

# PRO-ACTIVE WINTER PREPARATION

The following is a brief guide outlining some important issues that should be addressed before the first rain. As we all know, pro-active attention is always preferable to the panicked emergency calls during the winter months.

## I. KNOW YOUR VENDORS

- A. Verify the emergency phone numbers, 24 hour service capability, response time and emergency charges.
- B. Insurance certificates - hard copies must be on file naming the Association and Management Company as additional insured.
- C. Vendor record keeping - preferably a separate database for each Association with individual address and repair history records. **Note:** This type of record keeping will eliminate warranty questions and aid in reserve studies
- D. Vendor warranty policy and response time.
- E. Make sure your vendors knows the specific Association requirements and policies.
  - 1. Does your vendor have the gate access code?
  - 2. Does the Association approve tarping?
  - 3. Pre-approved repair charge limits (Pre-approved limits can dramatically reduce the time needed to successfully address a problem).
  - 4. Special record keeping and/or photo documentation needed for pending litigation cases.
  - 5. Who is responsible for interior damage?**Note:** PCW maintains a 98.3% success rate for solving leak problems the first time out

## II. ROOFS

B. Inspections

1. Roof inspections should be performed on a yearly basis with a roof maintenance being performed as necessary, depending on the type, age and condition of the existing roof system.

C. Typical Maintenance Items

1. **Clean off leaves and debris**

- a. When water can not flow freely it will back-up under the roof system.

2. **Seal Roof Jacks**

- a. This is the metal flashing that goes around the base of the pipes on the roof.
- b. A non sealed roof jack will allow water to enter and run down the pipe into the home or structure.

3. **Replace Missing Vent Caps**

- a. This is the metal cap on the top of the large pipes that go through the roof.
- b. A missing vent cap can create a 4" diameter hole in the roof.

4. **Replace Missing Roof Coverings**

- a. Missing and/or wind damaged tile, composition shingle, shake, etc.
- b. When a piece or section of the roof covering is missing, the sun and weather will damage the critical felt underlayment and create a leak problem.

5. **Flat Roofs**

- a. The simple fact is that flat roofs are a terrible design and need more attention than other types of roofing systems.
- b. Common areas of concern are:  
edge metal, roof jacks and other types of penetrations, roof drains, proper water run-off, and adequate U.V. and weather protection (i.e., cap sheet or rock coverage).

6. **Life Expectancy**

- a. Your roofing contractor should supply you with a yearly report addressing these items and projecting the remaining life expectancy for the roof system. **Note:** An Accurate estimate of the replacement year is critical for proper reserve budgeting.

III. **GUTTER SYSTEMS**

- A. Clean out the Gutters
  - 1. Maintaining gutter systems is usually as simple as keeping them cleaned and free of debris. This would include the gutters, collectors, and down spouts. Remember most of the leaves, dirt, and debris on the roof eventually end up in the gutter.
- B. Divert Water Away from the Building
  - 1. At the base of the down spout, make sure the water run off is being adequately diverted away from the building.

#### IV. LANDSCAPE

- A. Sprinklers
  - 1. Reset the amount and frequency of watering. In heavy winters, excessive rain and watering can create higher water tables that are responsible for foundation problems.
  - 2. Make sure sprinklers are directed away from walls. **Note:** This is very important to protect wood siding and stucco walls.
- B. Landscape
  - 1. The landscaping and soil grading should allow for proper water run off away from the building.
  - 2. Check ground collectors and drains for adequate water flow.
- C. Trees
  - 1. Cut back tree branches from roof areas where contact damage can occur and where excessive leaves and debris could build up.

#### V. BUILDING INSPECTION

- 1. Deck Systems - Entry, Stairway, Balcony Decks
  - 1. Inspect the top coat. This is the color coat that protects the deck against wear and U.V. damage.
  - 2. Identify cracks, soft spots, and failed areas.
  - 3. Review the drain system and water run-off.
- B. Stucco and Wood Siding
  - 1. Review separation and cracks.
  - 2. Identify possible dry-rot damage.
  - 3. Inspect wall penetrations such as A/C lines, wall fixtures, hose bibs, windows, vents, and other openings that could allow water to migrate into the walls.

#### VI. OUTSTANDING LEAK PROBLEMS

- A. Check your Pending Leak Repair Proposals
  - 1. If the Board did not approve the leak repair last year, you can bet the Homeowner will be calling after the first rain.
  - 2. This simple step can help reduce the flow of calls during the first heavy storm.

## **VII. DISASTER PLAN PROCEDURE**

- A. Although we can hope for a mild Winter Season, Mother Nature does not always choose to cooperate. Being prepared allows for a faster more controlled response, with better cooperation between the Homeowner - Property Manager - Management Company and Vendor.
- B. Ask for a copy of the Winter Disaster Plan from your vendor. If they do not have a formalized plan, there is no way they will be able to meet the emergency needs of the Association.
- C. Develop your own Disaster Plan in the event of a devastating storm or Winter Season. Some of the problems that were encountered during the last El Nino=s and past disaster storms are as follows:
  - 1. Excessive water volume for extended periods.
  - 2. Windstorms with resulting wind damage to the roofs and trees.
  - 3. Severe flooding, road closures, landslides.
  - 4. Service interruptions - power / phones.
  - 5. Excessive volume of leak calls.
  - 6. Back-log of work orders, appointments, etc.
  - 7. Extensive interior damage.
  - 8. High tarping and temporary repair costs (initial response).
  - 9. Unsafe working conditions for repair crews.
  - 10. High stress levels.

By addressing the obvious problems before winter, you can reduce the number of leak incidents, the severity of the leak problems, and of course, dramatically reduce the resulting interior damage.

Should you have specific questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call. Additionally, we would be happy to inspect the items listed above and submit a report, and/or walk with the Board during one of the landscape walk-throughs.

Respectfully,

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