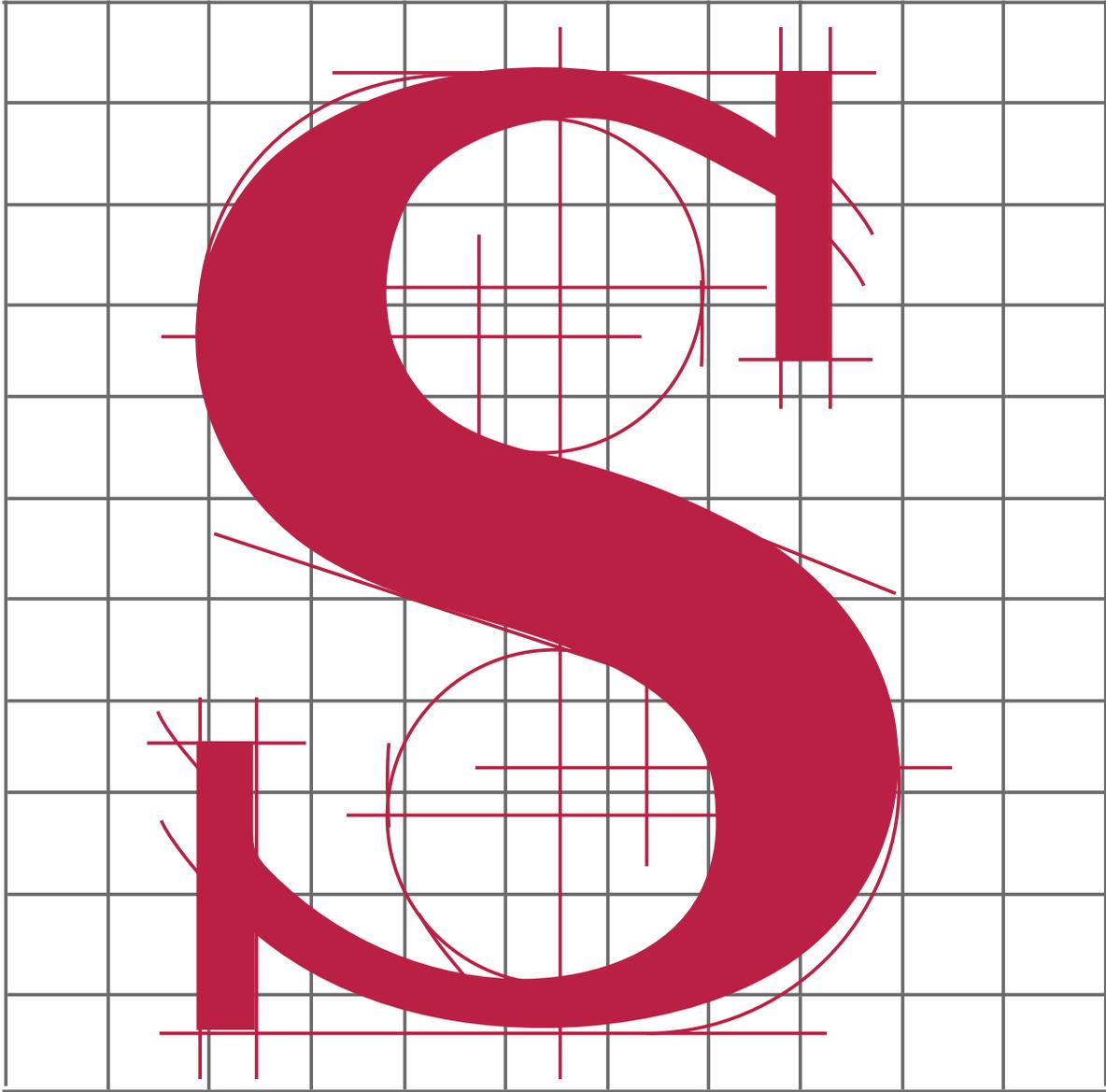


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THE “FIVE DEADLY SINS” OF CONSTRUCTION DEFECTS

By Don Neff, President
LJP Construction Services



Construction defect claims have significantly impacted the building industry – with water intrusion being one of the big ones. Based on our analysis of thousands of projects nationwide, we have found three root causes – 1) deviations from architectural plans, 2) deviations from approved materials, and 3) deviations from standard field quality. The result is frequently CD litigation.

Data from our CaptureQA® quality assurance App has helped identify common problems -- with five of the deadliest sins noted below. They require continuing diligence in implementing quality assurance checks during the building design, construction, and maintenance life cycle.

LJP Construction Services

Don Neff is President of LJP Construction Services. Headquartered in Irvine, CA, with regional offices in Miami, Atlanta, and Las Vegas. LJP has been at the forefront of the quality assurance movement on behalf of builder and insurance clients for over 25 years. Most recently, LJP has assisted clients in the residential, commercial and hospitality sectors nationwide with its CaptureQA® App. LJP's services encompass pre-, during- and post construction scopes of work and specialized risk management training. For more information, visit <http://www.ljpltd.com>.

DANGER

✗ **Improperly designed and constructed roofs:** Water leakage from any source can result in unhealthy living conditions due to mold growth and damaged interiors. Poorly designed and constructed roofs create many potential failure points. For instance, flat roofs with decks over living spaces (functioning like a walkable roof) are a potential water intrusion disaster. And mechanical and plumbing equipment installed on roofs requires proper flashing systems and continuing maintenance. Many of the most vulnerable roof installation defects are out of sight and consequently create longer term deterioration.

✗ **Improperly installed windows & doors:** Windows and doors are typically where the first problems manifest, because water intrusion leaves telltale drywall stains. More difficult is finding the source, such as improperly lapped flashing membranes, missing or compromised head flashing and improperly installed flashing at jambs and sills. Deeply recessed windows are particularly troublesome if lacking positive sloping sills for effective drainage. Similarly, radius topped windows require specific installation methods and sequences.

✗ **Improperly constructed structural components:** Defects in these systems may increase the likelihood and extent of structural damage as well as possible injury to occupants. Failure to properly design and construct load paths from the foundations to the walls and the roof can generate failures when Mother Nature's fury strikes with hurricanes and tornados.

✗ **Improperly constructed exterior siding:** Brick, rock, aluminum, wood, vinyl, and stucco are typical exterior cladding systems that protect the structure and provide esthetic appeal. However, improperly installed siding can result in water intrusion which is also difficult to find and repair. Exterior cladding systems should be designed with vented drainage planes so any water that gets in can also get out.

✗ **Defective foundations and concrete slabs:** These assemblies can also compromise the structure if improperly done. For example, a design mix with too much water can result in weakened concrete with high porosity which is more vulnerable to vapor transmission from vapor pressure differentials and possible damage to structural embedments.

As a former homebuilder, I can unequivocally say, each of these issues can be resolved. In doing so, the important question is, “WHAT'S IN YOUR TOOLBOX”?

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