

Maintenance Best Practices for Parking Structures

Proactive maintenance and preventative measures are essential for maintaining the integrity and safety of parking structures, which are particularly susceptible to structural failures due to factors such as heavy vehicle loads, exposure to the elements, freeze-thaw cycles, and corrosion from deicing salts. By implementing best practices, the lifespan of these facilities can be extended, thus reducing the need for costly repairs.

To achieve these goals, parking garage owners can adopt the following best practices:

1. **Prompt Repairs:** Address any minor issues, such as cracks, leaks, or damaged protective coatings, as soon as they are identified. Promptly repairing these issues can help prevent more extensive and costly damage in the future.
2. **Maintain Protective Coatings and Sealants:** Regularly inspect and maintain protective coatings and sealants on the parking structure's surfaces. This can help protect the structure from water intrusion, chemical exposure, and other environmental factors that can contribute to deterioration.
3. **Regular Cleaning:** Regularly clean the parking structure to remove debris, dirt, and accumulated salts that can cause corrosion and other damage. This includes power washing the floors, walls, and ceilings as needed, and ensuring proper drainage to prevent standing water.
4. **Monitor Drainage Systems:** Regularly inspect and maintain the drainage systems within the parking structure to ensure proper functioning. This includes cleaning out gutters, downspouts, and drains to prevent water buildup and potential damage to the structure.
5. **Monitor Lighting and Ventilation Systems:** Regularly inspect and maintain lighting and ventilation systems within the parking structure to ensure they are functioning properly. Adequate lighting is essential for safety, while proper ventilation can help minimize the buildup of harmful vehicle emissions and moisture within the structure.
6. **Implement a Routine Inspection Program:** Implement a routine inspection program to identify and address any emerging maintenance issues between the mandated inspections. This can help maintain the overall health and safety of the parking structure.
7. **Train Staff and Management:** Ensure that all staff and management responsible for the operation and maintenance of the parking structure are trained in the proper care and upkeep of the facility. This includes understanding the unique maintenance needs of parking structures and being able to identify potential issues before they escalate.

In locations such as New York State, with the [New York State Parking Garage Inspection Rule](#), and New York City, with its Parking Structure Inspection Law ([Local Law 126 of 2021](#)), parking garages must adhere to specific state and local laws and regulations. The inspection frequency for parking garages can vary based on these requirements. During an inspection, a professional engineer will assess the condition of a parking structure and determine if it complies with regulations regarding permits, health and safety, and building codes, among other requirements. It is the parking garage owner or manager's responsibility to be aware of these rules and maintain their facility accordingly. The condition assessment provided by a parking garage inspector offers valuable insights into the additional maintenance actions that should be undertaken annually.

By following these maintenance best practices and staying up-to-date on local and state regulations, parking garage owners and managers can ensure their facilities remain safe, functional, and well-maintained. Proactively investing in the proper care of parking structures yields long-term benefits by averting expensive repairs, safeguarding the value and longevity of the facilities, and fostering a safe and secure environment for patrons, employees, and the broader community.