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Proper phone etiquette can turn a "bad call" onto the right path. Learn how.

RESIDENTIALResource



THE OFFICIAL MONTHLY NEWS MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY MANAGERS

If only you had made the roof repairs

BEFORE THE STORM!

Whether or not there's an El Niño in our future, now is the time to get a roof inspection, get on a maintenance plan, and fix any issues. Oftentimes, HOAs or single-family property owners will postpone reroofing because of cost concerns, but, if a big rain does hit, and the roof's in bad shape, the price will be far greater in the end.

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El Niño on the Horizon? Resolve Roof Issues Now

As we head into summer after one of the driest winters on record, most California homeowners and Homeowners' Association (HOA) property managers are probably not thinking about rain-related roof and deck troubles.

The sun is shining, the temperatures are warm—it's time to sit back and relax.

While we may have avoided the hassle of leaking roofs and associated damage last winter, this dry spell could just be the calm before the storm—El Niño, that is. If so, now is the time to inspect that roof and repair any potential leak points, because those in the know predict that if El Niño does hit next winter, it could dump rain in quantities not seen in nearly two decades. Although normally associated with the Pacific Region, El Niño's effects would bring pronounced changes to weather patterns in all regions.

This year, the Climate Prediction Center (CPC) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) gives El Niño a 58 percent chance of

flooded with repair calls, and unless it's an emergency, you can expect wait times that can make leak-related problems much worse. Plus, as the law of supply and demand dictates, prices will be higher—not just for emergency fixes, but for permanent repairs as well.

Whether or not there's an El Niño in our future, now is the time to get an inspection, get on a maintenance plan, and fix any issues. Oftentimes, HOAs or single-family property owners will postpone re-roofing because of cost concerns; but, if a big rain does hit, and the roof's in bad shape, the price will be far greater in the end.

Here are some measures you can take to keep your roofs and waterproof decks leak-free:

- Get an inspection. If anything, it will bring your homeowners peace of mind when the raindrops start falling.
- Be proactive. Advise your homeowners to fix any problems while they're small and the weather is

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arriving in the next three months. By early fall, the probability rises to about 80 percent.

Many meteorologists, including Kevin Trenberth, a climate scientist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, CO, are predicting that this year's El Niño could be similar to the last big one in 1997-98 that caused billions of dollars in damage and killed an estimated 23,000 people worldwide. In California alone, that event nearly doubled the region's rainfall totals from the annual average of 15 inches to 27.85 inches.

With numbers like these, as far as roof and deck maintenance goes, Benjamin Franklin said it best: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." In a deluge of rainfall, a small leak can cause thousands of dollars in damage in very little time. During a major storm, most roofing companies will be

dry. Prices and wait times go up during storms.

- Get the properties you manage on a maintenance plan. Sometimes rainwater damage can be avoided simply by cleaning out the gutters and drains. Plus, regular maintenance can extend the life of a roof by up to 50 percent.
- Don't wait. The majority of mid-winter calls that roofing companies get are for problems that could have either been avoided or had their severity greatly reduced if the property manager and HOA board had addressed roof and deck issues before the rain started. If you wait, you're asking for trouble.

The secret to surviving El Niño is to be prepared. As a property manager or HOA board member, this means ensuring that your roofs and decks are solid, adequately maintained and replaced, if necessary. 