



THE NEED FOR ANNUAL INSPECTIONS OF PARKING DECKS

Nearly a dozen parking decks in the United States had portions of their structures collapse in the last two years. These failures were attributed to corrosion of key reinforcement pieces, and public safety officials are reacting. Lawmakers in New York state are drafting legislation requiring parking deck owners to conduct structural inspections every five years with a professional engineer.

Concrete contractors may consider this increased interest in mandatory parking deck inspections as a way to expand their businesses. Structural inspections can be very expensive. Then there's the cost of repair and downtime caused by mandatory repair.

Performing a visual inspection on your customer's parking deck surface can help. Contractors can provide an expert's eye to identify concrete surface distresses such as delaminations, scaling, rust, and evidence of water penetration. The inspection should target mechanical wear and abrasion from snow plowing, heavy traffic patterns, and weather issues. These visual inspections are better made when a thick coating doesn't hide the original concrete surface.

The American Concrete Institute publishes a document that contractors can use to set up these job site inspections. It outlines how to perform visual and nondestructive testing. The National Parking Association also offers a document prepared for operators with additional inspection items for operational concerns.

There's a new opportunity for contractors who want to ramp up their commitment in repair. The International Concrete Repair Institute recently launched a new certification for concrete repair technicians. Information on this new program is posted at www.icri.org.