

Getting Your Parking Structure Ready for Spring

Evaluating the condition of your existing parking structure after the winter season can ensure a safe and profitable facility for the rest of the year. *By Kyle Stanish, Ph.D., SE, PE*

As parking structures are exposed to the elements through a harsh winter, they need some TLC in the early spring. Some of the things that you should consider include:

Power Washing

Over the winter, a lot of salt and sand has typically been brought into the garage. Now is a good time to clean your floor. Removing any oil or grease build-up that you have is also a good idea while you are at it.

Check for Leaks

Washing the garage is a good time to check for leaks. You don't want water dripping on cars below or getting into the concrete and causing corrosion damage!

Clean Your Floor Drains and Piping

You want any water that gets in, to get out again. Making sure your drains and piping are clean is the best way to do this. Do not forget any sand traps and oil/water separators (triple basins) that you may have!

Guardrails and Vehicle Barriers

These serve an essential life safety function – keeping cars and people from falling over the edge! These should be evaluated periodically to make sure that they haven't been damaged and now is a good time.

Alarm Systems

These don't help if they are not working properly and need to be periodically evaluated by the appropriate professional. Checking should include fire safety devices, CO monitoring alarms, security stations and illuminated exit signs.

Lights

Now is a good time to clean your light fixtures and replace your bulbs. It will make the parking facility seem brighter and more welcoming.

Painting

Painting any exposed steel that you have will help extend its life, as well as making your garage look nice. Also think about restriping – the line stripes do wear off and should be redone every 3 – 5 years.

Tripping Hazards

Trips and falls are among the biggest source of accidents in parking structures. It is always a good time to check for trip and fall hazards. These can range from spalled concrete through uneven floors to old equipment bolted to the floor.

Develop a Plan

Garages don't last forever, but they last longer if you take care of them. Planning for repairs prevents surprises and reduces long term costs. Be proactive rather than reactive.

The spring is a good time to have an engineer familiar with maintenance and repairs have a look at your parking structure and develop a plan for keeping your garage in good condition – now and in the future.

If you have any questions about maintaining your parking garage, please contact Kyle Stanish, Klein and Hoffman, kstanish@kleinandhoffman.com or 312.251.1993.



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Kyle Stanish is a Senior Associate with Klein and Hoffman with more than 10 years of experience in the restoration/repair industry. He holds a professional registration as a structural engineer in Illinois and is licensed as a professional engineer in the states of Illinois, Indiana, North Carolina and Tennessee.

Some of his widely recognized projects include the Pepsi Ice Center Parking Garage, University of Chicago Medical Center Parking Garage, Duke Hospital Parking Garage, Asheville Mall Green and Red Parking Deck, Oak Park Mall East and West, Easton Town Center, and the Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau Parking Garage. He obtained his Ph.D. in Civil Engineering: Concrete Materials from the University of Toronto. Also, he completed his Master of Science in Civil Engineering Structures from the University of Toronto and his Bachelor of Civil Engineering from McMaster University.