



CRUEL SUMMER

By Christy Rhone

Summer weather conditions can be brutal to commercial roofs. Now that the end of this summer is approaching, that good ol' summertime might also be leaving some roofing problems behind.

Here are five ways your roof might have been affected this summer by heat, humidity, UV rays, wind and hail:

Heat and UV Rays

Commercial roofs are tougher than shingled roofs, but the sun still administers its blistering rays on the materials, sometimes causing cracks and bumps in the roof's surface. Check for any cracking, bubbles or blisters on the surface of your roof. This could be an indicator of trapped moisture that leads to leaking.

Blistering occurs when there are pockets of air or moisture trapped between the roof membrane and deck or between layers of the membrane itself. It's not a good idea to ignore them because the blisters will get worse and lead to more serious issues if not corrected.

Intense UV rays can also weaken the seals and bonds in the materials on your roof. Certain roofing materials can grow bigger in the heat, then further damage is done when they begin to shrink.

Humidity

Then you have humidity. Humidity weakens all structures of a commercial roof in summertime, and moisture can build up and start to affect other areas of the roof via wood rot, mold or corrosion, depending on the materials involved.

Wind

Wind damage can be detrimental as well. Many commercial buildings are protected by flat roofs, which are used because they can accommodate HVAC systems and other infrastructure. But strong winds can get underneath the roof materials and yank them up.

Check your roof for wrinkles or bubbles underneath the surface. If the roofing membrane is pulled up from the surface, rain can get in and damage your roof deck.

Strong wind can also pull off granules or remove the gravel found on the many building roofs, compromising the roof's ability to do its job properly.

Hail

Maybe you heard that unwelcome “ping ping ping” sound of hail this summer.

Different types of roofing materials can react to hail quite differently. The age and condition of the roof can also greatly affect how much damage hail inflicts.

The weight and size of the hail is also an important determining factor of damage to the roof; the larger and more it weighs, the more damage it will cause. Duration of the storm also is a big factor; the longer the hail falls, the more time it has to damage the roof.

Hurricanes

Take note that your roof may have been damaged as well during the hurricane season. And not only if you were in the direct path of a cyclone. If your area experienced a tropical storm or hurricane this season but you didn't see any obvious damage, it's still a good idea to have your roof checked. Winds well below hurricane force are capable of doing damage, as are wind-driven debris or rain.

As the summer winds down, having a professional inspect your roof to see how it has come through everything the summer threw at it would provide peace of mind and ensure you know what is needed to prepare the roof for the colder season just ahead.

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