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Commercial Inspectors Association of America - P.O Box 49 Brighton, MI 48116 - 866.434.9779

Commercial Inspector Newsletter

Green Roofs

The function of the roof will effect its design. For example, a green roof designed to retain storm



water may look very different from one whose main purpose is to brighten a hospital courtyard. Along with the question of aesthetics are inherent differences in the required depth of growing medium, the ongoing maintenance programme, and overall cost.

Location

The location of the green roof plays an important role in the design process. The height of the roof above the ground, its exposure to wind, the roof's orientation to the

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PCA ROOFING TIPS

A relatively little known roofing system is IRMA system, (Inverted Roofing Membrane Assembly).

When the roof is on a corrugated

Roof orientation to the sun and shading by surrounding buildings during parts of the day will have an impact. The general climate of the area and the specific microclimate on the roof must also be considered. Views to and from the roof may also determine where certain elements are located for maximum effect.

metal deck, a perlite board is placed on the steel deck to span the corrugations. Then a slip-sheet of polyethylene is placed on the board to allow the membrane to move when it shrinks and prevents the membrane from bonding with the board. A single ply membrane is then loose laid over the board and fastened at the perimeter of the roof, and flashed in at any penetrations or curbs. A layer of insulation is placed on the membrane; usually 2 inches or more of polyisocyanurate, which is a rigid closed cell insulation that does not compress like other insulations do, and will not hold water or allow mold growth. The insulation can be tongue and groove, or it can be butted joints, and it can also have a concrete backing for weight and strength. The final component is a ballast of stone or concrete pavers to prevent wind uplift.



The advantages of the IRMA system are:

- The membrane is never exposed to ultraviolet light, which ages all roofing systems to some degree, and it never receives abuse in the form of items being dropped on it, or people walking or working on it.
- The membrane is on the warm side of the insulation, therefore, it is not exposed to the wild fluctuations in temperature that other roof membranes are, and will last much longer.

Some places that you would expect to see these type systems are:

- Under cooling towers, where abuse would be most likely
- Under roof top equipment like large dish antennas.
- On roofs that are likely to have a lot of foot traffic.

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