

# Food Safety

## Protecting Your Brand from the Top Down



### **Electron micrograph showing Salmonella (in red) invading cultured human cells.**

If your facility produces or packages food and beverages, this is your enemy. Your roof is your first line of defense.

As food production practices change, so do facility safety and maintenance requirements. Today's food plants are larger and more complex than ever before. Maintaining the roof and preventing leaks is vital to your operation and brand.

### **Just one drop of water through your roof can contaminate an entire facility.**

Salmonella and other bacteria need water to grow, spread, and thrive. A leaky roof can bring contaminants on the outside of your facility to the inside. In addition to bacteria and other pathogens, roof surfaces often harbor bird droppings, fungal growth, oil, grease, fatty acids, and chemicals.



Rust spots on the ceiling over this food storage area are a clear warning sign. Other roof problems aren't so obvious and require diligent preventive maintenance.



## Implementing a preventive maintenance program.

There are seven steps you should take to implement an effective roof maintenance program.



Special attention needs to be made around roof penetrations and rooftop equipment common at food processing facilities.



### Step 1:

**Inspect your roofs at least two times per year and after any major weather events.**

Problems and anomalies found early can cost less to repair than those that are left unattended. Prevent major problems, such as:

- Decking deterioration
- Water infiltration into the building and onto critical areas
- Loss of flashings which can lead to blow-offs or other catastrophic events
- Coating failures and other uneven wear

### Step 2:

**Identify competent people to perform the work.**

- Trained
- Experienced
- Safety conscious

### Step 3:

**Gather and prepare information.**

- Historical data (e.g., original roof date, repairs and additions, substrate materials, surface type, and drainage and warranty information)
- Roof activity (previous roof problems, roof traffic patterns, maintenance needs, and emissions or discharge onto the roof)

### Step 4:

**Conduct a rooftop inspection.**

- Inspect roof edges, exterior walls, interior walls, projection flashings, surface conditions and rooftop equipment
- Clear and clean drains, scuppers and drain lines
- Remove storm damage and organic matter that may restrict drainage
- Repair minor problems before they become major
- Report, in either verbal or written form, the activities completed, the existing conditions and suggested actions



**Step 5:****Develop a comprehensive budget.**

- Yearly preventive maintenance expenses
- Yearly repair expenses
- End of roof life replacement costs

**Step 6:****Implement an ongoing preventive maintenance program.**

- Decide who will do maintenance
- Determine frequency of the work, actions required and documentation needed

**Step 7:****Ensure you have a solid record keeping and tracking system.**

- Capture information so it is not lost with employee turnover
- Plan for current and future needs
- Helps in getting management approvals
- Track roof performance and preventive maintenance
- Document warranty compliance

By developing a preventive maintenance program for your roofs you can minimize facility disruptions, maximize the life of your roof, comply with your warranty, and – most importantly – protect your food or beverage brand.

*If you are not sure what steps to take to protect your food facility, a reliable roofing contractor such as D. C. Taylor Co. can help you identify the best roofing maintenance strategy.*



### Other safety considerations.

When an accident happens or contamination is identified at your facility, safety is everyone's problem. No matter who is responsible, newspaper reporters and customers tend to focus on the company that puts their name on the food products. Can your company afford that kind of bad publicity?

Companies face direct costs and indirect costs whenever there is an accident or contamination on their property. While direct costs like workers compensation, OSHA fines and increased insurance premiums can be substantial, the indirect costs can be many times higher.

- Loss of customer confidence
- Tarnished corporate image
- Property damage
- Production delays
- Time and money lost dealing with the problem

### How to tell if a roof contractor is serious about safety.

Before hiring a roofing contractor, ask these important questions about safety. These are the contractor's responsibilities.

- Do they have a safety committee and do employees at all levels participate in the development and implementation of their safety programs?
- Does the contractor have a dedicated safety director that makes sure procedures are followed and projects are completed safely?
- Are all roofing crews tested for illegal substances prior to being hired?
- Does the contractor have a competent person in fall protection for each job site and a qualified person capable of horizontal lifeline design installation and supervision?
- Does the contractor complete a fall protection plan that clearly establishes and defines safety setup before the project begins?
- Do they perform a site specific job hazard analysis that identifies existing/potential hazards and outlines countermeasures?
- Can they show you their safety loss control manual?
- Do crews receive ongoing training to keep safety top-of mind?



**About D. C. Taylor Co.:** With 60 years of commercial and industrial roofing experience, D. C. Taylor Co. provides responsible roofing, inside and out, by delivering expert roofing and roof retention services that keep its customers' facilities protected and secure. We also provide sustainable roofing options to lower energy costs and advance environmental goals.

D. C. Taylor Co. is one of the nation's largest industrial roofing contractors, and has held this distinction for nearly 25 years. We operate from eight locations and have more than 60 service and roofing crews working across the country. Our safety ratings confirm D. C. Taylor Co.'s leadership in the industry, and we continue to seek innovative ways to provide distinctive value to customers.



D. C. Taylor Co.  
800-876-6346  
dctaylorco.com  
ResponsibleRoofing.com

## Proactive vs. reactive.

If your roofing contractor is not talking to you about safety before the job starts, you should ask yourself, "why not?" Talking about safety procedures after an accident is "a day late and a dollar short." Not taking a proactive approach to roof safety can cost your company considerable time and money.

## Evaluating a contractors safety record.

Besides the ongoing safety programs initiated by a roofing contractor, there are several statistics that can give you an indication of the contractor's safety record and commitment to responsible roofing. Ask your contractor for their updated statistics or check with OSHA for past citations.

- EMR – Experience modification ratio
- TIR – Total incident rate
- LWDIR – Loss work-day incident rate
- Past OSHA citations

## Summary – safety.

When you are considering hiring a roofing contractor, be sure to look at these six safety factors:

1. Culture – Does the contractor just talk about safety, or do they incorporate safety into every part of their work process?
2. Management Commitment – Does your roofing contractor financially support their safety programs and enforce their safety policies?
3. Training – Are ongoing training programs provided to the contractor's employees?
4. Proactive vs. Reactive – Does your contractor identify hazards or exposures before they happen? Or do they react only after a problem has occurred?
5. Risk Analysis Process – Are these three steps completed before work begins? Analyze the task or work to be performed. Identify hazards associated with the task. Develop countermeasures to prevent or reduce the risk of the hazards.
6. Safety Record – What is the contractor's record when it comes to safety?