

“Up On Top” News

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What Should Consumers Look For In Roof Warranties

5423 N. 59th Street
Tampa, FL 33610
P 813-626-7717
F 813-626-7248

3331 NW 55th Street
Ft. Lauderdale, FL
33309
P 954-777-0203
F 954-777-0283

765 NE 19th Place
Unit 9
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33903
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F 239-458-2510

www.serviceworksroofing.com



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State-of-the-art roof systems installed today are the result of more than a century of research and innovation. The relatively recent introduction of numerous systems using rubbers, plastics, modified asphalts and other synthetic materials caused manufacturers to focus attention on warranties they offer.

A roofing warranty's length should not be the primary criterion in the selection of a roofing product or roof system because the warranty does not necessarily provide assurance of satisfactory roof system performance. The selection of a roof system application should be based on the product's qualities and suitability for the prospective project.

There is a common misconception by roofing consumers that long-term warranties are all-inclusive insurance policies designed to cover virtually any roofing problem, regardless of the cause or circumstance. Roofing warranties typically do not warrant that the roof system will not leak or is suitable for the project where it is installed. Even the most comprehensive manufacturer warranties that cover materials and workmanship generally provide only that the manufacturer will repair leaks that result from specific causes specified in the warranty.

Long-term warranties largely are reactive (rather than proactive) solutions to roof problems. In general, they tend to undermine a prudent owner's initial concern for proper roofing specifications and application, as well as an owner's subsequent responsibility for periodic roof maintenance.

Roofing consumers are best served by manufacturers who:

- Base warranties for membranes or systems solely upon an honest and realistic appraisal of their proven service lives.
- Clearly and conspicuously state in writing all recommended and required owner maintenance responsibilities during the projected service life of the roof and warranty term.
- Solicit from a roofing consumer a clear understanding of the consumer's primary responsibility to provide periodic routine maintenance during the service life of the roof membrane or system.

Owners should focus their purchase decisions primarily on objective and comparative analyses of proven roof system options that best serve their specific roofing requirements and not on warranty time frames.