



Selecting a Roofing Contractor¹ (low-slope commercial)

Buying a new roof system is an important investment for building owners. Before money is spent, some time should be invested to evaluate potential roofing contractors. As many are aware, not all roofing contractors are alike - we recommend that a recognized member of CRCA be engaged for roofing work.

A CRCA member roofing contractor is recognized as a company with hands-on experience and specialized knowledge and training in roofing.

How can a building owner tell a qualified contractor from an unqualified one?

There are no foolproof methods, but CRCA recommends that you prequalify contractors. You can prequalify contractors on a project-to-project or annual basis. The criteria you use may vary according to job requirements, but all CRCA-member roofing contractors should be able to provide you with the following:

- **A permanent place of business**
Confirm that your contractor is well-established with a permanent address, telephone number, tax identification number and, where required, business license. A CRCA roofing contractor has this information readily available.
- **Knowledge of roof systems**
The introduction of new roofing materials and application techniques has sparked a tremendous change in the roofing industry during the past 10 years. A CRCA-member roofing contractor is familiar with the different types of roof systems and will help you make the best decision for your building and budget. Be sure you are comfortable with the roof system your contractor suggests.
- **Affiliated with an industry organization**
Ask the contractor whether his or her company is a member of CRCA (and where applicable, one of its provincial associations). Involvement in a professional organization keeps a contractor better informed about the latest developments and issues in the industry.
- **Committed to safety and education**
Choose a company that is committed to the safety and education of its workers. Ask the contractor to confirm that all workers have completed recognized provincial safety programs, as all workers must comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act in the province or territory that they are working in. The best roofing contractor is only as good as the workers who install the roofing systems. Insist on trained, experienced roof applicators to perform the work.
- **Insurance coverage**
Don't hesitate to ask the roofing contractor for proof of insurance and bonding. In fact, insist on seeing copies of insurance certificates that verify workers' compensation and

general liability coverages. Make sure the coverages are in effect through the duration of your job. If a contractor is not properly insured, you, the owner may be liable for accidents that occur on the property. Many building owners have been involved in litigation with uninsured roofing contractors.

- **Application expertise**

Have your contractor list the roofing manufacturers with which his or her firm has licensed or approved applicator agreements. Some materials require special application expertise to provide a quality of roof system that will last.

- **Insist on a written proposal**

Insist on a written proposal and examine it for complete descriptions of the work and specifications. Be sure the proposal includes the approximate starting and completion dates, payment procedures and any additional issues such as landscape damage prevention and debris cleanup.

- **Warranties**

Carefully read and understand any roofing warranty offered, and be mindful of provisions that would void the warranty.

- **Completed projects**

Look for a company with a proven track record that readily offers client references and a list of completed projects.

- **References**

When making the final selection, ask the roofing contractor for a list of recent clients. Check with these customers to see whether they were completely satisfied with the quality of materials and workmanship provided. You may also want to contact the Better Business Bureau to find out whether any customer complaints have been filed against the contractor.

- **Provisions for on-site supervision**

Have the contractor explain his or her project supervision and quality-control procedures. Request the name of the person who will be in charge, how many workers will be required and the estimated time of completion.

- **A professional maintenance program**

CRCA recommends regular inspections of roofing systems be undertaken by qualified roofing professionals. A maintenance program usually consists of a detailed visual examination of the roof system, flashing, insulation and related components to identify any potential trouble areas.

Reference:

1. Derived largely from the National Roofing Contractors Association (NRCA) in the United States Consumer Advisory Bulletin on the same subject matter.

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