

## Your Roof is the King of Your Castle!

### *Why maintaining & upgrading your roof is so important*

We all know how important the foundation of our home is, but what about the thing that sits at the very top of the house keeping it clean and dry?!?!?! Your roof has the single most important function, and yet it is the most neglected part of the home by far. What many homeowners fail to remember is that the exterior of their home is the first thing that people see, and that includes the roof! Although we can't see our own roof from inside, and don't tend to notice it much as we drive in and out of our garage, everyone else notices our roof every single time they look at our house. Not only this, but the outside of a home really does set the standards for what is expected on the inside, and when it comes to selling, for example, first impressions are pretty important!

So if it's so important, why is the roof the neglected cousin of the other structural components of the home? Homeowners tend to only maintain and update those parts of the home that they either utilise regularly or that are constantly in their line of sight. Clearly, the roof is neither of these. But, if left unattended for too long the roof is probably that one part of your home that can cause the most trouble, cost you the most money and reduce the value of your home the most. So, what should we look out for to make sure our roof is given the TLC it truly deserves?

### **How to Know When Your Roof Needs Some Attention**

There are a few key things that you can keep a regular eye on from the inside of your home that will give you an indication that your roof might need some extra loving:

- Any areas of *sagging* in the ceiling are a serious concern.
- If there are *dark spots* on the ceiling this could indicate an issue with water damage or leaks of other kinds.
- *Water damage* is generally visible in the ceiling where water physically leaks or paint begins to bubble and flake.
- If you can see *outside light* through the ceiling there is obviously something wrong!

As far as exterior signs of problems go, be on the look out for:

- *Cracked or missing shingles and tiles* – this can indicate significant damage, as well as any bald spots on the roof.
- *A sign of wear like missing gutters and loose materials* – these indicate that your roof is not coping well with the stress of protecting your home.

### **Why Might my Roof be Causing me Trouble?**

Your roof has to be tough enough to deal with any weather conditions that are thrown its way, but there will come a time when it physically can't deal with the pressure anymore. Some reasons for this might be:

- *Your flashing has been damaged* – Harsh weather conditions can damage flashing at various points along a roof, and if left unattended the problem will just continue to worsen. If the flashing was poorly installed in the first place, this can mean that it is less likely to withstand the test of weather and time, and this is equally true if substandard products were used in the construction of your roof.
- *Your skylight may be causing you drama* – Skylights might look lovely and be quite functional, but they need to be maintained and replaced regularly. If they are not looked after properly they will eventually start to let water into the home.
- *Roof fasteners may become damaged* – Check fasteners and shingles, particularly after periods of heavy rain or high winds. When fasteners are not properly in place this can lead to water leaks and mould, which is dangerous and expensive to repair.
- *Your roof is ready to retire* – Your roof has a lifespan, and older roofs were not made to the standard that they are today. Expect to update and replace your roof – it is normal and just part of maintaining your home. Shingles might last you 15 – 20 years (at a stretch), for example, so take the time and money to upgrade/repair your roof regularly rather than wait and have to replace the whole thing.

### **Now for the hard sell...**

Aside from these obvious reasons for keeping your roof in tip top condition, there are heaps of other reasons why your roof should be getting the TLC it deserves:

- *A new roof can significantly increase the value of your home* – According to real estate gurus, as much as 40% of your home's street appeal is directly related to your roof. If that isn't convincing enough, it has also been shown that a new roof can have up to a 67% return on investment! What's more, an old, tired and shabby roof can be an instant turn off when it comes to buying or selling a home.
- *Your home can be up to 10% more energy efficient with a new roof* – When your roof is replaced or upgraded a full inspection (and necessary repairs) are carried out on all

underlying structures and insulation, helping to keep your house cool in summer and warm in winter... naturally!

- *An upgrade to your roof will prevent serious damage and hazards like mould and water rot* - We need to keep reminding ourselves that our roof actually has important structural components in it. Considering that over 70% of all water damage in the home happens at roof level, it's no wonder that when there is a problem with the roof there are problems throughout the whole house. Wet rot and mould are not only dangerous for those living in the home, but they can also lead to collapsing structures. Don't be fooled if you can't necessarily see any water damage though – it doesn't mean that there aren't all sorts of problems lurking up in the roof's structure.
- *Your roof has a lot to do with your home insurance* - The age and type of roof on your home has a huge bearing on your insurance premium. Some insurance companies will even have a policy surcharge if the roof is deemed to be too old. Finally, many insurance policies will exclude water damage due to roof leaks if the damage has occurred over a long period of time, so it's best to get on top of any roof problems straight away.

We have established the importance of maintaining and upgrading your roof, but when doing so just be sure to use reputable contractors. Since we can't actually see the repairs taking place, we have to ensure that any contractors we choose are professional, prepared to get any necessary permits, clean up the job site according to regulations, and provide us with images and evidence of work completed in the past. Remember, your roof is the king of your castle, so treat it with the respect it deserves and in return it will protect you and your family to the best of its ability!

#### **Sources:**

- *Coldwell Banker Blue Matter*
- *Yahoo Homes*
- *Red Beacon*
- *Brandy Wine Exteriors*

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