

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT *Quarterly*



Ways to refresh a building's tech assets to attract tenants

Encore Electric

Helping with updates to audiovisual integration within an asset is one way property managers can help attract and retain tenants.

As shifting workplace patterns challenge tenants, property managers can show value and retain more leased space by taking a proactive role with tenants adapting to new collaborative expectations.

We see a pattern of collaboration technology in workspaces of all types increasing in density for workplaces with at least some back-to-office adoption. Technology-dependent meeting space requirements are growing, even if desk space contracts due to hoteling or shifts to work-from-home policies.

Workers who come to the office



Kevin Zolitor
Solutions architect,
Encore Electric

today are there to collaborate face to face. Technology-enabled meeting space is central to their perceived value of coming back to the office, and property owners and managers can seize an opportunity to help adapt.

Meeting room sizes are not contracting due to fewer in-person participants. Personal space expectations are increasing,

perhaps for good. Effective meetings with remote video participants remove usable seats from traditional conference rooms. All of this is happening while at the same time meeting room performance demands are increasing. How can property managers lower the friction for tenants to reconfigure spaces for enhanced collaboration and increase back-to-work adoption?

We've already helped our technology solutions and construction clients get more out of their meeting spaces in a number of ways.

■ **Improve marginal acoustics.** Ceiling tile upgrades or fabric-wrapped

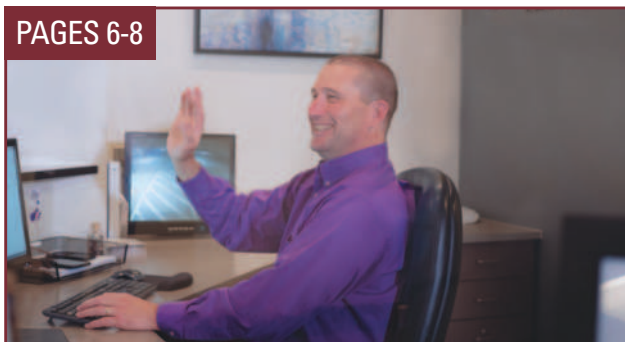
acoustical panels in strategic areas can improve meeting comfort by improving the auditory experience of in-room and especially remote participants for a relatively low investment.

■ **Furniture.** Boat-shaped tables are not conducive to video meetings. Work with tenants on alternative layouts like trapezoid-shaped or U-shaped tables sized appropriately for comfortable video display viewing in each meeting room. This may affect occupancy and thus increase square-foot requirements.

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Tenant relationships

Pandemic lessons: People-first management and keeping buildings healthy this winter

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Maintenance plans

Highlights on proactive maintenance tips for an asset's roof, parking structures and façade

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Wellness trends

Providing tenants with clean air continues to be a must-have amenity as the weather cools

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Letter from the Editor

Maintenance on the mind

When authors are invited to write for Property Management Quarterly, the general premise is the article must be educational in tone and should be something within the author’s area of expertise that the audience would benefit from knowing. This relatively open-ended guideline helps curate a wide range of topics and always reminds me of the broad subject matter that falls within property managers’ responsibilities.

As we enter the fourth quarter, there seemed to be one theme stretching across the minds of many of our experts: preventive maintenance. I’m not just talking about physical repairs on building structures though. The quarterly begins with articles highlighting the care and effort needed to maintain strong relationships with tenants, building owners and vendors.

On Page 8, Daisy Gauck discusses how her firm kept a people-first management approach even when many building tenants were working from home and how that has paid dividends since tenants started returning to the building. Then on Page 10, Peter Katz and Seth Elken share tactics on identifying owner pain points in order to maintain a healthy relationship. Being on the same team and proactively searching for potential future problems ensures managers are an integral part of the larger business.



Further in, the article on Page 21 says it’s time to rethink manager interactions with vendors by updating the tired request for proposal process. Kevin Carter writes that while the RFP is an undeniably important component to conducting business, the standard format has led to a world of copy-and-paste documents that benefits no one. He outlines new ways to assess potential partners.

And then there’s the physical work many of us think of when we hear the word maintenance. Experts in this issue weigh in on a host of issues that require constant, low-key care to avoid emergencies that come with a hefty price tag. Vern Bowman kicks off the section with firsthand stories about issues in which the owner opted for a short-term fix only to face a much larger project soon after that could have been avoided.

Following that, experts weigh in on advice for facility roofing, façade and parking care, as well as environmental care issues, like mold, on Pages 15-19. As budget season will soon be upon us, it’s an ideal time to set up 2022’s preventive care plans and determine the life expectancy for big-ticket items. Chances are the physical steps done to keep the property running smoothly will reinforce the relationship building being done with tenants, owners and vendors as well.

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Touchless elevators come to Denver’s Block 162

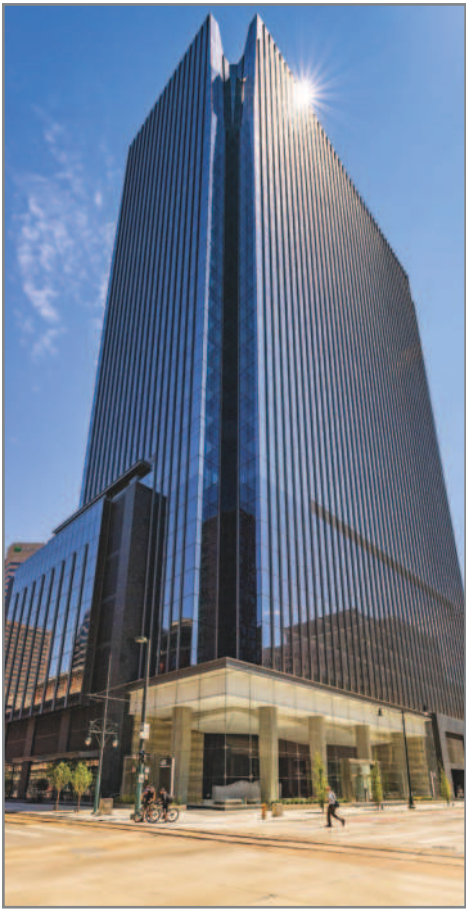
Denver’s 11th tallest building, Block 162, installed a touchless elevator solution. The LEED Gold building is the first in Denver to provide tenants with the touchless technology, which was installed by TK Elevator.

Agile mobile allows tenants to operate elevators via their smartphone or wearable device, helping to avoid elevator traffic congestion as well as physical interaction with elevator surfaces, buttons and handrails that can be prone to attracting viruses and bacteria.

“Block 162 embodies the future of commercial office buildings, and that includes focusing heavily on tenant health and safety throughout the building,” says Kevin Lavallee, president and CEO of TK Elevator North America. “We are proud to have our vertical transportation systems with technologically advanced touchless systems like Agile mobile and Max supporting such an inspirational building.”

Located in the heart of Denver’s central business district, Block 162 is a 30-story, 452-foot-tall, 606,000-square-foot office development of Patrinely Group and USAA Real Estate. Swinerton served as general contractor on the project.

“The graphic interface of the Agile mobile is very clean and easy for tenants to use,” said David Haltom, vice president with Patrinely Group. “It matches nicely with the seamless look and feel of the rest of Block 162 and is a compelling



Block 162 installed a touchless elevator solution from TK Elevator

differentiator between us and our competition. We definitely get a lot of ‘oohs and aahs’ about the feature on leasing tours. The fact that the app can sense which elevator bank a user is in and functions smoothly on every floor of the building is impressive.”

Available on Android or iOS devices, users can download the mobile app and request enrollment. An administration portal allows the building management to process user requests individually or in batch uploads. The portal can integrate with most access control companies to synchronize permissions. In addition, building management can use the portal to create tenant groups and floor access schedules.

After being granted access, users can create their profiles, requesting floor access and setting access schedules. Once approved by building management, the user can begin accessing elevators remotely via the app. Once a tenant enters the building’s lobby and connects with a beacon, a prompt is sent to the elevator system and the pre-selected floor is registered. The allocated elevator car is promptly displayed on the app and the tenant quickly gets into the car.

Other News

■ **Cushman & Wakefield** announced its emissions reduction targets were approved by the Science Based Targets initiative External Link as consistent with levels required to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.

The company’s SBTi commitments include:

- Target No. 1: Reduce absolute scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions across its corporate

offices and operations 50% by 2030 from a 2019 base year.

- Target No. 2: Engage key clients, some of the world’s largest real estate owners and occupiers, representing 70% of emissions at its managed properties (scope 3) to set science-based targets by 2025.

- Target No. 3: Reach net zero value chain emissions (scopes 1, 2 and 3) by 2050.

With 53,000 people around the world, Cushman & Wakefield makes a significant impact on employees, clients, shareholders, communities and the environment. Corporate social responsibility is embedded in the firm’s practices and strategic vision for the future, a press release states.

■ **The Arcticom Group**, the fastest-growing family of mechanical services and heating, ventilation, air-conditioning and refrigeration companies in the U.S., acquired **Chiller Systems Service**, an HVAC services provider based in Lakewood. Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

“Scott Tracy and his wife, Annette Hogan-Tracy, have built a wonderful business that is laser-focused on service-based, long-term relationships with large footprint, Fortune 500 clients,” said Jim Pape, CEO of The Arcticom Group. “The TAG platform, with the addition of the CSS team and their expertise, will accelerate the TAG mechanical expansion.” ▲

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Revisiting facility strategies ahead of colder weather

As fall descends and everything becomes pumpkin spiced, not only does the world continue to deal with COVID-19, but flu season looms. 2020 had record low flu numbers, attributed largely to masking, hand hygiene and decreased commercial traffic. But even as the COVID-19 numbers increase due to the delta variant, protocols differ from 2020's extreme lockdown, leading health experts to wonder what flu 2021 may have in store – and Colorado flu season can be a doozy. So, facing all of that, how do we boost the defenses in your facility? The good news is that you already know how to do this. Added protection in your facility can happen in every space, from access points and open lobbies to meeting rooms and individual offices. And while you surely underwent a major facility protocol overhaul 18 months ago, it's time to revisit those strategies – and then communicate them clearly to your building occupants.



Julie Hogan
Vice president,
marketing and
communications,
CCS Facility
Services

Let's talk about your masking policy. Eeons ago when this all began, every business wallpapered its front doors with mask signs of varying quality, then happily took them down when rules relaxed. Now mask signage is inconsistent, wordy and hard to find – like the paper equivalent of a whisper. That means that people may be walking in unmasked, which may be against your policy and serves to frustrate those who are following the rules. Whether it's your reinstated building rule or the county's mandate, just be clear. Create new mask signage that is short and simple, very visual and not just an 8.5-by-11-inch black-and-white flyer. For example, it could say: "Let's protect each other: Please mask up while in our facility." If you are not mandating masks again, that's fine too, but you still should make clear new signs that indicate the mask preference for vaccinated vs. unvaccinated individuals without going too heavily into Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended policy. People get it. Just be clear. Clarifying policies bring us to signage. Signage becomes wallpaper all too quickly. Add to that traffic and people bumping into signs and adhesive coming off and it becomes



ugly wallpaper. Make new signs! You can't just state the mask policy at the front door and hope people see it. Prepare clean, bright, easy-to-understand new signs and put them at all access points, lobbies and stairs/elevators. You may even be able to infuse a little bit of humor into the signage, if appropriate. But make it bright, clear and station it where people will see it. That also means building staff needs to enforce said policies and procedures. No one likes to be mask cop, especially when there comes with it a risk of a negative reaction, but the risk of not enforcing the policy is frustration or even anger from the people who are abiding by the rule – not to mention the risk of infection getting in. Not only is new signage important, but also training together as a team with a cohesive strategy is important. Have staff discuss how to professionally but clearly alert visitors about the mask policy. Discuss – even role-play – scenarios of belligerent interactions

to help arm them with tools. Ensure you have masks on hand to provide visitors who entered without one. And, importantly, let them know that you will be there to back them up if needed. That brings us to access points. Facilities have more access points than most people realize, and the public can take some liberties with allowing access into a building. Do a regular audit of your entrances and exits: Are doors being propped open? Are locks working on doors that should be secured? If you are tightening down on access again, put signage on doors that used to be unlocked making clear where to come in and why you are doing it: for the health and protection of everyone inside. This is your building, and you have the right to restrict access, but keep an eye out to ensure the restricted access is being followed. Don't forget about access points at the sides or the back of the building, favored by vendors and delivery people, and with good reason. They are schlepping boxes and pushing carts and backing up trucks. You get it. But also, they, too, are people entering your building, and that means they must adhere to the same policies. Even the, "I'll only be in for a second to drop this off" delivery people need to mask up and follow any other building procedure. They need efficiency in their day, but you need to protect your building's occupants and enforce facility rules, and yours will not be the only building in

Please see Hogan, Page 23



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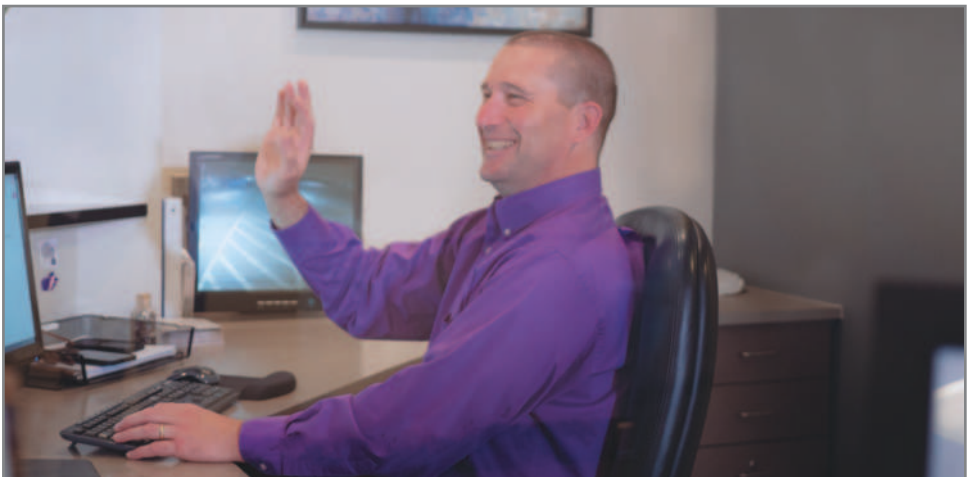
People-first management approach sees success

Will we or won't we return to the office? How this plays out over the long term remains to be seen, but there are lessons from the pandemic that validate the advantages to building owners of making the move from a static building operation to creating a service-oriented and engaged community within each building. Studies show that in times of uncertainty consumers reach for the familiar. When COVID-19 hit, publishers noticed that consumers were buying more classic novels. Amateur bread makers caused a run on baker's yeast at the grocery store. Demand skyrocketed for "treat cereals" like Fruit Loops. Zoom dinner parties connected grandparents and grandchildren as well as groups of long-lost college friends. How can a desire for the familiar influence management of office properties? Creating meaningful interactions with tenants, beyond logistics and billing, makes the office more human and less institutional. It becomes more than a building as tenants connect with the people and the experiences, which creates a bond. Investing in making this tenant connection can boost the bottom line. We took a high-touch, customer-focused property management approach that provided our team with genuine tenant relationships upon which we could build during the long months of work from home. As a result, we maintained some of the highest accounts receivables compared with other



Daisy Gauck
Senior vice president,
Hospitality at Work

institutional managers, and our tenant satisfaction scores continued to rise. The way that we maintained that connection with tenants didn't include bocce courts or fitness centers. Or weekly emails with all caps subject headers that talked about COVID-19 cleaning. Those were terrifying. Instead, we shifted toward positive, original content in order for our tenants to feel secure, safe and at ease. The first principle of a people-first property management program is to emphasize customer service, similar to the approach taken in the hospitality industry. Have members of your team out front and visible, not tucked away in the back office, so that you are a familiar face connecting with every worker in an office building – not just the tenant representative. Don't look at tenant events as just another "check box" building amenity. Property managers should take a strategic approach to tenant events and tailor them to fit the profile of each building. To create a profile, invest the time to know your tenants, their employees, their vendors and their guests on a first-name basis. Try a range of events and get feedback on what people enjoyed and why so programming truly engages the people in your building.



Chris Atkins, a Hospitality at Work building host, greets tenants as they arrive back to work in Denver.

It takes more time to devise and implement meaningful programming but when office buildings emptied out due to COVID-19 stay-at-home orders, the investment in a people-first approach provided useful insights into what might appeal to tenants. For example, we built out newsletters with activities for kids, information about new foods to try and history lessons from around the globe. We took our fitness instructors and did livestreams or posted videos of new workouts for those who missed the familiar faces of their in-building fitness classes. We created instruction videos of our team members planting succulents for Earth Day, creating fall-scented candles and assembling peppermint bark for the holidays. We created games and competitions so our tenants could play online and connect with others in the building with common interests.

Tenants responded. They noted that they could hear our voice in the newsletters, that they missed seeing us and they missed their routines. When people no longer have structure, they reach for the familiar. We responded by being there for them – familiar faces and all. After more than a year and a half of navigating remote work and hybrid or staggered schedules, we have found that tenants still crave the familiar – they delight in seeing us when they come through the front door, friendly faces and genuine warm greetings amid so much uncertainty. Our recent tenant survey shows that interacting with our team members is what they missed most about coming to the building each day. How can you gauge the benefit of

Please see Gauck, Page 23



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While the Colorado Real Estate Journal continues to run a multifamily news section in each issue of the newspaper, **Property Management Quarterly** features the most interesting projects and people, trends and analysis, and covers all commercial property types. The publication is mailed with the Colorado Real Estate Journal newspaper, a 3,500 plus distribution that includes developers, investors, brokers, lenders, contractors, architects, property managers and building operating service & supply firms.

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Owner Relations

Tactics to recognize and solve owner pain points

As an owner/developer of commercial real estate, the last thing you want is to work with a property management firm that not only fails to predict and recognize potential “pain points” (in regard to the cost and operations of a property) but also may be the actual source of this pain. There are multiple layers to successfully managing a property and ensuring that it runs like clockwork on a daily, monthly and quarterly basis. By not recognizing the various sources of “pain,” the bottom line could cause owners a great deal of discomfort.

Here are some of the obvious – and not so obvious – places that a property management firm should be concentrating on to not only alleviate but also eliminate distress.

■ **Communication.** Like a good doctor who provides constant updates and information regarding your personal health concerns, a property manager should consistently open the lines of communication. Weekly reports and monthly meetings should be a given. And if a red flag arises regarding a building inefficiency, tenant complaint(s) or market condition, owners should be expecting an immediate call from the property management team. If an owner hears about something before the managers do, the communication channels are amiss.

■ **Construction management.** Many owners may ask, “Should my prop-



Peter Katz
Principal,
Trybe Property
Management

erty manager have construction management skills?” Considering all that can – and does – go wrong with a building, the answer must be yes. If a property management firm doesn’t have a construction management expert on its team, and needs to wait to schedule an appointment with an outside expert, the property’s budget better have a high pain threshold. A lack of experience in construction management and planning, when a property manager doesn’t have the ability to define scopes of work and simply tells a vendor to fix the problem, will cost you a great deal of time, money and aggravation. Seeking multiple proposals with a well-defined, clear and concise scope, set budgets and expected outcomes is needed to avoid rework, change orders and expenses from getting out of hand.

■ **Preventive maintenance.** Preventive maintenance always is a requirement to ensure smooth and more budget-friendly building operations. Similar to a dentist administering just the right amount of painkiller before a cavity is filled or tooth is pulled, a qualified property manager will be able to ease the pain by adjusting to current conditions relative to required and recommended build-



Seth Elken
Principal,
Trybe Property
Management

ing maintenance. For example, the current supply chain slowdown is impacting the ability to get necessary parts, materials and labor for all types of maintenance work. A well-regarded property manager will understand the importance of stocking parts, planning for known maintenance issues, anticipating delays and budgeting for increased costs. This knowledge will save a lot of aggravation and help to retain tenants.

■ **Showing properties.** The pandemic obviously has impacted the way properties can be shown to and toured by prospective tenants. Most property management firms made the adjustment to provide virtual tours and marketing platforms. It always will be imperative to be able to adjust to ever-changing market conditions, and health and welfare demands in order to provide prospects with the most safe and convenient ways to see a property (whether it’s an office space, apartment or other real estate space) they may be interested in. There are several new options in the marketplace that allow for a much more seamless, organized showing experience that allows tenants more flexibility on when best to see the unit/space. It also enables better follow-up

experience/communication while streamlining the actual paperwork process.

■ **Understanding investment goals.** Finding the right prescription to help property owners/developers realize their investment goals takes diligence, knowledge and understanding. A qualified property management team will work closely with the property owner/developer to discuss the best options based on the plans to hold or sell a property, maximize short-term income for a sale or lay out a road map for the preservation of the assets. Each endeavor will require a customized approach in regard to maintenance plans and schedules, tenant retentions, lease rates and more.

■ **Fielding the right team.** Hiring and maintaining the best team possible (including administrative staff, maintenance crew and management team) is vitally important right now and continues to become a major pain point for ownership and management. A high-level property management firm has a happy team that is committed to the owner’s happiness and the well-being of the bottom line. Similar to a well-orchestrated medical team, a property management team should be ready, willing and more than able to ease the pain. ▲

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Owner Relations

The value of professional property management

It's not uncommon as a property manager to be approached by owners who are beyond frustrated and completely overwhelmed by their attempts to self-manage their properties. While I hear these stories in the commercial world, we also see this in the residential quadrant of management, which is generally more emotionally involved for tenants and owners alike. Said plainly, most property owners are not equipped to properly manage their own properties.

■ **Bookkeeping.** Many owners view bookkeeping as the biggest draw of hiring a property management company. Rent collection and paying property bills can be quite involved – especially for larger and/or multitenant properties. Some owners also elect to have their property managers handle paying property taxes and insurance premiums – often, these are escrowed by the management company to level cash flow. Property managers also can prepare annual budgets and triple-net/common area maintenance reconciliations, which can be exceptionally involved and time-consuming to say the least and generally are not a function even the most savvy property owner is equipped to handle.

Finally, because most property managers employ the use of comprehensive property management software, they're able to create an abundance of reports on the fly. Devoid of this sort of software, property owners are left to compile reports manually, which is obviously not ideal considering the output of effort and time involved.

■ **Addressing emergency situations.** If there's one area where property



Benjamin Yoder
Director of
commercial
management,
Dorman
Commercial Real
Estate

managers outshine all others, this is it. Being available to handle urgent situations during both convenient and inconvenient times is the name of the game for property managers. Because no individual property manager can effectively work 24/7, most will hire a third-party answering service to filter out nonemergency situations. Answering services are not generally cost-effective for a single property owner to hire, but managers are well positioned to hire them due to the volume of properties they manage. Managers also have an advantage here because of the slew of vendors they've vetted and worked with at their properties, ensuring the vendors they send are not only excellent, but also often more affordable and able to offer quicker response times. It's also worth noting that managers often get discounted pricing on work completed by regularly used vendors, along with having greater leverage when disputing charges, due to the symbiotic relationship that's often formed between managers and their vendors.

■ **Maintaining the property.** The day-to-day goings-on of a property are repetitive, but this certainly does not mean they're simple. In fact, managing a commercial property is enormously involved, and requires a great deal

of time and expertise. Here are a few items a commercial property manager must consider regularly: landscaping/snow removal, cleaning (interior and exterior), trash service, annual fire and backflow inspections, elevator inspections and maintenance, HVAC system inspections and maintenance, gutter/drain cleaning, parking lot service, and the filing of no-trespassing ordinances with the local police force. To stay on top of these items, managers periodically will walk their properties, occasionally hiring porters to get another set of eyes on things and to take care of miscellaneous items around the property (cleaning, touch-up painting, basic plumbing, etc.). The goal of all of these items is to maintain property value. Managers also can add value to a property by proposing capital expenses to improve the functionality or aesthetics of the property, as managers generally are well positioned based on their regular interaction with the property and its tenants. An experienced manager also will consider ownership goals when making these sorts of recommendations.

■ **Understanding the legal landscape.** While property managers are not attorneys and thus cannot give legal advice, they do acquire an understanding of federal and local laws related to property management and, more specifically, landlord/tenant disputes. This understanding can be exceptionally valuable to property owners as it can help owners to avoid expensive and time-consuming legal affairs. Some property managers will even attend court on behalf of their property owners.

■ **Leasing.** Many managers also handle leasing, and most managers handle lease renewals. Again, this is a legal process, and a keen eye and an understanding of lease language is immensely valuable when creating and renewing leases. Additionally, managers and leasing agents generally have good understanding of regional lease rates, and they have means of comparing against local properties to ensure owners are receiving fair value on their rents. As part of this, owners also can benefit from a manager/leasing agent's established marketing channels and connections to lease their property out more quickly.

■ **Tenant needs and challenging situations.** There's a lot to be said for having a buffer in place, like a property manager, to shield owners from tumultuous tenant situations. The reality is that property managers are trained to handle tough tenants – sometimes their approach is digging their feet in, and other times it's simply being kind. Either way, experienced managers almost always take a diplomatic approach to avoid further escalating challenging situations. It's worth noting that the morale of a building's tenants can make the building thrive or dive – happy tenants often stick around, and unhappy tenants generally do not. While there are certainly times when a tenant just needs to leave, the truth is that the majority of tenants are fairly reasonable and want to be heard. Appropriately responding to tough tenant situations is among the most important factors in keeping

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Sustainability

New tools help C-PACE reach farther across state

Combating climate change requires efforts on multiple fronts, including a significant investment in building energy efficiency. The building sector represents approximately 40% of U.S. energy consumption, with the commercial sector accounting for 18%. Policies guide and support smart planning and best practices, however, it takes effective programs, including practical implementation tools, working in unison to transform policy into significant market adoption.

As an energy consultant for 25 years, I've worked on this challenge in several capacities – from behind a desk to the underbellies and rooftops of commercial buildings. During this time, the most challenging barrier to effecting change and gaining building owners' commitment to act is the "money concern." Are energy-efficiency and renewable-energy improvements a good investment? Even if they are, how do you pay for these investments? Moreover, how do you provide information to an owner quickly and cost-effectively that speaks their language, i.e., financial impact and return on investment, so that they can confidently make an investment decision?

■ **Innovative financing.** One powerful financial tool that has proved to effect change across the country is commercial property assessed clean energy financing. The Colorado C-PACE program was launched in 2016 and since its inception has financed 95 projects valued at \$149 million in investment across the state. Project types have ranged widely from existing building solar PV installations and roof replacements to mechanical and control system upgrades, water-efficiency measures and lighting retrofits. Projects have encompassed single improvements, comprehensive retrofits and even gut-rehab or building repurposing. Sustainable new construction projects also recently have become a significant part of the program's success. Finance amounts for these diverse projects have ranged widely from as small as \$60,000 to as large as \$30 million.

C-PACE financing was developed to help overcome long-standing barriers to energy-efficiency project financing by providing owners with unique benefits that have been lacking in traditional financing options. For example, C-PACE enables owners of eligible commercial and industrial buildings to finance up to 100% of energy-efficiency, renewable-energy and water-conservation eligible improvements on existing buildings (no out-of-pocket cost). Financing is provided by private capital providers at competitive rates with repayment terms up to 25 years (long-term financing). Moreover, C-PACE financing also can be used to finance a portion (15%-20%) of project costs associated with new construction if these projects are built to or exceed the 2015 International Energy Conservation Code. Compared with traditional loans that typically require 20%-30% out of pocket and offer terms from five to 10 years, C-PACE provides a very different and much-needed financing alternative to accelerate investments in building energy efficiency.

Another potentially attractive feature of C-PACE financing is the funding mechanism that C-PACE uses, a special purpose assessment. As an assessment recorded on the property by the county, the owner repays the financing once or twice a year along with the property tax payments. The C-PACE assessment rides with the property –



Tracy Phillips
Director, C-PACE
Program

meaning that in the event of sale of the building, the repayment obligation can be transferred to the next owner. This mitigates an owner's potential reluctance to finance improvements with longer payback periods because the owner can make the C-PACE payments

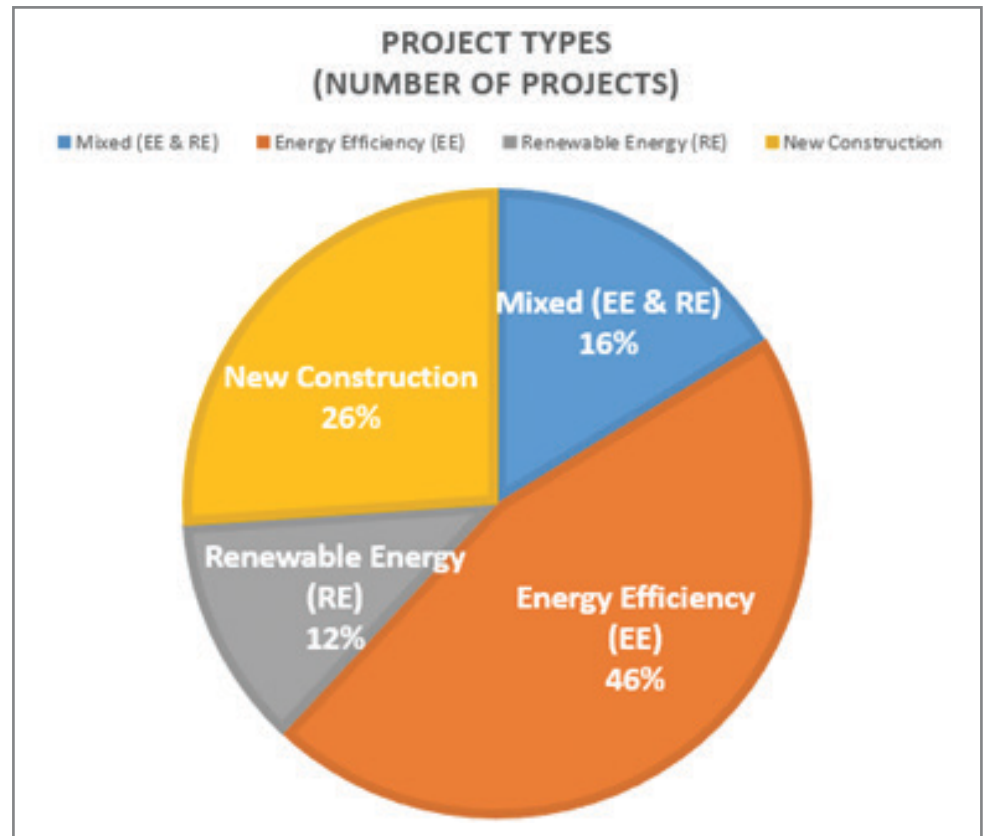
and enjoy the savings while they own the building and "hand off" the future payments to the next owner, who will subsequently enjoy the balance of the energy savings (as opposed to paying in full for improvements and then possibly selling the building before realizing a return on investment).

On existing buildings, for an improvement to be eligible for financing through C-PACE, it needs to demonstrate that it will reduce the owner's utility bill. This opens the door to a wide range of improvement types from envelope improvements (windows, roofs, insulation) and mechanical heating and cooling systems to building controls, plumbing fixtures, lighting upgrades and elevator modernization.

■ **Small and medium-sized buildings.** C-PACE financing currently is available in 37 counties across the state, including about 83% of the state's building stock. While the financing is available to any commercial, industrial or agricultural building type, buildings in the small and medium-sized sector classically have proved to be a challenge for several reasons. This is primarily because small and medium-sized building projects typically involve smaller dollar finance amounts that provide less attractive returns to lenders. Rural projects also can present a challenge since many lenders are reluctant to serve areas where they lack a physical presence or lending history. Moreover, nontraditional asset classes (such as agriculture) can be difficult for a lender to underwrite.

The Colorado C-PACE program has endeavored to serve the small and medium-sized building and rural markets across the state as achieving the state's ambitious greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals will require significant investment in energy efficiency by these owners. One way the Colorado C-PACE program has worked to address the challenge is through its open-source funding model. The open-source funding model allows any financial organization the opportunity to fund projects through Colorado C-PACE. The program currently has over 40 participating lenders, which represents the most of any C-PACE program in the country. Having such a diverse network of lenders facilitates competitive interest rates and fees, and it provides building owners with a wide range of lender types to better serve diverse building types, project sizes and locations across the state.

This open-source funding model has proved effective in serving the small and medium-sized building market and rural communities, however, gaps still exist. Paul Scharfenberger, formerly with the Colorado Energy Office, has led the development of what hopefully will prove to be a significant "gap filler" in the sector with a new lending source: the Colorado Clean Energy Fund. CCEF was recently launched as Colorado's first "green bank," and its mission is to "use financial tools to increase sustainable investment," particularly focusing on smaller (less than



Colorado Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy program project types

\$250,000), more rural and harder-to-underwrite projects.

To appreciate the potential opportunity that the CCEF can unlock in underserved markets, consider that 88% of commercial buildings across the country are less than 25,000 square feet in size. Couple this with the fact that most building infrastructure is aging and much of Colorado's land mass is rural. With the addition of CCEF as a capital provider in the C-PACE program, Colorado now has a lender dedicated to serving the hard-to-reach, historically underserved small and medium-sized building sector and bringing C-PACE to every remote corner of the state.

■ **Owner engagement.** Another challenge to energy-efficiency adoption involves building owner engagement. Some projects are simply too remote or too small to warrant an on-site energy audit to help an owner evaluate different energy-efficiency and renewable-energy improvement options. In fact, most projects do not have sufficient time or budget to support a comprehensive energy audit, especially when an owner is unsure about the potential size and financial return of an energy-efficiency project.

Owner engagement represents a critical first step toward the success of any energy-efficiency project. An owner needs to understand, quickly and early in the process, what the scope of a project might look like, including the project's financial impact. Providing the owner with this information is critical to ensure the owner can evaluate the investment in recommended improvements or a comprehensive energy audit (for larger projects) where needed.

The same may be true when an HVAC equipment manufacturer, distributor or contractor is preparing a proposal for equipment that will generate significant energy savings over its lifetime. Such HVAC equipment replacement proposal scenarios often are highly competitive with multiple firms competing for the building owner's project. For this reason, the equipment providers typically have neither the time nor the budget to support a conventional energy audit. However, such firms can differentiate their proposal by providing the building owner with an estimate of the energy savings, GHG emissions reduc-

tion and financial impact over the lifetime of the replacement equipment. This analysis also can provide the case for an owner's potential investment in higher-efficiency equipment (going beyond the requirements in the local building energy code) that may present higher first cost but result in greater energy cost savings over time and potentially attractive utility incentives.

Recently, a state-of-the-art software, data and analytic solution has been introduced into the market that can meet the increasing demand from building owners for a time and cost effective "first look." Sustainable Real Estate Solutions' Energy Performance Improvement Calculator has been increasingly adopted by energy professionals as an inexpensive tool that, with minimal input of data, quickly estimates potential energy savings, GHG emissions reduction, improvement investment cost and financial impacts. These energy professionals have successfully incorporated the EPIC-generated business case in their proposal and audit processes and have proved to meet the building owners' demand for a streamlined, time- and cost-effective analysis of potential energy improvements.

The EPIC tool currently is being used by the Colorado C-PACE program to accelerate project quality assurance reviews and to provide a standardized, easy-to-read project report format. EPIC also integrates the key assumptions of C-PACE financing so the building owner can review annual cash flow impacts over the project life cycle. On the front lines, the EPIC tool is quickly gaining traction as a solution to the owner engagement challenge for both C-PACE and self-funded projects, providing owners with necessary information that they need to make investment decisions, or to justify the need for a more detailed energy study. Moreover, the EPIC tool's ability to allow users to evaluate projects remotely enables much needed penetration into smaller and more rural markets – a critical sector to achieve the state's ambitious GHG emissions reduction goals.

■ **The one-two-three punch.** Colorado has progressive policies that establish some of the country's most ambitious energy-efficiency and sustainability

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Maintenance

Challenging lessons from deferred maintenance

*Pennywise, pound-foolish.
A stitch-in-time saves nine.
You can pay me now or you can pay
me later.
Pick your poison.*

Idioms such as these may seem quaint, but they have a whole lot of meaning when it comes to the deferred maintenance of a commercial real estate property. As a building engineer and maintenance professional with decades of experience, I've practically seen it all when it comes to property owners who choose the quickest, easiest and cheapest solution to resolve a mechanical, electrical, plumbing or sometimes bigger problem, rather than biting the bullet and making the necessary investment to take care of the problem once and for all. Shortcut solutions (which involve the proverbial bubblegum and shoestring fix) to address building breakdowns are the easy way out and don't impact a bank account as much. But they can come with a much higher price tag down the road.

Before I get into my suggestions to avoid or at least ease the pain of writing a big check to take care of what likely could become a bigger problem, I thought I'd share a few "horror" stories. Hopefully they don't sound too familiar to you. And if they do, please read on to the end of this article.

■ **Eight feet of sewer line and a semitruck.** A downtown office



Vern Bowman
Chief engineer,
Elevate Real Estate
Services

building had a sewer line break at the building's foundation in the alley. After digging up the alley, the problem was quickly identified. Before the fracture was repaired, I suggested that the 8-foot sewer line be replaced. Of course, this

would come at a higher price than simply fixing the pipe. The property owner decided against the higher expense, so the crack was repaired, the hole was filled and new pavement was laid. Less than a month later, the pipe broke again, not only doubling the time and expense of the repair work, but also the building owner had to work out an agreement with the alleyway neighbors to help unload their semitrucks filled with store products.

■ **Leak here, leak there, leaks everywhere.** Some of you may be familiar with the tale of the Little Dutch Boy who saved Holland by plugging a hole in the country's dike with his finger. He was heralded as a hero, but within days, leaks were spouting out everywhere. Building window systems can often present the same problem. In one particular instance, a window leak was discovered on the seventh floor of an office building (at least

that was where the obvious problem was). It was an easy fix at the time, with the application of caulk to the problem area. Unfortunately, the caulk didn't resolve the fact that the windows in the building were years past their prime and hadn't been adequately maintained since the time they were installed. Like the Little Dutch Boy, the building owner was soon confronted with window leaks everywhere, leading to a window system replacement.

■ **Chasing flickering lights.** Understandably a common complaint among tenants is burned-out lightbulbs or inconsistent lighting in a building. The fastest way to address these complaints is to send over a maintenance person with a ladder to screw in a new lightbulb. This solution is like a dog chasing its tail, as lights continue to go out (replacing cheap bulbs with cheap bulbs that don't last and perpetuate inconsistent lighting throughout the building) and alienate tenants. The better solution for the owner would be a lighting retrofit, which not only provides superior, consistent lighting but also saves on energy due to advancements in technology. To help with the investment, utilities offer rebates based on the scope of work.

Some of these stories may hit close to home, and lessons have been learned. Here's a checklist to keep in mind to avoid costly

repairs, or to at least soften the blow when they do arise:

- **Think long term.** By putting a maintenance plan and schedule in place for every aspect of a building, an owner can get the most out of the systems and avoid repair work that could have been avoided with a plan in place.

- **Know your tenants.** Too often, owners make their own determinations of what needs to be done to make their buildings comfortable and desirable when they should be getting that information from their tenants.

- **Understand warranties and life expectancies.** For example, if an HVAC system has a life expectancy of 20 years, based on 10 hours a day, don't expect it to reach its life expectancy if it's running 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- **Dig into building efficiencies.** As a way to improve your property's performance, have qualified engineers and technicians examine the places where a building may be failing you.

- **Identify qualified property management teams and vendors.** These partnerships often come hand in hand, as the better/best property management teams have relationships with the most qualified and respected vendors.▲

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Roof inspections protect buildings and pocketbooks

Y our building's roof does more than just protect the outside of the building from the elements. It protects everything inside the building, from equipment and inventory to your most important asset, your employees. With so much riding on the performance of your roof, it's important that this capital asset gets the attention it needs.

Neglecting a roof is an easy, yet costly, mistake for many. Building owners and property managers often become aware that their roof needs repairs or replacement in emergency situations. These emergency situations, however, can be prevented or minimized with regular roof inspections.

Roof inspections are an important key to getting the most out of a commercial roof. Much like performing maintenance on your vehicle, a roof needs a regular maintenance program to sustain its proper life cycle. A regular maintenance program can find and prevent leaks and other problems before they cause major damage to your building and your pocketbook.

■ **Causes of roof damage.** Commercial roofs are subjected to a wide range of factors that can cause immediate damage or longer-term wear on a roof. Here are some common causes of roof damage:

- Rain and water. Most inspection and maintenance programs are aimed at keeping water out of a building. If water leaks are not found early, they can go undetected for long periods and create expensive problems to repair.



Mark Forbes
Business development manager, United Materials

- High winds. Wind can loosen and sometimes tear off roof components and create potential leak paths for water.

- Snow and ice. Heavy snow, snow that's allowed to sit on a roof long term, and the freeze-and-thaw cycle all take a toll on a roof and can create possible leak paths for

water.

- Heat and sun exposure. Hot, dry weather can play havoc on roofs in need of repair. Colorado's beautiful sunny weather and high altitude also expose roofs to strong doses of ultraviolet rays, which eventually break down even the most durable materials.

- Clogged downspouts, gutters and drains. Commercial roofs are designed to efficiently move water off the roof. Clogged downspouts, gutters and drains prevent water from draining and can cause serious damage if not corrected.

- Damaged flashing. Flashings are thin strips of material, usually metal, that are installed around HVAC equipment, vents and along a roof's edges to seal and weatherproof a roof. Damaged flashing, and dry and cracked caulk and adhesives also can create leak paths.

- Roof penetrations. Most commercial roofs have numerous penetrations for ventilation pipes and HVAC equipment. The seals around these



A regular inspection program not only can uncover problems, it also can tell you the general condition of your roof and allow you to plan for any major repairs or replacement in the future.

penetrations can eventually crack and fail and are the No. 1 cause of roof leaks.

- Excessive foot traffic. Other trades need to access the roof at times. Having walk pads helps limit potential damage to the roof from this access. It's always a good idea to limit the access to the roof and have a quick inspection after any work is completed by other trades.

- Hail damage. As you know, Colorado has severe hailstorms. It's a good idea to get an inspection of your roof after any hail event. The Rocky Mountain Insurance Information Association reports that hailstorms have resulted in more than \$5 billion in damage in the state over the past 10 years.

■ **Regular inspections are crucial.**

To detect damage early and prevent major problems later, it's important that building owners and managers conduct regular roof inspections. The information uncovered during regular inspections also will help with budgeting for major repairs or replacement in the future.

A proper roof inspection looks for the following:

- Bubbling, soft spots, splits, punctures or separation in the roof membrane.
- Roof damage, including damage to HVAC equipment curbs, drains, skylights, the roof perimeter and flashing.
- Clogged gutters and roof drains.
- Deterioration of sealants at pen-

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Maintenance

Budget secrets revealed: Tips for façade care

As the fourth quarter approaches and facility managers begin preparing for the upcoming budget season, the item that most often gets missed in budgeting is façade maintenance and repair.

The facade of a building has a useful life, and when it comes to the end of that time period, it can be a big expense to take on projects like recaulking or refreshing all four elevations of a building and sealing windows. Educating property owners about the importance of façade maintenance is probably what gets missed the most during budget season.

Most building owners already will have budgets in place for HVAC, elevator, and roof maintenance and repairs but rarely capital budgets for their buildings' facades. Informing property owners about the importance of façade maintenance and creating an anticipatory capital budget can keep ownership aware of the big picture for upcoming repairs and replacements.

It is important to look back at previous years' budgets, whether or not you're a seasoned manager to the building. Looking at past budgets and actual spending from previous years is useful to determining how much you should put in your budget for the following year.

Facility managers do not want to be faced with a huge variance in spending versus budget. Unforeseen situations like weather activity can't be predicted, but being able to look at historical spending on a building's roof, for example, is an



John Meyer
Branch manager,
Denver branch,
Western Specialty
Contractors

Facility managers should make sure explanations for exterior maintenance and repairs are clear; ask for a sit-down meeting with ownership so they understand the pros and cons of not placing a particular exterior project in the coming year's plans.

It is important to explain to the owner the consequences of deferring maintenance on a building's exterior. When you buy a car and defer maintenance, like not changing the oil or rotating the tires, the car will age prematurely and be more costly to repair down the road. The same analogy goes for building maintenance. Many times, a building's budget won't allow for a full expenditure, so a temporary solution may have to do until the budget can cover the full repair or replacement cost.

Structure facades can be made from any number of materials, including brick, terra cotta, granite, marble, sandstone, limestone, brownstone, concrete masonry

important factor to consider when compiling a budget.

Property managers usually are tasked with giving very detailed budget numbers to the building owners, but they often are lacking an important explanation or summary as to why a repair needs to be done.



Informing property owners about the importance of façade maintenance and creating an anticipatory capital budget can keep ownership aware of the big picture for upcoming repairs and replacements.

units, glass curtain wall systems, precast concrete and more. Likewise, they can all deteriorate for any number of reasons, including lack of maintenance, movement, air pollution, improper workmanship, weathering and moisture.

Ongoing maintenance always is recommended to minimize exterior damage, no matter what the building material. Problems with building facades can include cracking, efflorescence, spalling and joint sealant failure. Proper façade maintenance will reduce the likelihood of unexpected repairs and costs, plus helping maintain the proper-

ty's value and protect property and tenant spaces from leaks and water damage.

Here are some additional budgeting tips for façade maintenance:

■ **Collect data all year long.** Keep a running list or folder of façade maintenance information throughout the year. Anything that comes up during the year that wasn't in the budget for 2021 goes into a folder for consideration for 2022.

■ **Get contractor assessments.** Reach out to façade specialty contractors when starting the budgeting process and ask them to do an assessment of your building's exterior components, parking garage and other areas.

■ **Set priorities.** Contractor reports can help a building manager decide what needs immediate attention in the next budget and what projects are forecast for the next five years and can be included in future capital budgets.

■ **Start with income.** Begin the budget process with the income that will come in from the property's tenants. Add fixed expenses such as taxes, janitorial, regular maintenance contracts, and then add the fixes needed for the year. This will provide a clear picture of cash flow for the building so managers and owners can decide how much will go back into the building's maintenance projects and capital improvements.

■ **Create a separate capital budget.** If projects exceed cash flow expectations, put them into a capital bud-

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Maintenance

Avoid problems from the dreaded 4-letter word

Summer weather is coming to an end, and the cold weather will soon be upon us. Allergies from pollen, mold, smoke and other environmental contributions are prevalent during the summer for many people. While some may think that the end of summer will be a reprieve from mold concerns, in fact, the wetter, colder months tend to bring about more indoor environmental issues, such as mold.

Mold is found both indoors and outdoors. Mold can enter a property through windows, vents, and heating and air-conditioning systems. When mold spores fall on places where there is excessive moisture, such as where leakage may have occurred in roofs, pipes, walls, plant pots or where there has been flooding, it will grow. Many building materials provide suitable nutrients that encourage mold to grow. Wet cellulose materials, including paper and paper products, cardboard, ceiling tiles, wood and wood products are particularly conducive for the growth of some molds. Other materials such as dust, paints, wallpaper, insulation materials, drywall, carpet, fabric and upholstery commonly support mold growth.

Molds are classified into three categories: allergenic, pathogenic and toxigenic. Mold species that commonly are found in commercial buildings are allergenic, such as *Aspergillus* and *Penicillium*. These types of molds can cause some individuals to have an allergic reaction but don't typically cause serious health effects. Pathogenic



Jackie Bauer
Director of business development,
Colorado Premier Restoration

and toxigenic molds can be more dangerous and cause illness.

Health effects are obviously the most important reasons to keep your property free of mold, but mold also can have devastating impacts to your building. If mold is present it can continue to grow and spread to other surfaces. Long-term mold growth can result in serious property damage.

Property managers need to take action to find and eliminate the source, but also there is the public perception surrounding mold that needs to be addressed. Discretion in handling the situation can make a property manager's job easier. The word mold itself can bring out fear in people. People working in buildings where they believe mold has been found can cause a ripple effect throughout the building, causing what is called "sick building syndrome." Someone may become ill, not necessarily from mold, and word will spread, which can make others believe that they too are sick and that mold is cause.

Sometimes people immediately associate the word mold with black mold, or toxic mold. Mold can be seen having many colors. The color of mold does not automatically mean that it's black mold. Black mold has become a common term



When mold spores fall on places where there is excessive moisture, such as where leakage may have occurred in roofs, pipes, walls, plant pots, or where there has been flooding, it will grow.

for certain types of potentially harmful mold, such as *Stachybotrys*. In my years of experience in the field, I have encountered *Stachybotrys* in a rainbow of colors. The same is true for common mold species. You may have common-looking mold growth that you might think is harmless. There is no way to determine the type of mold by simply looking at it. Indoor air quality tests for mold are the only way to

positively identify what species of mold is growing and to what extent. Mold testing also will provide you with the level of spores that are in the environment. Extremely high levels of common *Aspergillus* and *Penicillium* can have adverse health effects to those with compromised immune systems or respiratory problems.

When mold is discovered, the first step to take is finding out why. Do you have a leak somewhere that is promoting the mold growth? Have you had recent water damage that wasn't dried out properly? Property managers must find and eliminate the source to effectively correct the problem. Secondly, mold growth needs to be properly remediated to ensure that no spores are left behind to spread and start growing in other places.

There are general misconceptions about mold remediation. Mold growth occurs in porous materials. Cleaning the surfaces of these materials might make it look as though the mold is gone, but in fact spores may be growing much deeper than the surface. The only way to be certain of getting rid of mold is to remove the affected porous materials under mold remediation protocols. Proper work containment and air filtration is paramount in keeping any spores from releasing and finding a new surface to grow on.

Prevention is the best way to avoid mold problems in your properties. Moisture control of the envi-

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Maintenance

Properly maintain parking structures for longer life

To ensure the service life of precast concrete elements and parking structures, routine maintenance is needed.

Unlike other types of buildings, parking structures are exposed directly to weather and environmental conditions that over time can influence durability and create performance problems. Extreme temperature changes, rain and snow, salt and magnesium chloride, road grime and insufficient drainage are primary causes of deterioration. Periodic inspections can help expose problems early, and combined with regular maintenance these practices can extend the life of your building and lower the total lifetime maintenance budget.

Structural and architectural precast concrete restoration is a market segment that requires extremely skilled practitioners to correctly detect and diagnose the extent of a problem, prepare an engineered plan and execute the necessary repair work. These contractors are familiar with International Concrete Repair Institute, Payment Card Industry and American Concrete Institute guidelines, and can provide services to mitigate issues.

The introduction of a maintenance schedule will increase the service life of your structure, reduce long-term structural damage and repairs, and will lower the owner's exposure and risk. Maintenance is a fundamental and necessary part of a strategic asset management plan. There are substantial long-term benefits of good maintenance,



Matthew McMeeking, PE
Project design engineer/project manager, EnCon Renew

including better performance, extended service life and reduced operating costs. Categories for parking garage maintenance encompass housekeeping, preventative maintenance and structural repairs. Each category includes specifics that require periodic attention for precast parking

structures. The following sample schedule shows industry suggested inspection occurrences for specific garage items and systems.

General housekeeping maintenance will enhance aesthetic appeal and user safety. If the structure is cleaned and refreshed often, it is easier to identify any issues. Two major areas that fall into this category are cleaning and inspection of expansion joints and control joints, along with snow removal and ice control. These items require proactive knowledge and planning as they can affect the operations, safety and durability of the structure.

Chemical de-icers and removal procedures often are causes of harm to the structure due to their chemical potency and mechanical methods. Recommendations are to never use de-icing salts, but if the situation requires, they should be used sparingly on a structure until it is at least a year old as they may cause damage

Sample Inspection Schedule

Item	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Semi-Annually	Annually
Bearing Pad					X
Cable Barrier				X	
Concrete Cracks			X		
Concrete Reinforcement			X		
Egress – Handrail, Doors and Jamb Handles		X			
Elevator – General Operation, Lighting, Security		X			
Expansion Joints					X
Fire Protection System		X			
Floor Drains		X			
Floor Joints and Joint Sealant				X	
Floor Surface				X	
Floor Traffic Coatings				X	
HVAC Equipment					X
Lighting- Stair, Elevator, Interior Parking, Exterior					X
Paint					X
Plumbing – Domestic Water System					X
Plumbing - Drain System – Roof and Floor Drains, Oil Water Separator					X
Roof Enclosure - Roofing, Flashing, Gutters, Downspout					X
Safety – Egress Lighting, Fire Alarm, Phone Line					X
Sanitary Facilities Operation					X
Washdown					X
Water Leakage – Floors and Walls					X
Winterize Water System					X

Industry suggested inspection schedule for specific garage items and systems.

to the surfaces. Wide ranges of cost and availability create many de-icing choices, so it is important to note that chlorides are more harmful than ureas or calcium magnesium acetate. Though inexpensive, sodium and calcium chlorides should not be used.

Another process that can cause severe structure damage is snow removal. The plow crew should use only rubber blades that do not come in direct contact with any of the expansion joints, deck membranes or joint sealants to minimize contact damage. Typically, this gap from the blade to the surface should be set no less than 3 inches.

Prevention maintenance should be managed by the structure owner and cover all structural, architectural and

mechanical elements, equipment and safety features on an annual basis. Verifying proper performance prevents deterioration and allows for the discovery of minor issues that can be corrected when discovered, preventing extensive and expensive future repairs.

An experienced engineer familiar with precast concrete should be hired for a visual inspection of all structural components, focusing especially on drainage and sealants. Standing water, water infiltration, freeze-thaw cycles and repeated exposure to de-icing salts leads to concrete cracking and spalling on structural members. Constant

Please see McMeeking, Page 25

Working Around Your Schedule



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How clean air can revive Colorado's real estate

In 2019, Colorado's commercial real estate market reached an all-time high. In the first quarter of 2020, nearly 3.7 million square feet of new office space began construction.

Then the pandemic hit. Restrictions were put in place. Office capacity was capped at 50% and workstations had to be spaced at least 6 feet apart. Now, as the state emerges from lockdown, the local economy needs a wholesale reopening of business.

It's widely accepted that for companies to thrive they need a physical presence. Personal contact and face-to-face brainstorming stimulate innovation and champion corporate culture. Most companies, therefore, want their staff to come back into the office, at least on a part-time basis, so that their real estate assets can once again add value to the bottom line.

■ Resistance is building. But workers have gotten used to working from home and virtual meetings. Attitudes have changed. The real estate sector will have to make changes too, or it will lose out.

Workers are resisting companies' attempts to lure them back into the office, and it's even been suggested in a recent Bloomberg article that some employees will quit instead of giving up working from home. That may be a stretch, but for many who do want to come back, at least for part of the week, infection control measures are critical.

COVID-19 is mainly spread through the air. Just as people expect pure water from the tap,



Frederik Hendriksen
Co-founder, Rensair

they now expect clean air at their place of work. If companies are to reap value from their office space, clean air needs to top of the facilities management agenda.

■ A practical indoor air quality solution. The pursuit of clean air may give compa-

nies a headache, caught between the remit of their own company and that of their property managing agent. Fortunately, there is a simple solution.

The World Health Organization recommends that an air purifier should be used to close the gap between the minimum liters per person per second requirement and what any existing ventilation provides. Companies can add portable air purifiers without affecting the fabric of the building. Working in tandem with HVAC systems, these can easily provide the optimum cumulative air change per hour rate.

■ HEPA filtration traps COVID-19. With many air purifier devices on the market, companies need guidance on the right technology. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention cites portable filtration units that combine a HEPA filter with a powered fan system as a preferred option.

"While these systems do not bring in outdoor dilution air, they



Just as people expect pure water from the tap, they now expect clean air at their place of work.

are effective at cleaning air within spaces to reduce the concentration of airborne particulates, including SARS-CoV-2 viral particles. Thus, they give effective air exchanges without the need for conditioning outdoor air," according to the CDC website.

The diameter of the SARS-CoV-2 virus has been found to range from 0.05 to 0.14 microns, and research by NASA proves that HEPA filters are most efficient at capturing ultrafine particles below 0.3 microns in size, as well as larger particles. The larger sizes are arguably more important as the virus is mainly carried in respiratory drop-

lets, over 10 microns in size, that protect it from evaporation.

■ Ultraviolet light kills COVID-19. Having trapped the virus, it must then be destroyed. The CDC recommends ultraviolet germicidal irradiation as a disinfection tool, "when designed and installed correctly." Combined with HEPA filtration, UVC light is able to destroy all virus particles that are trapped and held in place. Devices that use UVC alone, sometimes referred to as "fly-by-kill" products, do not subject viruses to UVC light long enough to guarantee inactivation because they are a moving target.

Please see Hendriksen, Page 22



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Vendor Relations

Rethink the standard request for proposal format

Ah, the request for proposal. No one likes them, according to surveys and my own anecdotal evidence. Vendors believe the RFPs they receive from prospective clients are repetitive and poorly written, and procurement and vendor management are not always on the same page. Many vendors believe clients flip straight to the pricing page of the RFP response.

Clients say most RFP responses they receive are cut-and-paste jobs with numerous grammatical errors in the responses, contain mostly fluff and lack creativity. Most clients admit they do not read the responses from cover to cover.

In short, clients and vendors both would prefer to avoid doing RFPs altogether. But most people believe they are necessary. So how can we be more creative to find ways to truly evaluate vendors? Of course you could follow the same tried-and-true formula or your corporate template. Most of us know what the process is, but let's review the current standard.

■ **The RFP.** At its core, an RFP must include the project timelines; an introduction; company and project history; a definition of the project, needs and requirements; an explanation of how vendors should respond; and an outline on the selection criteria. Once it's created, a list of vendors, often without much prequalification, is gathered and the RFP is emailed out. Typically, you then receive novel-length responses and go right to the pricing page, skimming or skipping



Kevin Carter
Security consultant,
Kastle, and vice
chair, ASIS Denver
Mile High Chapter

other pages, to select a short list, which is followed by site visits, after which you pick a vendor.

■ **How about a reboot?** The famous quote “the definition of ‘insanity’ is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results,” certainly applies to the RFP

process. Let's face it, business as usual is just not cutting it in the RFP process.

Cut-and-paste questions result in cut-and-paste answers. If you are shopping for more than price, often you end up choosing whoever can best fill out an RFP. In the end, if all else is equal, what are you truly searching for in a partnership from your vendor – culture, trust, creativity, accountability? It's time to try a different approach that isolates the problems you have and the solutions they may bring to the table.

■ **Quick RFI.** Often you may come up with a large list of vendors, especially for a service, product or location that you have never dealt with before. Narrowing down your vendors first is never a bad idea, even before you get to the proposal or pricing conversations. Sometimes it is good to eliminate those who you would never do business with as soon as possible, wasting less of your time and theirs. Send them a brief request for information that

requires basic information. Then schedule a videoconference that poses a series of additional questions to the vendor. Give them a maximum of two to three minutes to respond verbally to specific questions.

This helps gain a bit of familiarity and understanding of vendors and their capabilities, strengths and weaknesses. This can test their ability to clearly explain their position and solutions in a real and genuine conversation. You also may find indications of their authenticity, or lack thereof. Consider it a job interview for the vendor. Do they show confidence, intelligence and trustworthiness?

■ **Pre-RFP meeting at their office.**

Once the list is narrowed down, try visiting their offices for a pre-RFP meeting. During the visit, the client can visibly see the business environment that the vendor creates for its employees. After the meeting, you'll be able to share the RFP with more clarity of the pluses and minuses of each vendor.

■ **Scenario-based test.** After you narrow your list of vendors, create a test with a series of plausible what-if questions. Then, brainstorm internally to develop a series of situational questions that will help to extrapolate the “inner vendor,” instead of the typical gloss and shine responses. For example, “What if you are staffed at X agents and your service levels are X when they should be X? What is your process to take corrective measures, and who is responsible for executing your plan and communicating

with the client?”

■ **Vendor Q&A.** Perhaps you may be buying a product or service for the first time or first time in a long time. Allow the vendor to drive the process. Ask a short list of vendors to submit 10 questions about the business needs, then provide a proposal. Evaluate the vendors not only on the quality of the proposal itself but also the process and the types of questions asked.

■ **Video RFP.** With face-to-face meetings less common, ask vendors to submit a video responding to a list of RFP questions. This permits the vendors to inject their own personality and story with their own creativity. Create guidelines on required topics, suggested topics and parameters on the length of the video, but beyond that let it up to them to show you how they can be the vendor of choice.

■ **Midnight special.** At the end of the day, what you want is a vendor who is not only responsive, trustworthy and reliable but also someone who will help when there is an emergency. During the RFP process, obtain the cell number of the person who you will deal with if there is an off-hours emergency. Call the individual at midnight on a Friday or Saturday night, see if your call is answered. Note how long it takes for that person to return your message. Harsh? Maybe, but this can expose those who say they want your business but aren't prepared to deliver when you need them. ▲

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Tech

Continued from Page 1

■ **Increased video display expectations.** Assist tenants in minor infrastructure changes to enable larger and/or multiple video monitors. Dual displays are becoming standard in low- to medium-value meeting spaces. Help plan for the electrical install, as well as framing, drywall and paint.

■ **Floor boxes.** Assist tenants in recabling and/or increasing floor-box capacity by coordinating with tenants below. Add a pathway from the table directly to the video display location to enable packaged solutions like Zoom Rooms, Google Meet and Teams Room systems with proprietary distance-limited packaged interconnections. Over-floor semipermanent raceway systems are an easy way to accommodate this and can be relocated by the tenant and retained by the building owner post move-out. From then on, floor boxes are an amenity of the building, kept in inventory and not discarded on tenant move-out.

■ **Lighting.** Drop-in directional lightning can improve image quality on camera. Consider packaged radio-based controls, including on-wall switches. This helps to minimize infrastructure and could be retained by the building and allow integration with custom audiovisual controls if present.

■ **Shades.** Lose the miniblinds. Battery-powered roller shades can be an easy way to update a meeting room without major construction cost. These can easily be integrated into custom AV or lighting controls if present.

Outside the meeting room, property owners and managers can use technology amenities to entice back-to-office acceptance in 2021 and beyond, and to differentiate the property in a volatile market.

For example, fix the cellular coverage problem. Tenants and their workforce have no remaining tolerance for poor in-building service. Improving cell service also could help building

owners capitalize improvement cost beyond a single tenant, as the investment stays with the building when tenants move out.

Also, workers are accustomed to increased controllability of the home office. Personal lighting controls increasingly will become the norm in meeting and working spaces. Taking actions like de-lamping bright overhead lights and adding task lights or personally controllable fixtures can make a big difference to office and task workers. In addition, packaged radio-frequency controls minimize infrastructure needed.

Internet outages are more disruptive than ever, with many more meetings now including remote participants. Consider high-bandwidth point-to-point wireless instead of costly diverse physical paths and terrestrial providers.

To create peace of mind for a post-COVID-19 work space, consider technology that allows for the public display of carbon dioxide levels, air changes per hour, filter rating and life, potentially repurposing underutilized “green” ener-

gy public displays.

Finally, rethink TV service. Tenants want to feel informed while in the building, but cable news channels can be negatively perceived. Consider a more dynamic digital signage experience like headline-driven text from multiple sources alongside eye-catching video content. Property managers can deploy this across multiple properties inexpensively.

Proactive property managers can be partners with their tenants in a creative process to entice and facilitate the return to office. Individually, many of these ideas may be too small to scope and execute versus the value gained. Consider working with a provider that can roll up multiple items across multiple disciplines – electrical, communications, AV, lighting and controls. Doing so will reduce the friction to start, ease planning, reduce risk and lower the operational impact to the tenant and the building during deployment. ▲

kevin.zolitor@encoreelectric.com

Hendriksen

Continued from Page 20

A recent study by the Henry Ford Health System shows that germicidal UVC light is effective for killing COVID-19 on N95 respirators. Since the threshold for COVID-19 infection is estimated at only 300 virus particles, whereas an inhaled viral infection typically requires 1,950 to 3,000 virus particles, the case for air purification is even stronger.

■ **Added value beyond the pandemic.**

While it's hard to put a value on the financial contribution gained from collaboration and innovation, there are studies that demonstrate the benefits of reduced absenteeism, sustained health and increased productivity that directly result from clean air.

In the U.S., poor air quality is responsible for \$150 billion of illness-related costs per year. Of that, \$93 billion represents lost productivity from headaches, fatigue and irri-

tation associated with sick building syndrome. The World Green Building Council reports that after cleaning the indoor air, employers have seen workplace productivity increase by up to 11%. Further, a Harvard study showed that with better air quality cognitive scores were 61% higher across nine functional domains, including crisis response, strategy and focused activity level.

The office as we know it is under threat. Clean air is not just a weapon

against COVID-19 but also a defense mechanism for commercial real estate. The value of office life is in getting people together in an open environment and reaping the benefits of collaboration. The answer therefore cannot be cubicles, protective partitions and barriers. For Colorado's commercial real estate to bounce back after lockdown, indoor air quality is the only solution. ▲

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Hogan

Continued from Page 6

which they'll face reinstated policies. Again, deploy signage and staff training to prepare for these interactions.

Communicate, and then communicate again. Whether it's through an e-newsletter or signage by the mailboxes or your Instagram page, ensure the people coming into your

facility – and especially the tenants, staff and regulars who occupy your building – know what information is current. Engage tenants in problem-solving with you.

Know their policies, too. Help protect each other. None of this is new, and reviving it may be a little painful, but your responsibility to your facility occupants

is the same as it ever was: Take care of the building and the people within to the best of your ability. ▲ jhogan@ccsbts.com

Yoder

Continued from Page 12

tenants happy. There's a saying I recently

heard from another property management company that I thought was clever: "Friends don't let friends self-manage."

Certainly, there are property owners from whom self-managing makes perfect sense, but my experience is owners, by

and large, are not equipped to handle the day-to-day operations or to involve themselves in the many intricacies of

appropriately managing their own properties.▲ byoder@dormanrealestate.com

Phillips

Continued from Page 14

goals. To realize these goals, stakeholders need the tools and resources to engage building owners and help

develop and finance energy-efficiency projects, small and large. With financing tools like Colorado C-PACE to address many of the historical barriers to upfront project

costs, the newly launched Colorado Clean Energy Fund to address the small and medium-sized buildings, rural and hard-to-underwrite market sectors, and the

EPIC implementation tool to provide a quick, easy-to-use and robust resource for project origination, Colorado is poised to effectively meet the high standards of energy

efficiency and GHG emissions reduction necessary to transition into a sustainable future. ▲ tphillips@copace.com

Forbes

Continued from Page 16

etrations and termination metals. Cap/coping metal integrity. Signs of mold and other

unwanted growth (not very common in Colorado). Ponding or standing water on the roof. While an annual roof inspection can catch many problems,

scheduling inspections to occur every six months is a far better way to detect and repair problems. Most commercial roofers will inspect roofs, with some

offering formal preventive maintenance programs, some of which are tax deductible. Building owners who are qualified or who have trained maintenance personnel also can

conduct their own inspections. A regular inspection program not only can uncover problems, it also can tell you the general condition of your roof and allow you to plan for any major repairs or replacement in the future. Your roof is a major investment. Setting aside time and funds now to regularly maintain your roof may prevent headaches and stress in the future and save you some money. Don't put it off any longer.▲ mforbes@unitedmtls.net

Gauck

Continued from Page 8

maintaining tenant connections? Rather than starting over in building relationships with them, we are reuniting. Our team is once again delivering special treats and events, and providing fun and engaging surprises, which is the second most important aspect of the office building environment per responses to our recent survey. Food trucks, treats and fitness activities bring social interaction and variety to the office routine. For our team and our tenants, that's worth coming to the office for – and that is good news for building owners. ▲ dgauck@hospitality-work.com

Bauer

Continued from Page 18

ronment is the best way to reduce your chances of mold growth spreading. Inspections and proper maintenance of a building will reduce your risk. Plumbing systems, ventilation and ducting, proper drainage, HVAC, rooftop systems and roof integrity can all be contributing factors for mold. Fall is a great time to inspect all areas of your building for maintenance and repair of systems that can cause problems throughout the long, cold winter months. Don't let mold become a "four letter word" in your properties. ▲ jbauer@trustincpr.com





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Continued from Page 17

■ **Provide owners with a project wish list.** Building managers should give their owners a reasonably sized list of projects for the building. Prioritize the list by importance so owners can understand the needs for the most critical items first.

■ **Prepare a contingency budget.** Property managers don't always know what's going to happen to their building in the budget year. Put funds away for those items that come up unexpectedly. The amount

Being proactive when it comes to façade maintenance is the key to

keeping future costs down, and hiring your preferred contractor to do annual inspections is just one way of being proactive. When you do an inspection every year, it will not take as much time to inspect, and the repairs will likely be less widespread, as well as less severe, saving your owner money; whereas, if you do the inspections every five years, it becomes a game of catch-up to make repairs. ▲

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Continued from Page 19

Any deterioration or deficiencies

One common issue found in parking structures is spalling of concrete due to corrosion of steel-embed plates. Corrosion of the steel is



One common issue found is spalling of concrete due to corrosion of steel-embed plates, which often can be spotted at beam ledges, as water leaks through the joint above and sits on the ledge of the beam.

caused by water infiltration from the level above. Water infiltration can occur at expansion joints that have failed or caulk joints that have failed and have not been repaired or replaced. This issue often can be spotted at beam ledges, as water leaks through the joint above and sits on the ledge of the beam, as shown in the photo. Much like changing the oil in your car, replacement of joint sealants can significantly increase the longevity of the structure and

With proactive assessments and a maintenance schedule, you will limit deterioration, and expose and address problems much earlier. By creating this fundamental aspect of strategic asset management, the parking structure will continue to support service and mitigate the owner's exposure and risk. ▲

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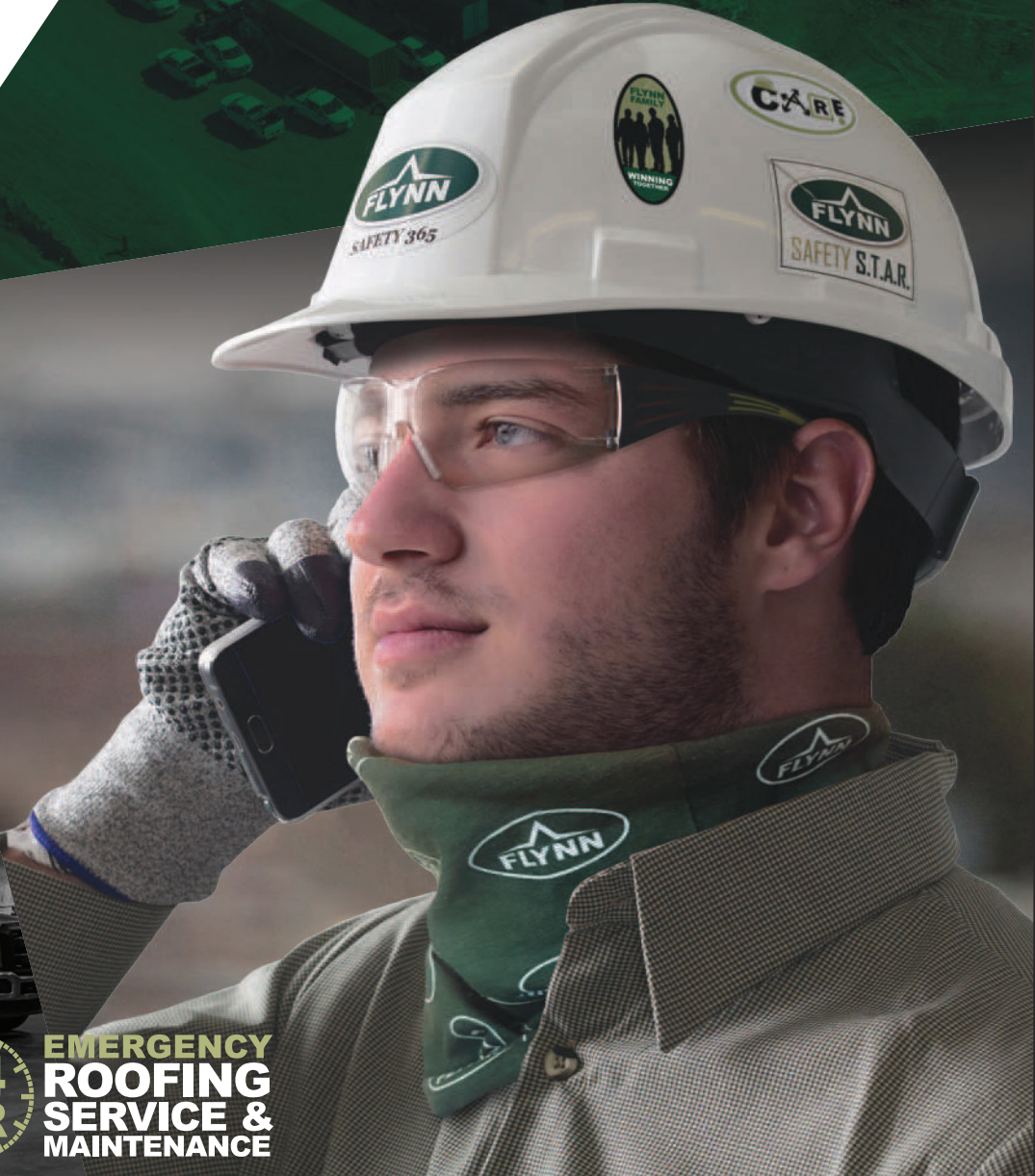


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