



Protect Your Roof and It Will Keep Protecting You

A home is the biggest investment most people will ever make, which is why home owners often go to great lengths to protect that investment. But one of the more important components of safeguarding a home is also one of the most often ignored: the roof.

It's tempting to devote more time and attention to more fashionable maintenance and upgrades like updated kitchen appliances or new bathroom vanities. However, those improvements might lose much of their appeal if water begins dripping through the ceilings or mold starts growing in the walls.

When preparing for winter, the top of your to-do list should include what's on top of your house. Take the time to ensure your roof is up to the task of protecting everything - and everyone - it shelters beneath by following these simple steps:

1. Start by visually scanning the roof for any sagging or uneven areas, which can be signs of damage to the roof deck below the shingles.
2. Clear the gutters of any branches, leaves or other debris that could clog downspouts. Water or snow that is left standing on the roof will increase the likelihood of leaking or ice damming, which can damage not only to the roof, but the interior walls as well.
3. Ensure the gutters are fastened properly and securely to the fascia board, to minimize the risk of the gutters loosening or, in extreme conditions, falling off while supporting heavy snow and/or ice.
4. Remove any debris from the valleys, including small branches and accumulating leaves, which can add weight to the roof and also inhibit proper drainage.
5. Check the positioning and the condition of the flashings, which are the thin pieces of material, often made of aluminum or other metals, used to prevent water seepage between joints and seams around vents, pipes, skylights, and chimneys. When loosened or damaged by high winds and heavy rains, flashings can actually cause leaks rather than prevent them.
6. Examine the condition of the shingles and repair or replace any that might be missing or damaged. Look for curling edges or missing granules.

Inspecting your roof at least twice a year (before and after winter) by following these steps will help you identify potential problems before they result in costly repairs or even premature roof replacement.

For additional home owners resources please contact the Builders Association at 814-833-3999 or email builders@banwpa.com.