



CertainTeed

# Homeowner's Guide to Reroofing

CertainTeed

SAINT-GOBAIN





# So You Need to Reroof Your Home?

Maybe you're not quite sure where to start? Or maybe you have reroofed your home before, but you need to brush up on some of the latest products and procedures? Well, you've come to the right place.

Your decision to reroof your home may have been the result of seeing a neighbor reroof his or her home. Or maybe you've been experiencing some roofing problems which can no longer be ignored. Then again, maybe you've decided just to give your home a face lift and a new roof would really enhance the look. Whatever the reason, you don't want to make any costly mistakes!

To help you through the process, we've broken down the reroofing process into three specific areas: Getting Started, Selecting a Product and Reroofing Procedures. Our brochure outlines each of these areas and lists the most commonly asked questions concerning each topic, with straightforward answers to help resolve some of your uncertainties.

Not surprisingly, there are a number of pitfalls to which homeowners can fall victim, including evaluating and hiring a contractor without a personal interview, judging estimates on low price only, selecting products without comparison shopping, and not understanding reroofing basics. We suggest using this brochure in combination with our *Choosing a Professional Roofer* brochure in order to get maximum benefit. You'll find that being prepared and knowing what to expect when reroofing work begins will help ensure your ultimate satisfaction with your new roof.

# Getting Started

When it comes to reroofing, there are a number of areas homeowners need to be aware of—from selecting a contractor to the actual start of work. We've outlined the six most commonly asked questions by homeowners with regard to getting started.

## 1. How do I find a professional roofing contractor?

Referrals are the best place to start. Ask a neighbor or friend who recently had his roof replaced about his contractor and if he was happy with the work done.

The second best place to seek out a professional contractor is to go to your local building distributor or lumber yard dealer and ask them. We are not referring to the large home center or retail store chains, but rather professional roofing material distributors who work with reputable contractors on a regular basis.

The yellow pages is usually the third place homeowners can look. You should interview two to three different contractors, whether they are referrals or from the yellow pages.

Ask for eight to ten references, meaning jobsite locations or names of homeowners, from each contractor interviewed.

The following are additional points to consider in evaluating contractors:

- Repeat business in nearby area
- Length of time in business
- Willingness and ability to handle complaints quickly and fairly
- Completeness and professionalism of estimate offered and presentation given. Make judgments based on the quality and number of jobsite photos shown (these should include names, phone numbers and completion dates), presentation of proper insurance, number of references offered, proposal provided, etc. Do not base professionalism on the sole criteria of having a legible business card.
- Membership in professional associations
- Knowledge and thoroughness of roofing procedures

Do not consider any bids from contractors you have not met or interviewed. Check with your city hall if you are unsure.

To help you find a professional contractor, we've designed a special brochure, *Choosing a Professional Roofer*. You might have received a copy of it with this pamphlet. If not, then download a copy of it at our website—[www.certainteed.com](http://www.certainteed.com)—or call 800-782-8777 and we'll send you one.

## 2. How many estimates should I get before selecting a roofing contractor? What is the best way to judge an estimate?

Although you may receive a reliable, fair estimate from the first contractor interviewed, you should usually obtain two additional estimates to help you determine which one is best. In judging the cost of a job, you should evaluate the following:

- **The contractor**—Base your evaluation on the likelihood that during the next two to five years (the period in which any imperfections in the roof system are most likely to occur) the contractor can be located, will stand behind his warranty and will provide the service he promised.
- **The quality and completeness of the roof system recommended**—Make sure the complete roof system will include ventilation and waterproofing shingle underlayment (if appropriate to your region and your home's structure).
- **The quality of the product choices offered**—Expect to pay a higher price for designer or architectural shingles. (Further explanation regarding product selection is provided in the next section.)
- **The completeness of the contractor's insurance package**—Protect yourself from involvement in worker injuries, third person liabilities and damages consequential to the work being performed.

**MOST IMPORTANT:** Never judge the value of various proposals from the lowest bid received. A low price can signal a lot of discrepancies and shortcomings in the reliability of the contractor.

### 3. How long is it reasonable to expect to wait after I select a contractor for work to begin?

Weather permitting—a common period from contract signing to job start is two to six weeks. This can vary a great deal depending on the time of year and the contractor's backlog. Job start delays and postponements are a fact of life in a trade which is highly dependent on weather. However, the contractor also has a responsibility to you to be straightforward about his availability right from the start. He should also advise you on a timely basis about any changes in the schedule originally set.

### 4. What is the typical duration of a reroofing job?

The duration of the job varies widely depending on the size and complexity of the roof. A small, uncomplicated roof job can usually be finished in a day or two. A large, complex project can last a week or more. Once started, however, a job should not be interrupted for any reason other than weather.

If, on the other hand, a problem arises in the reroofing process, it might be necessary to halt the work to negotiate a change in the contract. You should always be advised of any changes which affect the contract agreement. A well-drafted, professional contract will anticipate unforeseen problems such as hidden deck rot, etc. These conditions can be incorporated in “not to exceed price” or “time and material” clauses.

## 5. How does extreme weather affect reroofing projects?

Bad weather and extreme temperatures can interrupt or postpone roofing projects. Safety of the worker is the first consideration. This can be an issue in both hot and cold weather. Windy, wet and icy weather present dangers on a roof. Shingles are also affected by temperature extremes. Cold weather will delay activation of the sealant. This is not a reason to delay a project unless the shingle manufacturer prohibits installation at low temperatures for warranty purposes. Experienced installers who exercise care can usually avoid this problem.

## 6. Should I expect to pay a deposit when I sign an agreement?

Deposit requirements vary from contractor to contractor. While it is not considered unreasonable to pay a deposit, you should never pay for the total job up front. It is not recommended that the total deposit and progress payments equal more than 75% of the total job price. (Some state laws regulate this amount.)

Deposits should not be held over more than two months without consideration for the cost of money. Long-term deposits can be placed in escrow or interest costs can be credited against the cost of the job as a term of the contract.

It is not recommended to give a deposit to a contractor whose track record cannot be verified by references from recent work.

**NOTE:** Before signing the contract or agreement, make sure the price covers all materials, gutters, ventilation, cleanup, completion date, etc.



# Selecting a Product

Selecting roofing shingles is no different than purchasing a major home appliance or even a new car. You should investigate your options carefully, comparison shop and weigh the costs against features and benefits desired.

Just like choosing a car, the overriding factor in selecting a roofing shingle is knowing whether your primary goal is function only, or function plus aesthetics. With a car, you know whether you want a sporty, knock-em-dead car or a practical sedan with room for several passengers. It's the same with roofing shingles.

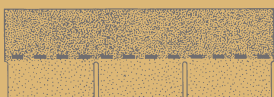
Sometimes a homeowner who is looking to reroof for functional reasons may see a standard three-tab roofing shingle on a neighbor's home and decide to go with the same product choice—and maybe even the same color. But if appearance is a major factor in your reroof decision, then take the time to really look around. You may want to visit a local distributor to obtain product literature and see the various designer shingle choices available.

The following are the most important questions you can ask when choosing a roofing shingle.

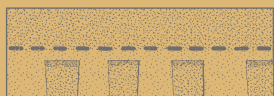
## 1. What's the difference between an architectural, or designer, shingle and a standard shingle?

Since the early 1900's, the three-tab or strip shingle was the standard composition shingle installed on single family residences. These products come with 20, 25 and 30 year warranty coverage. Color is about the only appearance differentiation in this class of shingle. In 1965, CertainTeed Corporation introduced the Hallmark Shingle,<sup>TM</sup> the first architectural or designer shingle on the

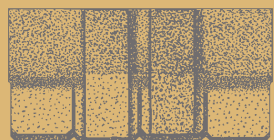
market. The standard laminated “dragon-tooth” design followed that. Other important innovations in architectural shingles include the Super Shingle and Super Shake styles. Today, the architectural shingle class is running away with the market. Warranties range up to 40 years and even lifetime. Color is no longer the only choice to make. The many textures, forms and designs of architectural shingles in the marketplace can result in a major aesthetic upgrade for your home.



**Three Tab/Strip**



**Standard Laminated**



**Super Shingle**

Ask your contractor to show you a good, better, and best selection of products. Shingles are not just for keeping out the rain anymore.

## 2. What type of warranty should I look for? Aren't they all the same?

Warranties range from 20 years to lifetime. The length of the warranty is an indicator of performance and value. The upfront coverage in the first few years following application is also very meaningful. This is the time when, according to contractors, problems caused by defects are most likely to occur. As a result you should:

- Look for manufacturers' warranties that cover materials and labor in the first three to five years after application on any grade of roofing shingle.

- Carefully review the manufacturer's warranty stipulations about proration and transferability. Proration is the reduction of the manufacturer's contribution to the homeowner for repairing or replacing defective shingles during the warranty period. Select products carrying a warranty that does not prorate during the first three to five years after installation. Also, make sure the warranty prorates on the current market cost of the replacement shingles (as opposed to the original cost of the defective shingles).
- Examine the manufacturer's stipulations on ventilation and warranty validation. Shingle roof system failure as the result of inadequate ventilation may cause the shingle warranty to become invalid. (See question regarding roof ventilation in "Reroofing Procedures" for further explanation.)
- Note the contractor's guarantee of performance. Contractors' guarantees are usually for one to five years on the average. Remember that the length of the contractor's guarantee is less important than his ability or intent to stand behind his workmanship and to service a valid complaint in a reasonable time period. This intent must be determined from referrals and references and his general reputation in the local business community.

### 3. What does the UL fire resistance rating for a shingle mean?

The Underwriters Laboratories Inc.<sup>®</sup> (UL) ratings signify that the shingles were manufactured to pass a certain set of standards to qualify as fire resistant.

Fiber glass shingles carry a UL Class A fire resistance rating.

Some local building codes may have ordinances specifying a certain UL Class for your residential area. Your contractor or local building codes officer can tell you what the requirements are for your particular area.

## Reroofing Procedures

While we do recommend hiring a professional contractor to reroof your home, you should, nevertheless, familiarize yourself with certain aspects of the reroofing process. The fact is, there are various conditions about your roof that may limit your product choices or affect the cost of your roofing job. Consequently, you should learn about these certain circumstances if and when your contractor approaches you about them. Here's a list of questions and answers that are relevant to the reroofing process.

### 1. Do I need to obtain a permit to install a new roof on my home?

Some local ordinances require permits be obtained prior to the start of roofing work in both new and some reroofing jobs, depending on the locale.

If a permit is required, discuss with your contractor who will obtain it and how it will be obtained. If your contractor agrees to obtain the permit, make sure your contract states this clearly. Your roofing contractor should know if a permit is required in your area for reroofing jobs. You can also double-check with your local building codes officer to be sure.

### 2. What is roof slope? Does the slope of the roof limit the choice of shingle that can be used?

The slope of the roof is measured by the rise versus the run, or the number of inches vertically by the number of feet horizontally. Some roof slopes can limit the choice of shingles that can be used.

For Instance:

- A roof slope below 2/12 (2 inches per one foot) cannot use shingles.
- Roof slope between 2/12 and 4/12 require low-slope application techniques, including application of waterproofing underlayment as appropriate.
- Roof slopes above 21/12 require steep-slope application techniques.

Your roofing contractor should consult the application instructions found on each shingle bundle wrapper or installation instructions supplied separately for further details.

### 3. Is it always necessary to tear off existing shingles before reroofing? If they are torn off, who is responsible for the disposal of the old shingles?

There are two options available for reroofing installations. One would be to tear off the old roof before applying the new one (tear off). The second would be to lay new shingles over the existing roof (lay over). While the second choice is the less expensive of the two options, it is not necessarily always the best choice.

There are advantages to tearing off the old roof before installing a new one. For example:

- If there are any defects in the roof deck, they will be revealed when the roof is torn off. These defects should be repaired before applying the new roof.
- If condensation problems exist in the attic, they too will be revealed when the roof is torn off. Properly designed attic ventilation can then be installed in order to help eliminate such problems.
- When the old roof is torn off, waterproofing shingle underlayment can be installed before applying the new roof. This will help protect against leaks created by cyclical ice damage and wind-driven rain.



- Tearing off the old roof and starting with a clean deck before reroofing may result in a smoother finished roof system.

Although there is added cost to these advantages, each lessens the likelihood that the validity of the manufacturer's shingle warranty will be impaired. If the old roof is torn off, your contractor should be responsible for the cleanup and disposal of the old shingles, but make sure your contract states this clearly.

If you do plan to reroof over existing shingles, first check if your local building codes limit the number of roof layers that can be applied to a residence in your area. Your contractor should know the pertinent code requirements.

#### 4. How can you determine if the roof is properly ventilated?

When contractors say a roof should breathe, they are usually referring to the ventilation system beneath the roof deck.

Most shingle warranties require a lot of ventilation—as much as one square foot of net free ventilation area for each 150 square feet of floor space to be vented or one square foot per 300 square feet when both ridge and soffit ventilators are used.

An effective ventilation system will help:

- Reduce attic heat buildup
- Reduce attic moisture and condensation
- Prevent weather infiltration, i.e., drifting snow, wind-driven rain
- Prevent ice dam build-up (See the following question for ice dam discussion.)

Even if you feel you've had satisfactory ventilation performance with your old roof for as long as 20 years, it might be necessary to add ventilation with your new roof to meet the standards mentioned previously.

## 5. What function does shingle underlayment serve?

An underlayment, commonly known as roofing felt, will:

- Protect the roof deck from moisture prior to shingle application
- Provide a degree of backup protection in the event water gets under roofing shingles.

Some local building codes and UL standards require that a shingle underlayment be installed. Ask your contractor if this is the case in your area. Also, some manufacturers offer a special underlayment product which prevents leaks caused by water backup from ice dams—a common condition in many winter snow areas. Protection against ice dams can be obtained by using a waterproofing shingle underlayment at the eaves or lower edges of the roof, in addition to installing adequate ventilation and proper insulation in the attic floor. (See our *Protecting Your Home From Ice Dams* brochure for more information.) Ask your contractor about these specialized underlayments.

## Need to Know More?

We hope this brochure has provided you with some insightful information regarding the reroofing process. Our intention is not to overwhelm you with information, but rather offer you a reliable resource for easy reference. If you have any questions or comments about this brochure, we would be happy to hear from you. In addition, if you did not receive our *Choosing a Professional Roofer* brochure or if you would like any other literature on specific products, please write or call us at:

CertainTeed Sales Support Group  
P.O. Box 860  
Valley Forge, PA 19482  
or call 1-800-782-8777

Also visit us at [www.certainteed.com](http://www.certainteed.com)



Easy selection.  
Long-term protection.  
And a #1 rating with building  
and remodeling professionals.

### What's behind our #1 rating?

Builders and remodelers across America know certain things to be true of CertainTeed. For starters, we've been in the roofing business for over 100 years, and we have thousands of satisfied homeowners. The process of building that satisfaction begins the moment you turn to us.

CertainTeed offers you the broadest range of color and style choices. But you'll see it's not style over substance. You'll get a roof that's made from the highest quality materials and backed by a strong warranty program. It's our promise to you: quality made certain, satisfaction guaranteed.

You've got questions? For answers, or to find the professional contractor nearest you, call our Consumer Hotline at 800-782-8777.

#### ASK ABOUT ALL OF OUR OTHER CERTAINTEED PRODUCTS AND SYSTEMS:

ROOFING • SIDING • TRIM • WINDOWS • DECKING • RAILING • FENCE  
INSULATION • GYPSUM • CEILINGS • FOUNDATIONS • PIPE

CertainTeed Corporation  
P.O. Box 860  
Valley Forge, PA 19482

Professional: 800-233-8990  
Consumer: 800-782-8777  
**[www.certainteed.com](http://www.certainteed.com)**  
<http://blog.certainteed.com>

Code No. 20-20-1698 © 1/11 CertainTeed Corporation, Printed in U.S.A.

