

WATERPROOFING ANALYSIS

AN IMPORTANT STEP DURING DUE DILIGENCE

by Paul Beavers

The value of waterproofing cannot be underestimated, yet oftentimes this important aspect of purchasing a property is overlooked. If waterproofing is made a top priority during the due diligence phase of the purchase, further damage could be prevented and thousands of dollars perhaps saved by the purchaser.

As a building envelope consultant, I have received many calls from clients in the lodging industry who are shocked when they discover their newly renovated rooms are being damaged because of water from roof and/or wall leaks. This discovery is often made by the guests of the resort after suffering from the effects caused by the infiltration of moisture.

More often than not in cases like these, we have found that the due diligence performed prior to the purchase did not include an analysis of the building envelope (roofs, walls—anything related to the waterproofing integrity of the building). Although hoteliers and resort developers often do have an architect or an engineer on their due diligence team,

these professionals will be the first to tell you they are not waterproofing experts and can render only general opinions. They are unable to give specifics as to the inside hidden condition of these critical protective waterproofing components.

Moisture saturation beneath a roofing system on a concrete deck may not be

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noticeably leaking into the building, but a very expensive roof removal process is eminent once it does become discovered. Similarly, trapped moisture behind a wall, which has gone undetected can cause

immense damage not only to the exterior walls but the interior of the hotel can likewise become grossly affected.

Infrared scans, analyzing cores taken from the roof and moisture probing are just a few of the tests that can be done to determine whether or not water has infiltrated any of the building envelope. An infrared scan uses the heat generated by the water trapped within the roofing and/or wall components to expose and determine the depth of the problem. This can also help determine whether or not the entire roof system may simply need repairs or to be completely replaced. Photos taken from an infrared scan along with a detailed report can be quite helpful to either buyer or seller. Or, as an owner, it can help reduce further damage and pinpoint the problems at hand.

Sixty-five percent of all construction litigation is related to waterproofing issues, and a full 60 percent of that damage is related to the walls, yet most of this can be sidestepped and corrected if waterproofing analysis becomes priority during the due diligence phase. **D**

