

ROOFTOP

REVIEW



Spotting an aging roof and keeping it in good condition

BY JENNIFER HOGELAND

The roof is one of the most important parts of a home and it also happens to be one of the most expensive items to replace. According to Mike Pierce, owner of Pierce Roofing in Green Bay, the average roof replacement falls between \$7,500-\$15,000. While the cost is hard for some homeowners to swallow, the investment is often critical.

“The roof is designed to protect the interior of your home – everything from your drywall and insulation to your electrical components,” adds Paul Saharsky, owner of H and S Roofing and Siding in Green Bay. “When your roof system fails, you jeopardize the integrity of your interior components of your house, which could lead to costly repairs.”

Prevent damage inside the home by watching for signs of aging. Protect your investment by proactively maintaining your roof.



Replacement warning signs

Without even inspecting your roof and home, one of the first things to consider is the age of the roof. This simple piece of information can determine the urgency of its replacement.

“If your roof is approaching 20 or 22 years of age, there is a good chance your shingles are going to be approaching the end of their life expectancy,” says Saharsky.

For homeowners unsure of when the roof was last replaced, other obvious signs of age are curling of the shingles or granular loss. Shingles are made of a granular composite so the loss of gran-

continued on page 14

ules indicates the roof may be losing its effectiveness. Pierce explains if a homeowner is seeing more and more shingle granules in their downspouts after a rainfall it's a sign the roof should be checked out.

He says, "Curling or lifting of shingles is usually obvious by looking from the ground, but to do further observation you'll need to go up to the roof to see the extent of granular loss or to see if the shingles are cracking."

When closely examining the roof's exterior, look for damaged flashing, missing shingles, blistering, rotting or moss growth.

Roof care tips

By regularly inspecting a roof, and making fixes as necessary, homeowners can prolong the life of their roof. Don't wait for damage to occur. Regular maintenance, ideally in the spring and fall, can add years to a roof.

"You want your gutters clean and free of debris because once your gutters start to clog up they can negatively impact your roof system," says Saharsky.

He also suggests inspecting the existing caulking. Saharsky adds, **"The number one thing I see fail on a roof is cracked caulk, which provides water access to enter the home."**

Keep tree limbs trimmed and away from the home. "Try to eliminate areas that have shade all the time," says Pierce. "If the branches are close to the house and that part doesn't see sunshine it is going to stay

moist all the time and create moss. Moss eats at the shingles and shortens the roof's life."

Pierce recommends checking the roof for proper insulation – a combination of a roof vent and soffit vent is needed. He says, "You have to be sure they are in good working order. The air comes into the soffit, circulates out through the roof vents and keeps the attic air circulating at all times."

While maintenance on a roof is typically minimal and homeowners can usually wait 20 years or more before replacing it, Saharsky reveals defective products in the early 1990s have required some homeowners to invest in a new roof sooner than expected. He reminds homeowners to periodically inspect their roof and, when in doubt, contact a roofing contractor for a professional opinion. ♦



"If your roof is approaching 20 or 22 years of age, there is a good chance your shingles are going to be approaching the end of their life expectancy."

**— Paul Saharsky,
H and S Roofing and Siding**