct damage that occurred during the winter, and in the early fall to prepare the roof to withstand the onslaught of another winter. Additional inspections should take place when events occur which may cause, or be evidence of roof damage, such as workmen on the roof, appearance of leaks, or a hail storm or hurricane.

For a roof inspection to be most effective, it should be done when the roof surface is dry. If your purpose is to trace leaks, the best time to inspect your roof is within 12 hours of the last rain so that the damage will still be obvious.

A qualified roofing contractor or consultant's program of inspection and preventive maintenance reports should include the following:

- A roof plan accurately showing existing roof mounted equipment and deletions of former equipment.
- Evaluation of the general condition/appearance and life expectancy of the roofing system.

These reports should also include a checklist addressing the types and seriousness of the problem(s), any observation relating to the problem(s), and the condition of and recommendations for the following items if needed (note that I have not listed the many subcategories that pertain to each item listed).

- Structural deck/deflection results in ponding.
- Condition and effectiveness of drains, gutters, and downspouts.
- Physical damage to the existing roof system.
- Flashing.
- Expansion joints.
- Fascia.
- Penetrations.
- Pitch pans.

The results of this inspection may be used to develop a maintenance schedule. Such a schedule addresses specific areas of concern which should be checked during the course of the planned life of the roof. The maintenance schedule, which can cover several years, initially addresses the most serious problems on the roof which must be taken care of immediately. It can then be used as a prioritized inspection and maintenance schedule. This schedule, which can cover 4-5 years, also allows you to anticipate the need for resurfacing.

With such a schedule, funds may be planned and allocated on an orderly basis. Also when the roof has neared the end of its life span and can no longer be maintained economically, it can be scheduled for replacement during good weather.

Roof inspections, surveys, and preventive maintenance performed on a regular basis are not costly when compared to major repair and replacement costs which will prematurely occur if these actions are neglected. In addition, there are certain tax advantages which apply to repairing a roof which do not apply to replacing a roof.

**To obtain a professional roof evaluation contact:**  
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