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2025 State of Commercial & Industrial Roofing in Ontario

A Property Owner's Guide to Maximizing ROI and Protecting Your Investment

Includes Free Roof Walk Checklist

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO MAXIMIZING ROOF LIFE

Stop Reacting. Start Planning.

Ontario's commercial and industrial roofs face a multitude of threats, including the effects of a harsh climate, poor workmanship, material mismatch, and neglect. Industry data suggests that a significant percentage – **an estimated 80%** – of roof replacements occur prematurely. This is often due to a lack of consistent maintenance, leading to accelerated deterioration and unexpected capital expenditures.

This report provides critical insights into the state of roofing across the province. It highlights the hidden risks of premature failure, the financial burden of reactive repairs, and the achievable **return on investment (ROI) that preventative maintenance** can deliver.

With data-driven analysis and real-world case studies, we aim to help property owners make informed decisions, extend the lifespan of their roofs, and plan long-term capital expenses with greater confidence.

For property managers, this report also serves as a practical guide for implementing strategies that **maximize roof life**.

Kirby Hewines
Service Manager & Owner

Kyle Hewines
Field Operations & Marketing

Lynne Hewines
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RUN TO FAILURE—OR PLAN TO SUCCEED

What's Your Roof Life Strategy?

Industry data suggests a troubling pattern in commercial and industrial roof management: an estimated **80% of roof replacements occur prematurely**, often the direct result of inconsistent or absent maintenance.

While this figure has been cited by U.S.-based sources such as Fortis Roofing, our field data across Ontario suggests this is not an exaggeration—it's a situation we encounter regularly. In many cases, roofs fail not because of design flaws or inferior materials, but because critical warning signs are overlooked until the cost of inaction can no longer be ignored.

The following comparison illustrates two common maintenance trajectories observed in commercial and industrial property management. One reflects a reactive model: a "run to failure" approach where maintenance is only triggered once a problem becomes visible or disruptive. The other represents a structured preventative model: periodic inspections, early interventions, and data-informed planning.

> **Videl's Field Insight:** Our preventative maintenance clients regularly see 5 to 10+ years of extended roof life—while reactive clients often face full replacement a decade too soon.

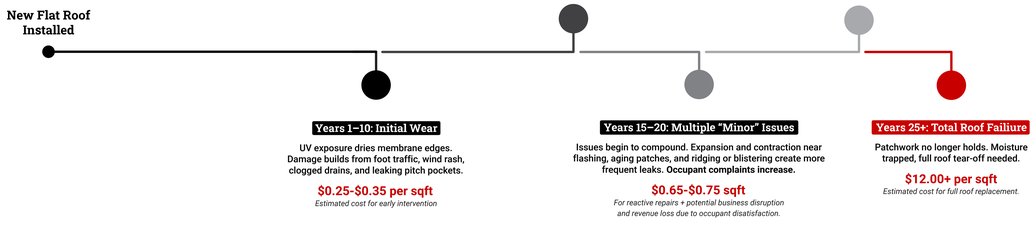
These two approaches lead to fundamentally different outcomes—financially, operationally, and structurally. It has direct and measurable consequences on roof lifespan, capital expenditures, operational disruption, and long-term asset value.

While the following illustrations may appear hypothetical, they are a reflection of recurring patterns we've documented across dozens of real-world commercial and industrial projects throughout Ontario.

RUN TO FAILURE

Timeline of Roof Decay

* This timeline illustrates how minor, yet manageable, roofing issues can compound into major costs if regular maintenance is ignored.



As Figure 1 demonstrates, a reactive approach often creates the illusion of cost savings in the short term by deferring maintenance activity.

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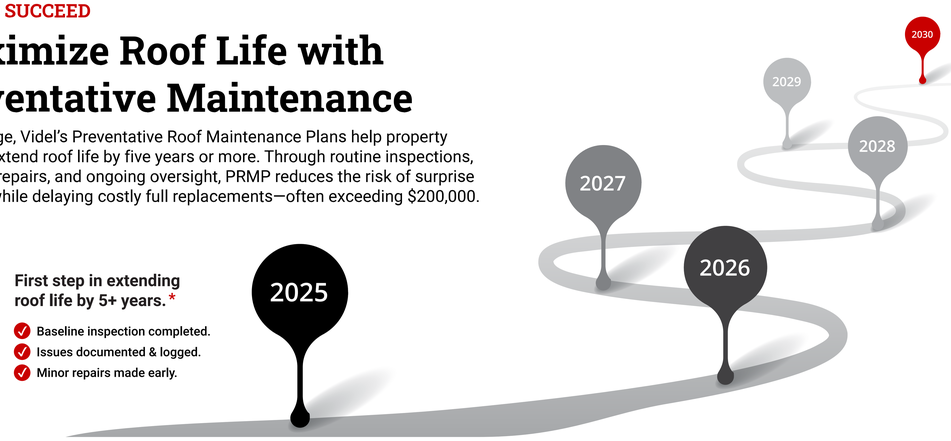
However, this short-term avoidance strategy leads to accelerated membrane degradation, hidden moisture damage, warranty voidance, and emergency repair events—each of which compounds the financial burden over time.

The result is a system that fails earlier than expected, often triggering a full replacement 5–10 years ahead of its projected service life.

PLAN TO SUCCEED

Maximize Roof Life with Preventative Maintenance

* On average, Videl's Preventative Roof Maintenance Plans help property owners extend roof life by five years or more. Through routine inspections, targeted repairs, and ongoing oversight, PRMP reduces the risk of surprise failures while delaying costly full replacements—often exceeding $200,000.



In contrast, our proactive model prioritizes scheduled inspections and routine maintenance. Which includes predictable annual costs that are significantly lower and more manageable than reactive repair events. In addition to reducing the frequency and severity of roofing issues, this approach enables more accurate CAPEX forecasting, ensures continuity of operations, and significantly extends the roof's service life—often by a full decade or more.

In capital planning terms, this is the difference between controlling your costs versus being controlled by them. And in a climate as unpredictable as Ontario, opting for proactive roof maintenance over reactive repairs isn't just best practice—it's a critical business decision.

At Videl Roofing, we've implemented our preventative model across a range of commercial and industrial properties in Ontario.

In the pages that follow, we'll share anonymized case studies and project-level data showing how consistent, **proactive maintenance not only reduced lifetime costs—but extended the service life of many roofing systems by 5 to 10+ years beyond their expected lifespan.**

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SUMMARY OF FIELD DATA (2025)

15 Commercial & Industrial Roofs in Ontario

Drawn from inspections, maintenance records, and observed performance outcomes.

Property	Location	Property Type	Roof Type	Roof Age *	Roof Size	Est. Cost to Replace	Years w/ PRMP*	Est. Years Left*
#1	Wasaga Beach	Multi-Tenant Strip Plaza	4-Ply BUR / Tar & Gravel	21 years	35,000 sq ft	$435,000	1 year	3 to 5+
#2	Toronto	Multi-Tenant Strip Plaza	4-Ply BUR / Tar & Gravel	45 years	25,000 sq ft	$440,000	2 years	3 to 5 (likely 10+ more)
#3	Mississauga	Multi-Tenant Strip Plaza	EPDM	20 years	35,000 sq ft	$420,000	6 years	3 to 5 (likely 10+ more)
#4	New Market	Industrial Facility	4-Ply BUR / Tar & Gravel	10 years	60,000 sq ft	$700,000	2 years	20+
#5	Mississauga	Multi-Tenant Strip Plaza	4-Ply BUR / Tar & Gravel	30 years	30,000 sq ft	$415,000	1 year	5+
#6	St. Catharines	Industrial Mechanic Garage	4-Ply BUR / Tar & Gravel	23 years	15,000 sq ft	$210,000	2 years	5 to 7+
#7	Mississauga	Industrial Manufacturing Facility	4-Ply BUR / Tar & Gravel	29 years	30,000 sq ft	$425,000	1 year	5+
#8	Toronto	Multi-Tenant Office Spaces	4-Ply BUR / Tar & Gravel	30 years	6,000 sq ft	$95,000	**n/a**	**BEYOND MAINTENANCE [REACTIVE]**
#9	Mississauga	Multi-Tenant Strip Plaza	EPDM	17 years	150,000 sq ft	$2,000,000+	5 years	2 to 5+ (other sections = 15+)
#10	Ancaster	Office Spaces & Garage Storage	Low Slope Steel Roof	14 years	8,000 sq ft	$100,000	1 year	10+
#11	Brampton	Multi-Tenant Strip Plaza	EPDM	16 years	20,000 sq ft	$320,000	1 year	7+
#12	Burlington	Multi-Tenant Office Spaces	EPDM	15 years	30,000 sq ft	$435,000	1 year	3 to 5+
#13	St. Catharines	Multi-Tenant Strip Plaza	4-Ply BUR / Tar & Gravel	25 years	180,000 sq ft	$3,000,000+	**n/a**	**SECTIONAL REPLACEMENT PLAN**
#14	St. Catharines	National Grocery Chain	TPO Canopy & Steel	10 years	12,000 sq ft	$200,000	**n/a**	**REACTIVE MAINTENANCE**
#15	Georgetown	Car Dealership	4-Ply BUR / Tar & Gravel	25 years	20,000 sq ft	$280,000	**n/a**	5 to 10+

Notes:

1. **Roof Age –** This is an estimated value based on the age of the roofing system when Videl Roofing first became involved. In some cases, this is approximate due to limited historical documentation.

2. **Years w/ PRMP –** This indicates how many years the property has been enrolled in Videl Roofing's Preventative Roof Maintenance Plan (PRMP), calculated from the year the program began through to 2025. Where applicable, this helps contextualize the roof's current condition, as properties with ongoing preventative care typically show slower deterioration and fewer compounded issues.

3. **Estimated Years Left –** These projections are based on Videl Roofing's experience and familiarity with each roof's condition through ongoing inspections and maintenance. Not all properties are under an active maintenance plan, so this column may be revised pending confirmation.

How These Properties Were Assessed

The fifteen properties featured in this data set were selected to represent a real-world cross-section of commercial and industrial roofs across Ontario.

Our goal was to capture a diverse range of factors, including:

- Roof size (small plazas to large industrial facilities)
- Roof system types (BUR, EPDM, TPO, steel)
- Building uses (retail, office, manufacturing, storage)
- Maintenance histories (proactive vs. reactive approaches)

Each property faced unique challenges — from typical wear and tear to deferred maintenance issues — reflecting the reality that **no two roofs are the same**.

This variety provides a more complete picture of how preventative maintenance strategies impact real buildings over time.

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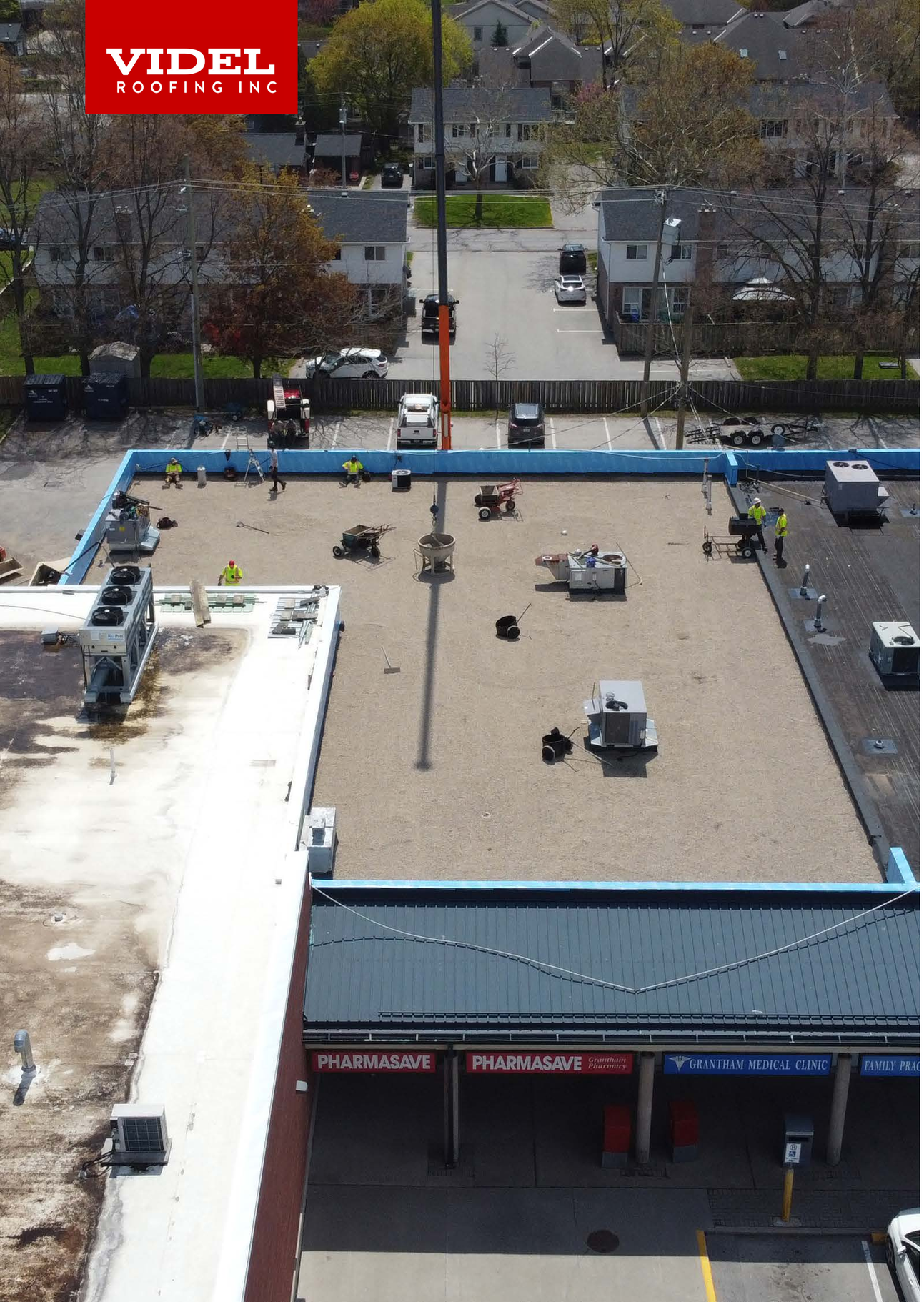

KNOW THE ENEMIES OF YOUR ROOF

10 Common Causes of Flat Roof Failures

Issue #1. Blistering, Delamination & Aging

Common in:	BUR and fully adhered EPDM/TPO systems
Failure risk:	Leads to membrane separation, uplift, and trapped moisture that accelerates deterioration
How to avoid:	Ensure dry substrates before installation, use correct adhesives, and monitor for early signs of moisture infiltration
Early signs:	- Raised bubbles between plies or beneath the membrane - Visible separation in BUR layers (delamination) - Blisters that expand in the sun and contract overnight - Wrinkling or loss of adhesion in fully adhered systems - Installation over damp or improperly cured surfaces

Issue #2. Flashing Failures

Common in:	BUR, EPDM, TPO
Failure risk:	Upgrade flashing details, inspect terminations regularly
How to avoid:	Upgrade flashing details, inspect terminations regularly
Early signs:	- Most common leak origin point (parapets, penetrations, edges) - Often fails before the field membrane - Cracked or dried-out sealants - Flashing base not fully bonded to membrane - Improper termination heights below code (less than 8”)

Issue #3. Foot Traffic & Mechanical Damage

Common in:	BUR (gravel hides damage), EPDM (puncture-prone)
Failure risk:	Cracks, punctures, membrane damage
How to avoid:	Install walk pads, train contractors, limit access
Early signs:	- Unprotected walkways or excessive foot traffic near units - HVAC panels or parts dropped during maintenance - Punctures from tools, screws, or debris - Membrane scuffs or surface abrasions - Ballasted systems with displaced gravel exposing membrane

Issue #4. Improper Repairs or Add-ons

Common in:	All systems
Failure risk:	Short-term fixes cause long-term failure
How to avoid:	Use compatible materials, always document history of repairs
Early signs:	- Incompatible materials used during patchwork - Patching over wet insulation or old leaks - Sloppy roof tie-ins with new mechanical equipment - Flashings reused or bent out of position during repairs - Caulking applied instead of membrane repair or welding

Issue #5. Pitch Pocket Failures

Common in:	All systems with pipes or conduit penetrations
Failure risk:	Allows water to seep around penetrations, leading to interior leaks, wet insulation, and deck corrosion.
How to avoid:	Use properly installed and sealed pitch pockets; inspect and reseal regularly as part of preventative maintenance
Early signs:	- Cracked or dried-out sealant - UV degradation of pitch pocket mastic - Movement in conduit or unsupported penetrations - Inadequate fill or shrinkage over time - Improper or rushed installation during equipment add-on

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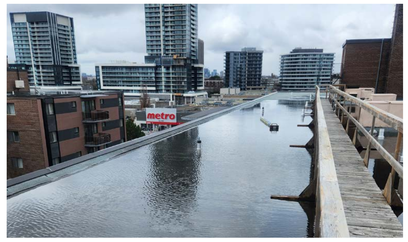

Issue #6. Ponding Water & Poor Drainage

Common in:	All systems, especially BUR & EPDM
Failure risk:	Accelerates membrane breakdown, promotes organic growth
How to avoid:	Regular drainage checks, tapered insulation systems, added drains
Early signs:	- Water remains >48 hours after rainfall - Flat areas with insufficient slope (<1/4" per foot) - Low spots or "birdbaths" in the roof surface - Blocked or undersized roof drains, scuppers, gutters - Collapsed or compressed insulation causing depressions

Issue #7. Poor Workmanship

Common in:	EPDM, TPO, steel
Failure risk:	Seam failure, splits, fastener pull-out
How to avoid:	Expansion joints, flexible adhesives, re-tighten exposed fasteners (steel)
Early signs:	- Seams and flashing pull apart over time - Steel roofs suffer from fastener loosening and panel shifting - Gaps forming at terminations or penetrations - Membrane wrinkling after cold nights or hot days - TPO roof tents or pulls at corners and walls

Issue #8. Thermal Expansion & Contraction

Common in:	EPDM, TPO, steel
Failure risk:	Seam failure, splits, fastener pull-out
How to avoid:	Expansion joints, flexible adhesives, re-tighten exposed fasteners (steel)
Early signs:	- Seams and flashing pull apart over time - Steel roofs suffer from fastener loosening and panel shifting - Gaps forming at terminations or penetrations - Membrane wrinkling after cold nights or hot days - TPO roof tents or pulls at corners and walls

Issue #9. UV Degradation & Weathering

Common in:	EPDM (most vulnerable), TPO
Failure risk:	Loss of flexibility, brittleness, cracks
How to avoid:	Use of UV-resistant coatings (acrylic or silicone), periodic inspections
Early signs:	- EPDM is prone to chalking, cracking, and shrinking - TPO seams may deteriorate faster in high UV areas - Membrane discoloration or fading - Cracking or splitting near protrusions - Dry, brittle feel to the membrane surface

Issue #10. Vegetation Growth

Common in:	Neglected flat roofs with standing water or debris buildup
Failure risk:	Roots can puncture membranes, clog drains, retain moisture, and accelerate material breakdown
How to avoid:	Clear debris regularly, especially near drains and corners; remove early moss or plant growth on sight
Early signs:	- Accumulated leaves, soil, or organic debris - Moss or grass growing near drain outlets or ponding zones - Standing water with algae or plant matter - Poor housekeeping or lack of seasonal cleanups - Rooftop HVAC or vents dropping debris that traps moisture

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SUMMARY OF OUR FINDINGS FROM THE FIELD

What 15 Roofs Tell Us About Maintenance Strategy

If we had to summarize the most common roofing challenge we see across Ontario's commercial properties, it would be this:

> **"Most failures didn't start last month. They've been building quietly for years, and by the time we're called in, it's already gone too far."**

In our field analysis of 15 commercial and industrial flat roofs, we identified a total of 58 active failure points. Every property had at least three separate issues while most had four or more.

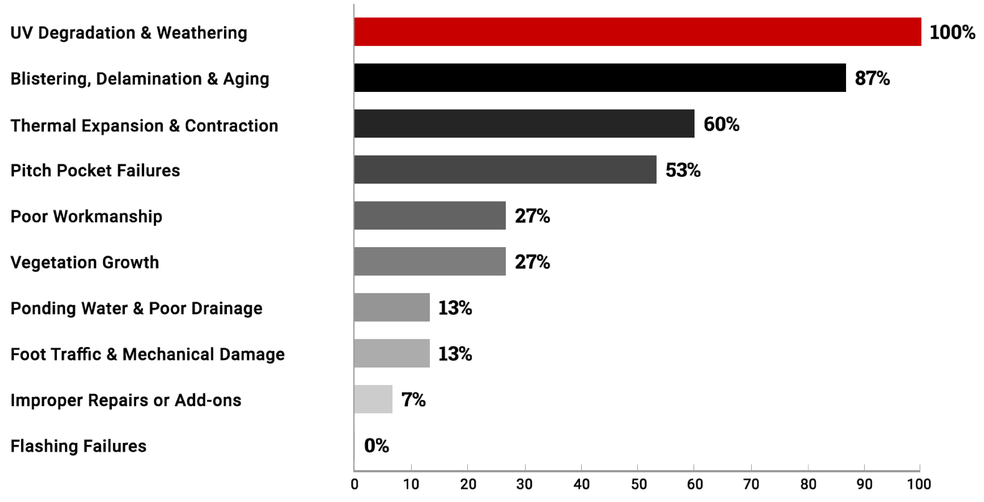
The most consistently observed issues were UV degradation (100%), membrane aging and delamination (86.7%), and thermal expansion and contraction (60%). Natural wear on a flat roof is expected over time, but these stressors become far more damaging when routine maintenance is absent.

Without early intervention, even manageable deterioration can accelerate into more complex failures such as pitch pocket breakdowns (53.3%), vegetation growth (26.7%), and ponding water (13.3%).

These are not isolated incidents; they reflect what happens when minor, preventable conditions are left unchecked.

Top 10 Flat Roof Issues in Ontario (2025)

Based on 58 real-world failures recorded across 15 commercial & industrial properties



n = 15 commercial and industrial properties assessed across Ontario.
% = Percentage of properties affected by each recorded issue.
Source: Videl Roofing field data, 2025.

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Maintenance Neglect as a Primary Risk Factor

The roofing issues and causes of failure we encountered were not caused by a single event. Instead, they were the result of prolonged neglect, where minor issues accumulated into major capital risks over time.

Preventative maintenance is often misunderstood. Many property owners treat it as a discretionary cost, rather than a strategic tool for protecting asset value.

At Videl Roofing, we like to use a car analogy to help make sense of maintenance:

> ***Skipping oil changes, brake inspections, and tire rotations might save money in the short term. But it eventually leads to failures that could have been avoided for a fraction of the cost.***

The same holds true for flat roofs.

Our data shows that early intervention almost always reduces long-term costs and helps avoid the much higher price of full roof replacement.

A FAILURE OF ADVICE, NOT THE ROOF

Why Some Contractors Push Full Replacements When Strategic Maintenance is Still Viable.

Several properties in this assessment had previously been advised to replace their roofs outright—despite the fact that targeted maintenance could have added another 3 to 5 years or more of reliable service.

In these cases, the push for replacement came not from the condition of the roof, but from contractors prioritizing short-term project revenue over long-term client value. This practice is more common than it should be, and it places unnecessary financial pressure on property owners who may not be aware that viable alternatives exist.

Among the 15 properties reviewed, the average roof age was 22 years. Yet across that group, 12 are either currently enrolled or previously enrolled in a Preventative Roof Maintenance Plan (PRMP), with an average program duration of just over 2 years.

$3.6M+ IN PREMATURE REPLACEMENT COSTS AVOIDED

Savings from Three Properties Where Previous Contractors Pushed for a Full Replacement (But Not Required)

Property	Quoted Replacement	Actual Strategy	Estimate life gained
#1	$420,000	1 year of PRMP	3 to 5+ years
#6	$210,000	2 years PRMP	5 to 7+ years
#13	$3,000,000	Sectional Replacement Plan	Cost spread over 10 to 15+ yrs

- **Property #1 faced a quoted replacement cost of over $420,000.** Instead, the owner adopted a preventative plan. After their first year of preventative maintenance, we predict the roof to easily last for another 3 to 5+ years.
- **Property #6 had also been advised to replace.** After 2 years of targeted repairs and maintenance coordination with our team, the projected life extension is 5 to 7+ years—well beyond the original replacement timeline.
- **Property #13 took a different approach.** Rather than replacing the full roof at once, the owner adopted a sectional replacement strategy in coordination with our team. We now replace portions of the roof as needed.

The next time a roofing company recommends a full replacement, remember this:

Have they provided detailed inspection photos? Have they ruled out targeted repairs or phased solutions? Are they explaining your options—or just pushing one outcome?

In our experience, some roofing contractors default to full replacement too quickly—especially when they're focused on large project revenue, not long-term value. But with the right maintenance strategy, many roofs still have years of reliable service left.

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BEST ROOF TYPE FOR ONTARIO

Comparing BUR and EPDM Roofs

While there are several flat roofing systems used in Ontario—most notably BUR, EPDM, TPO, and Steel—this section focuses on the two most common systems observed in our field data: Built-Up Roofing (BUR) and EPDM single-ply membranes. .

We've chosen to highlight BUR and EPDM not just because of their prevalence, but because they consistently show the widest performance gap when it comes to longevity, failure patterns, and maintenance outcomes.

For property owners considering which roof type offers the best long-term value, understanding this comparison is critical.

BUR (Built-Up Roofing / Tar & Gravel)

What to Know	BUR System Insights
Expected Lifespan	25–40 years
Why It Performs Well	- Multi-ply build with hot asphalt + gravel ballast - Excellent UV protection and durability - Handles foot traffic better than most systems
Proven in the Field	- Clients under PRMP gained 5–10+ extra years of service - Very few foot traffic issues reported
What to Watch For	- Blistering or hidden damage under gravel - Heavier weight may require load assessment

Videl's Verdict: BUR systems are Ontario's most underrated long-term performer. When paired with scheduled maintenance, they deliver exceptional ROI and are almost always worth preserving—Well beyond the typical 30-year benchmark.

EPDM (Ethylene Propylene Diene Monomer)

What to Know	EPDM System Insights
Expected Lifespan	15–25 years
Why It's Chosen	- Budget-friendly and easy to install - Good UV resistance and flexibility in cold weather
Common Issues	- Foot traffic damage near HVAC units and drains - Punctures, seam splits, and shrinkage - Fails faster without walk pads or proper care
Repair Red Flags	- Caulking over structural issues - Incompatible patch materials - "Fixes" that mask deeper deterioration

Videl's Warning: Popular, yes. But we often see this roof system fail the fastest, especially under heavy use.

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Material type, roof usage, and maintenance history must all be considered as part of a unified strategy.

At Videl Roofing, we tailor each Preventative Roof Maintenance Plan (PRMP) to the specific system in place—whether it's a decades-old BUR or a vulnerable single-ply EPDM membrane. This allows us to address system-specific risks, prioritize proactive interventions, and maximize the usable life of each roof.

> **Want a full comparison of BUR, EPDM, and other flat roof systems?**
> Click here to read our in-depth article on Ontario roof types

In the next section, we'll show how this approach paid off—literally—for a property owner in Mississauga who avoided a six-figure replacement by aligning roof maintenance with broader investment strategy and market timing.

PROPERTY #5 (MISSISSAUGA)

Case Study: Strategic Roof Preservation in a Redevelopment Zone

Located within the future Lakeview Village redevelopment area, Property #5 sits on land just behind the new development, with a high likelihood of being acquired and demolished by developers within the next 1–3 years.

Figure 1. Lakeview Village redevelopment area (source: Lakeview Master Plan, p.11)

Even though the property's roof is nearing the end of its lifecycle, a full replacement—estimated at over $415,000—would be a waste.

At this site, the roof was showing signs of aging: cracked flashing, minor leaks, and thermal movement near mechanical units. Some contractors had already recommended full replacement based on these issues.

But after our inspection, it became clear that the concerns could be addressed through targeted patching, re-sealing, and drainage corrections.

By executing these selective repairs as part of a preventative maintenance strategy, we've extended the roof's usable life just long enough to maintain operations until the site is redeveloped and sold.

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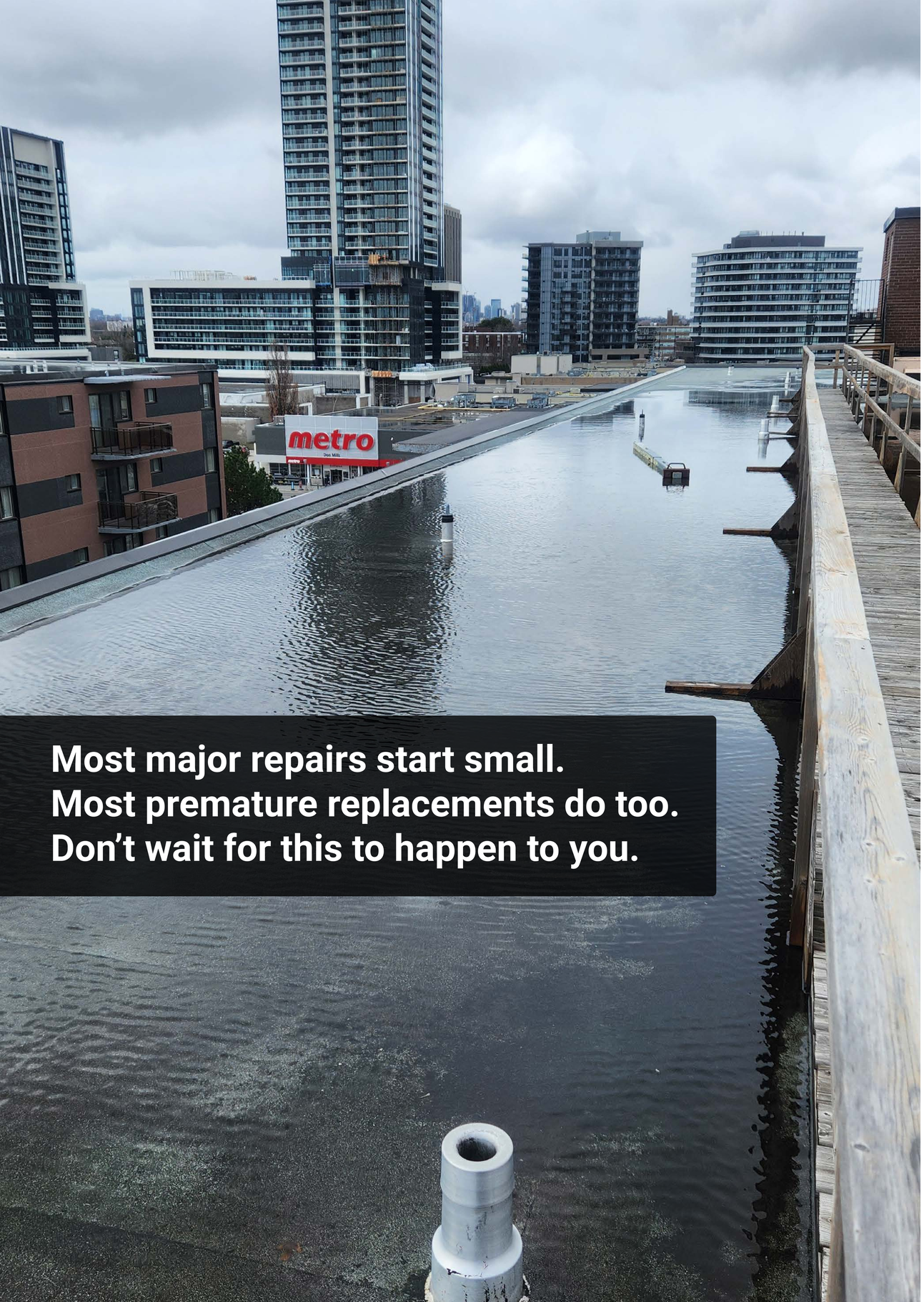

FOR PROPERTY & BUILDING MANAGERS

Roof Walk Checklist: A Self-Guided Visual Assessment

Purpose: This checklist is designed for non-roofers—property managers, facility supervisors, and owners—who want to take a proactive role in monitoring roof health. It doesn’t replace professional inspections, but it helps catch issues early.

Printing Tip: Print this checklist as a single page and bring it along for your next rooftop walk. Use a pen or marker to check off completed items and jot down any observations. Ideal for quarterly reviews, seasonal changes, or after major weather events.

☐ Q1 ☐ Q2 ☐ Q3 ☐ Q4 Date: _____ Initials: _____

BEFORE YOU GO UP	✓
Notify building occupants or security	☐
Review safety protocols (harness, ladders, buddy system)	☐
Check weather conditions — avoid wind, rain, or ice	☐
Bring a smartphone or camera for documentation	☐

1. PERIMETER & DRAINAGE	NOTES	Y	N
Are scuppers, downspouts, or gutters blocked?		☐	☐
Is there standing water near edges or corners?		☐	☐
Any signs of gravel loss or membrane lifting at the perimeter?		☐	☐
Vegetation growth or debris near drains?		☐	☐

2. PENETRATIONS & FIXTURES	NOTES	Y	N
Are vents, HVAC units, skylights, or pipes properly sealed?		☐	☐
Cracking or splitting around sealants or flashings?		☐	☐
Rusting, loose fasteners, or tilted equipment?		☐	☐

3. FIELD MEMBRANE & SURFACE	NOTES	Y	N
Any soft spots or spongy areas underfoot?		☐	☐
Blisters, cracks, or open seams?		☐	☐
Surface punctures from tools or equipment?		☐	☐
For gravel roofs: bald spots or uneven gravel?		☐	☐

4. DOCUMENT & REPORT	NOTES	✓
Take wide photos of each roof quadrant		☐
Snap close-ups of questionable areas		☐
Note ponding or discoloration spots		☐
Send photos to your roofing provider		☐

ADDITIONAL NOTES *(Use this space for any additional observations, special areas of concern, or reminders.)*

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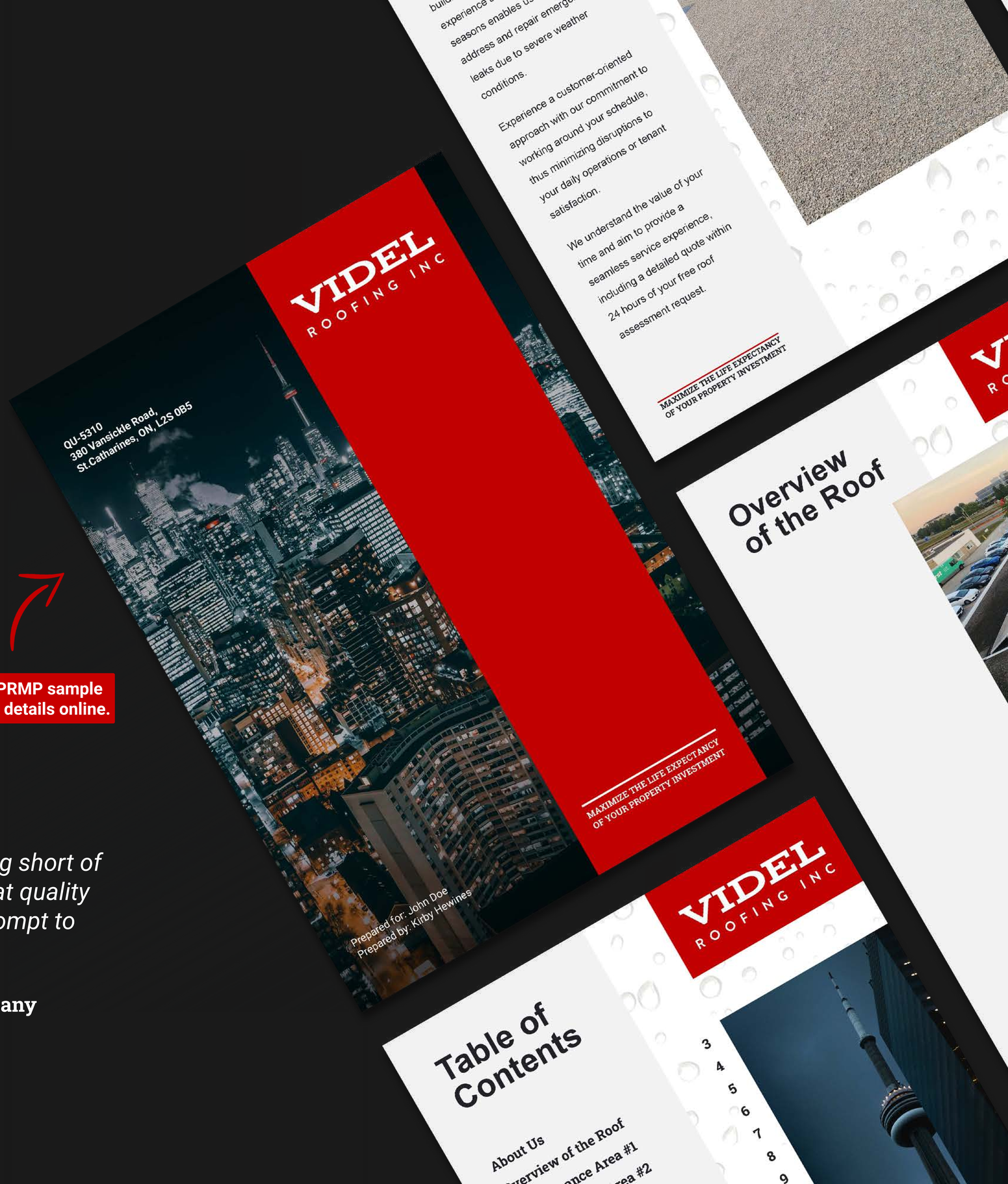
If you noticed issues—or aren't sure what to make of them—we can help.

Our Preventative Roof Maintenance Plans (PRMPs) are built for property owners and building managers who want peace of mind, not guesswork.

What's Included in a PRMP?

- ✓ Annual or semi-annual inspections
- ✓ Detailed photo reports
- ✓ On-call repair support
- ✓ Maintenance tracking
- ✓ CAPEX planning insights

Click the PRMP sample to view full details online.



> *"Kirby and the whole team at Videl have been nothing short of amazing over the years. They have always done great quality roofing work for us at fair pricing, and are always prompt to attend to emergency situations.*
>
> **— Street Properties, Ontario Property Management Company**

Maximize Roof Life

with Videl Roofing

“Contact us to learn how our PRMPS help Ontario property owners get more years out of their roofs.”

Kirby Hewines
Service Manager & Owner

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