



CELEBRATING  
55 YEARS

# nerej

## Replacing your roof or contracting any type of building improvement need not be a bad experience

March 18, 2009 - Connecticut

Investing in a new roofing system: Is the lowest price your best value?

As a building owner or manager, you are faced with many types of repair and maintenance issues. It is always in your best interest to make careful decisions regarding your investment.

In many cases, one of the largest investments in building maintenance is the repair or replacement of a roofing system. With this in mind, the thoughtful owner must search for the best possible value. On the subject of roofing, good value can be defined as the most effective, longest lasting product for the money. It is a combination of these factors and minimal impact on your business operations that leads to a successful project.

So how as an owner or manager, can you be more proactive in making your projects successful? Be informed, learn as much as you can. Choose a type of roofing system that fits your criteria.

Choosing the right contractor, while not a guarantee, will go a long way to getting a project started and completed successfully. You should get at least three quotes for the project. Use this opportunity to ask questions. Take the time to interview your prospective contractors; they should appreciate your knowledge and help you in coming up with ideas. Ask them about their business. Get references. Ask about their employees. Do they subcontract the work to others? (It is common practice for some contractors to subcontract projects, effectively limiting their control over the workers while increasing your liability). One of the most important things you must insist upon is proof of insurance. This should be in the form of an insurance certificate sent directly to you by the carrier with you listed as additionally insured. The contractor must have a Connecticut Contractors License.

OK, so assuming that all three contractors give you the same level of comfort, have provided you with all the required documents and are bidding the project using an identical scope of work. What else should you be looking for? Having been in this business for a long time, I can tell you that the most important thing you can have after a completed roofing project is a warranty. Warranties can take several forms: 1. The contractor gives you a warranty from their company. What happens if they go out of business? 2. A Material Warranty given by the manufacturer. While better than the first, this type of warranty does not cover failure due to poor workmanship or offer any services should your new roof leak. 3. A full system No Dollar Limit Manufacturers Warranty. This is your best choice because it requires your contractor be certified by the manufacturer to install their roofing system and also that all components used in the new roof are compatible and will perform long term. Should failure of the system occur, the manufacture will, at no cost to you, repair or replace your roof through the entire warranty period. Depending on the type of roofing system, these types of warranties cover your roof from 10 to 30 years, and are most often fully transferable.

Now that you have decided on the contractor, mutually agreed to contract terms and commenced

the start of work, you have but one thing left to think about. How best to care for your investment. Your new roofing system will have a substantially increased lifespan if seasonal maintenance is performed on it. Maintenance should be done a minimum of twice a year, spring and fall. This ensures that the roof is prepared for winter and in spring is checked for any winter damages. Your roof should be inspected, if deficiencies are found, address them as soon as possible. Not doing so will decrease the value of your roof and even has the potential to void your warranty. A good contractor can provide you with a cost to perform this annual service.

In conclusion, replacing your roof or contracting any type of building improvement need not be a bad experience. As you plan for such projects, define for yourself the meaning of value. You may find that in the end, the lowest price is not always your best value.

Danny Young is president of Quality Roofing Systems, Inc., West Haven, Conn.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540