As You Review Your Roof...

Expect a natural aging process
Just as the human body ages and changes appearance over the years, so too will your roof. Due to the severity of the roof environment, even a one-year-old roof may look different from a roof that was just installed. While you may have first noticed the cracks or blistering from the ladder as you were cleaning the gutter, please be reminds that those normal weathering characteristics may not be visible when you view the roof from your trees or driveway. And if the problem is not severe and the shingles are still providing the protection intended, then it is not a cause for alarm.

Even a one-year-old roof may look different than a roof that was just installed.

Your roof is an important investment, since it literally protects you from the elements. While there are no magical creams or ointments to prevent your roof from aging, investing a small amount of time to examine your roof can reduce the life expectancy of your roof and become a more informed homeowner. Take the time to determine if the conditions you have observed are severe enough to require immediate action. Should such problems occur, please contact CertainTeed Corporation’s Technical Services Department for a review of your situation and possible courses of action, which will involve submitting shingle samples, pictures, etc. to our lab for evaluation. Call 800-345-1145, or go to www.certainteed.com/claims. 

Material Concerns

Cracking through the reinforcement and bald shingles are potential concerns.

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* AR: algae-resistant

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Tip: Look for algae discoloration, open and closed blisters, exposed asphalt, and slight granule loss when examining your roof from the ground. You may also wish to open the lower/lower corner of your ladder and examine the shingles and reinforcement from directly on the roof. This can reduce the life of your shingles to be appreciably reduced due to the effects of ultraviolet radiation from the sun and should be investigated by your homeowner’s insurance carrier. Shingles with open blisters in which the asphalt becomes visible are also at greater risk for premature failure.

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Normal Aging

As you review your roof, you will notice that some shingles are more weathered than others due to their location on the roof. Depending upon the style of shingle, the nominal weathering characteristics described earlier may be a sign of more severe weathering. For example, cracks in a typical three-tab shingle may be a sign of weak reinforcement. This type of cracking threatens the waterproofing integrity of the roof and needs to be addressed immediately.

Aging and Normal Weathering Characteristics

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For the applique-style shingle, on the other hand, cracks that are restricted to the reinforcement are not severe problems. For example, cracks in a typical three-tab shingle may be a sign of weak reinforcement. This type of cracking threatens the waterproofing integrity of the roof and needs to be addressed immediately.

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The Hostile Roof Environment

How natural weathering affects your roof

Consider the conditions your roof must endure. First, there is the intense heat of the sun, which scorch the surface of the roof and raises temperature 50 to 70 degrees above ambient temperature. The sun's rays are intense, especially during the early afternoon hours. In addition to heat, the sun is the source of ultraviolet radiation, which has been shown to degrade and accelerate the aging of asphalt roofing shingles. If not for the protective layers of colored granules, roofing shingles would fail very quickly. Other factors such as moisture, pollution and physical effects (roof traffic, hail, snow loads, tree limbs, etc.) all contribute to the aging and degradation of your roofing shingles.

Sun, rain, heat and cold...your roof never has a “good” day.

In addition to all of the climate and external variables that can impact the performance of your roof, consider the internal factors that significantly influence the performance of roofing shingles.

Research has confirmed that an improperly ventilated air space (an attic or crawl space) is one of the most common causes of rapid aging of asphalt roofing shingles. Proper ventilation is 89% of the entire equation. During the summer months, the roof is exposed to the intense heat of the sun, which scorch the surface of the roof and raises temperature 50 to 70 degrees above ambient temperature. As the temperature rises, the granules which were once securely embedded begin to break away. Occasionally you may have seen the colored granules in your gutter. Also, as this hardening advances, the asphalt layers begin to shrink. Of course, all of this is occurring on a microscopic level, and is not something which will be noticeable on a daily basis. As the asphalt layer shrinks, it is being countered by the shingle reinforcement, which remains stable. We note here a situation in which the top and bottom coatings are shrinking and the reinforcement is remaining stable. As a result, the edge of the shingle may begin to curl over time. In addition, organic shingles may exhibit signs of curling which might be considered excessive, however, it is not a manufacturing defect and would be considered part of the normal weathering process of organic shingles.

What Will My Shingles Look Like as They Age?

Roof Environment

Asphalt is one of the primary ingredients in roofing shingles. Its purpose is to provide the waterproofing integrity of the roof. Additionally, the asphalt binds the colored granules in place and contributes to the overall life and durability of the shingles. If not for the protection layer of colored granules, roofing shingles would fail very quickly. Other factors such as moisture, pollution and physical effects (roof traffic, hail, snow loads, tree limbs, etc.) all contribute to the aging and degradation of your roofing shingles.

Staining:

During the course of natural weathering, small bubble-like raised blisters frequently result when minimum ventilation is not met. By rainwater. In an attempt to restore equilibrium, new oils begin to rise to the surface and the washing process where they are washed away by rainwater. In an attempt to restore equilibrium, new oils begin to rise to the surface and the washing process where they are washed away.

Applique Surface Cracking

Another manifestation of the normal aging process may occur over time. In addition, organic shingles may exhibit signs of curling which might be considered excessive, however, it is not a manufacturing defect and would be considered part of the normal weathering process of organic shingles.

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