

Roofs.....Metal Over Existing Shingles

By: Inspector Weeks 613.290.3697

I am considering installing a metal roof over an old shingled roof. Can this be done or should the existing shingles be removed ?? Anne G. Wakefield, Quebec.

Can it be done that way you ask , Yes. But it would not be my first choice. The best way would be to remove the old deteriorated shingles right down to the plywood or sheathing. Take a good look at the wood and make whatever repairs are necessary to the roofs surface. Once this is done install a 30 pound felt paper or an ice and water shield membrane, install strapping, or furring strips by screwing the furring strips to the existing roof surface parallel to the roof trusses. Then attach a second layer of strapping horizontally. This allows for good ventilation between the wood roof sheathing and the new metal roof. You then have a nice solid structure to install your new metal roof to. Follow the manufacturers instructions for the correct installation allowing for proper ventilation and your roof should last a long time. More than once roofing contractors and homeowners have asked me why not leave the old shingles on the roof and put the metal roofing material directly on top of the old roof. This can be done and in fact is quite common. It can create an uneven look to the surface of the roof due to the unevenness of the pre-existing roof shingles and strapping . During inspections I often find this method of installation, but point it out as a potential issue for the future. Think about it. The reason you have decided to replace your current shingle roof is because it is either old and due for re-shingling or it is leaking. It is quite possible that there may be some rotten wood below the current old asphalt shingles. This could be the future home of some nasty carpenter ants or other bugs that love rotten wood. If left unrepaired it will only get worse. Then, to compound the problem, now you are considering installing strapping over the old stuff and then metal roofing. If problems due occur how else but completely removing both roofs can you do a repair. This doesn't seem like the right thing to do in my opinion. The rule in roofing is never install more than 2 layers of roofing material. Before doing this consider the extra weight on your buildings structure, can it take the extra loads ? Take the time and do the right thing. Remove the old shingles, all layers. In the end, it may cost a bit more but it's the right thing to do !!



I welcome your questions please forward them to , Inspector Weeks ,c/o Peter Weeks Home Inspections PWHI@sympatico.ca or by phone at 613.290.3697.

Peter Weeks has been a Chelsea resident for 19 years. As a general contractor since 1988, he has been doing Residential Home Inspections for about four years. He is an Associate Member of OAHI (Ontario Association of Home Inspectors), CAHPI (Canadian Association of Home & Property Inspectors) and a member of the BBB in Good Standing.

Peter Weeks is a fully insured and qualified Home Inspector registered with the Royal LePage Relocation Services Program.

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