

10 Tips for a Better Roof

by Jennifer Snukal

As the rainy season gets into full swing, many owners are finding that their roofs are in need of repairs. Sometimes a good repair, rain gutter cleaning or tree trimming, etc. is all that is necessary to shore up any leaks. In some cases, an entirely new roof is the best option.

The following list of tips can help in deciding what course of action is best for your situation.

1. **Age** – Roofs should last 15 to 20 years. If you have a younger roof and it is leaking, you may be able to repair it instead of re-roofing. Some roofs have a ridge that has begun lifting and peeling, often the ridge can be replaced for a couple thousand dollars and the roof can last another decade.
2. **Seasonal Checks** – Check your roof quarterly to make sure there are no issues with cracks, debris, etc. that may lead to bigger issues.
3. **Rain gutters and Drains** – Keep them clean and clear so water doesn't pool on your roof.
4. **Trees** – Have your trees trimmed so that they do not touch the structure of your apartment. If the trees are not trimmed properly, a good wind can rub the roof into disrepair. Also, falling leaves on a roof allows water to pool, which can lead to leaking. Trimming will also help you keep your gutters clean.
5. **Materials** - What type of roofing material do you currently have on your building? If it is built and flashed correctly it should not leak and there are products out there that come with 20 year warranties. Check out your options, you may want to look into a light and easy to install rubber membrane system.
6. **Contractor** - How do you choose a roofer? Ask friends, associations and check with the contractor's license board www.cslb.ca.gov.
7. **Interviewing a contractor** – Make a list of five to 10 questions in order of importance. You may want to ask for referrals, number of years in the business, copies of worker's compensation insurance papers, and warranty and guarantee information, etc. As you interview the contractor(s) ask your questions and run if they don't pass the test. A good contractor should be happy to answer your questions. Keep in mind, if they have a problem answering your questions now or have a bad attitude before they get paid or do the job, good luck dealing with them if the roof leaks a year later.
8. **Down payment** – The contractor's license board recommends no more than a 10% or \$1000 down payment (whichever is less).

9. Records – Keep good records in case something happens in the future. A roof may not leak for two or three years so keep your papers and records in case you have to use your guarantee for a repair.

10. Be Firm but Fair – Believe it or not, but many contractors do great work. Finding a reputable contractor who shows up on time and one who honors the contract is someone to have in your phone book for years. If you pay them on time and treat them fairly, you'll find they will work hard for your business.

The above article was written by Jennifer Snukal of Gil's Roofing Incorporated. Gil's Roofing, Incorporated is fully licensed and insured and has been serving Southern California for over 10 years. For more information or a free estimate, please call 1-888-571-7663.