

Wilmington Roofing Tips: Tear-off or Overlay?

Homeowners seldom think about the roof over their heads until they encounter a problem. Then the question always comes up: should they get a tear-off or just an overlay or recover? If you have ever wondered the pro and cons of these two roofing methods, then you should read this article on roofing in Wilmington.

What is a Tear-Off?

This is a common roofing project. Basically a Wilmington roofing contractor and his crew will come to your home and completely “tear-off” or remove all the shingles from the roof. They will then inspect your roofing deck (the wooden base over your rafters) and replace and seal it as needed. They will then cover your roof with new shingles from top to bottom.

What is an Overlay?

While overlays save on time, labor and disposal costs (it is required by code that waste shingles from a tear-off be taken to a local landfill or similar disposal center), they can only be done if certain conditions are met. If the existing roof is in good condition, has only one layer, lays flat (no bumps or rolls) and has no leaks or any problems with the underlying roof deck (soft spots); a complete tear-off or removal may not be needed.

However if your roof has any of these problems or conditions then you must a tear-off:

- More than 1 layer – if a roof has 2 layers then it should be torn off. In many cases this is building code requirement. If you are uncertain, contact your local building inspection department or a Delaware roofing contractor.
- Roof Decking is Bad – You can call any Wilmington roofing contractor to do an inspection of your roof’s decking. If he finds any soft or spongy spots while walking on the roof or he points out sagging sections between the rafters, there is good chance the underlying structure is damaged or is deteriorating.

Deterioration can be caused by the plywood decking becoming wet and delaminating over time, or from dry rot due to mold or mildew.

- Another common problem well known to Wilmington roofing contractor are ice dams. In northern states like Delaware, roofing companies get plenty of calls concerning ice dams. When temperatures start to hang below 30° F and a roof has no ice or water membrane to protect it, a building can unexpectedly develop thousands of dollars in damage during cold snaps.
- Current Roof is Poor – The condition of the existing is a big deciding factor on whether a recover or overlay is feasible. Curled tabs, bumps or torn shingles are signs you should consider replacement roofing, a Wilmington contractor can give you an estimate.

Now that you understand a bit more about roof repair and what to expect, you are ready to contact your Wilmington roofing or Delaware roofing contractor to get an inspection.