

MAINTAINING COMMERCIAL BUILDING FACADES | AUG. 2024

Maintaining the facade of commercial buildings is essential for attracting tenants, enhancing curb appeal, and ensuring the longevity and safety of the structure. Vancouver's unique climate and environmental conditions require specific maintenance strategies. This article outlines nine critical tips for property managers and building owners to effectively maintain their building facades.

Introduction



The facade of a commercial building is its first impression and a significant factor in attracting and retaining tenants.

In Vancouver's competitive real estate market, a well-maintained facade can set a property apart from its peers, contributing to higher occupancy rates and rental values.

Beyond aesthetics, regular facade maintenance offers substantial financial benefits by preventing costly repairs and extending the building's lifespan.

Preventative maintenance helps identify and address minor issues before they become major problems, avoiding expensive emergency repairs and potential revenue loss from tenant dissatisfaction or vacancies.

Regular maintenance also enhances the property's value. Buildings with well-preserved facades are more attractive to investors and potential buyers, often commanding higher prices on the market.

9 Essential Tactics for Your Building Preservation Strategy

1. Regular Inspections

Regular inspections are vital due to Vancouver's cold, wet climate, which can cause moisture-related and freeze/thaw issues. Inspections should be conducted at least twice a year, preferably in spring and fall, and after severe weather events.

Key inspection points include:

- Cracks in the facade
- Water stains
- Peeling paint
- Loose materials

For high-rise buildings, highly trained rope access technicians may be necessary to safely conduct thorough inspections.

2. Cleaning

Frequent rain and urban pollution in Vancouver contribute to the buildup of dirt, algae, and mould on building facades. Regular cleaning is essential for maintaining a professional appearance and preventing damage.

Cleaning methods should be tailored to the facade material:

- Concrete and Brick: Power washing
- Natural Stone and Stucco: Gentler soft washing methods

Note: Environmentally friendly cleaning agents or “solution contain and capture” methods should be used to comply with local regulations and protect the environment.

3. Repair Damages Promptly

Promptly addressing any cracks, holes, or other damages is crucial to prevent water infiltration and further deterioration. Repairs should use materials and techniques suitable for Vancouver's climate to ensure durability.

4. Sealants and Coatings

Applying appropriate sealants to stone and concrete surfaces and renewing caulking when needed is crucial for protecting facades from moisture. Products should be selected based on suitability for our regional weather conditions and renewed periodically to maintain their effectiveness.



5. Monitor and Control Moisture

Effective moisture control is vital. Steps to ensure proper drainage include:

- Regularly inspecting and cleaning gutters, downspouts, and weep holes
- Promptly addressing any drainage system problems or leaks

These measures help prevent water ingress into the facade, avoiding mould and structural damage.

6. Maintain Vegetation

Unmanaged landscaping can cause severe damage. Regular trimming of plants and trees is necessary to prevent root invasion, surface abrasion, and moisture retention against the facade. Proper drainage around landscaped areas is also crucial to avoid water pooling near the building.

7. Address Structural Issues

Structural issues such as settling, or foundation problems can severely impact a building facade. Prompt attention to signs of structural distress is essential. Consultation with a structural engineer familiar with local conditions to evaluate and mitigate risks.

8. Use Quality Materials and Workmanship

When undertaking repairs or renovations, using high-quality materials is vital. Quality workmanship means hiring skilled professionals who understand our environmental challenges and specific building materials ensures durable and effective solutions.

9. Documentation and Planning

Maintaining comprehensive records of inspections, repairs, and maintenance activities along with periodic depreciation reports, help track the building's condition over time and plan future maintenance effectively. Developing a proactive maintenance plan that includes scheduled inspections, cleaning, and repairs helps keep the facade in optimal condition and avoids unexpected issues.

Conclusion

Diligent facade maintenance is essential to preserve the aesthetic appeal, structural integrity, and value of the property. Following these tips help ensure that buildings remain attractive, safe, and functional in Vancouver's unique climate.

For more information or to arrange a complimentary professional initial consultation on building facade maintenance in Vancouver, please visit huardduncangroup.com, email contact@huardduncangroup.com or call 604-734-6586.