



THE FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE...ROOFING SHINGLES!

Roofing shingles are an integral part of the “envelope” used to protect your house from the elements. A building permit is necessary to strip and reroof or reroof over one layer.

WHO SHOULD GET THE PERMIT?

If you're having a roofing contractor do the work, it is strongly suggested that he apply for the permit. This will make him responsible for the work. Also, he must have a Home Improvement Contractors registration when the contract is above \$1,000. All homeowners using unregistered contractors do not have access to the states guaranty fund. Contractors will need to bring a copy of the contract to get the building permit.

If you're doing the work yourself or with the assistance of family members or friends or wish to take the responsibility for this work then you, the homeowner, should sign the building permit application.

14 ITEMS TO CONSIDER BEFORE CONTRACTING FOR A ROOF.

Discuss them with your contractor before signing any agreement.

- (1) Type of shingle to be used: (asphalt), (fiberglass), (composition), (other).
Shingle weight:_____ Manufacturer:_____
- (2) Average life expectancy: (25 year), (30 year), other:_____
- (3) Type of flashing around the chimney: (copper), (galvanized corrosion-resistant sheet metal not less than #28 gage), (aluminum), (lead flashing), are acceptable. *However, do not mix these types of flashing.*
- (4) Ask what type of product will be used in the valleys. There are new products which can be more expensive but provide a tighter, sealed valley than the traditional woven 15 lb. felt.
- (5) Make sure a drip edge will be installed. There are choices in the types of drip edge you can use.
- (6) Ice and water barrier: (3' strip), (6' strip).
- (7) Felt undercourse – 15 lb. is required – 30 lb. is available.
- (8) Evaluate your gutters and downspouts. If they need to be replaced, now would be the time to do it. Make sure galvanized hangers and nails are to be used.
- (9) As in any job – ask about the contractor you're hiring – does he have a reputation for good workmanship. As a reference tool a list of roofing contractors is available in the Building Department.
- (10) If your gutters are good but could use a cleaning, get an estimate for this clean-up work from the contractor doing the roof – especially with wood gutters – as oiling may be necessary. If the cost is agreeable, have him do the work as he is already working there.
- (11) Have a contract for the work specifying exactly what you will receive and how much it will cost. This contract should be countersigned by you and your contractor with each of you having a copy of this agreement.
- (12) If you have one layer of shingles on your roof you may roof over that one layer.
If you have two layers of shingles – you must have both layers stripped.
- (13) Disposal of shingles shall be in a properly licensed solid waste disposal facility.
- (14) Have your contractor check for roof board replacement, if necessary.

MAKING THE DEAL

Detail the full range of your expectations. Find out who will do the work and the foreman's name. And it is advisable to get everything in writing.

Then verify that the roofer carries workers' compensation coverage and liability insurance. Ask to see a copy of his insurance certificate.

Then get an estimate, which should be free. Because roofing is a short-term job, break up the total due into two payments: one-third up front for materials, and the remainder when the roofing and cleanup are done to your satisfaction. Also, speak up about and, in fact, insist on a warranty that covers leaks, flashing failure and other labor-related defects. A one year warranty is the minimum, though 2 or 3 years is preferable. These same stipulations should go into the contract, which should also include what type of shingles will be used. Request the highest-rated, longest-lasting shingles you can afford.

Shingle manufacturers generally back their products for 20 – 30 years. Some warranties are void if shingles are put on over existing shingles, so tearing off the existing layer could be required, at an additional cost – check the manufacturers warranty requirements. Life spans of asphalt roof vary, confirm/check the lifespan of the shingles you've chosen. Just be sure you get the paperwork and proof of purchase needed to pursue any problems down the road.



ICE DAMS CAUSES & CURES

It happens every few years. After a number of several mild, relatively snowless winters, the Northeast has an old-fashioned winter, with excessive amounts of snow cover and bitter cold, often interspersed with thaws, rain and sleet. A common result of such a winter is ice damming on roofs, causing water to back up and damage walls and ceilings.

Ice dams occur after a heavy snowfall, followed by several days or even weeks of very cold weather. Because of the escape of heat from the building interior through the attic, the snow on the roof starts to melt and trickle down to the eave, where a crust is formed, holding the snow in place and keeping the wind from blowing it off the roof. This process continues until a dam of ice is built up that exerts pressure at the edge of the roof and the lower tier of shingles. As this ice expands and backs up closer to the warm roofing, it melts again and finds its way under the roof shingles and underlayment and into the building.

The real secret is VENTILATION. The roof must be as cold on its underside as the outdoor temperature.

Older buildings, with open attics, had the attic floor filled with insulating material. This kept the lower floors warm and the attic precisely as cold as the outdoors. Louvered openings in the gable ends or other devices kept a flow of frigid air moving through the attic. Buildings like this won't have ice dams build up on their roofs.

To avoid ice dams, anything that impedes the flow of cold air must be removed.