

# Permanent Roofing Solutions Using Recycled Tires



By Martin Ingham



**ONE OF** the more important innovations in the roofing business in recent years has been the development of rubber roofing profiles. Manufactured principally from recycled tires and plastics the average 2500 sq ft home consumes between 600–1000 tires for every roof covered. With between 10–12 million tires discarded every year in Ontario, this roofing innovation and the introduction of similar recycled products means thousands of tires can be diverted from landfill sites. So efficient are these developments in recycling that there is even a temporary shortage of processing capacity in Ontario.

When considering a permanent roofing solution, it is important to understand the many benefits that all permanent roofing solutions offer over and above the historical and conventional choice of asphalt, which represents over 85 per cent market share in North America.



### ■ Cost Considerations

The cost of installing a rubber roof is usually one of the most important components of any decision both for new and reroof situations. Typically asphalt shingles are considered to be the least expensive roofing material to install in the North American market and at first glance they do represent the cheapest alternative. As a guideline it is considered to be fair to use the factor that the installed price of a rubber roof will approximate to just over twice the price of asphalt but will last well over 4-6 times as long therefore giving two to three times the value.

The various designations of 25,30, 40 and 50-year shingles are in themselves a very misleading and deceptive designation that gives many people the impression that this represents the lifecycle expectation of the product. Nothing could be further from the truth and many customers report a declining life from shingles that may have lasted for 15-18 years when installed that length of time ago. More recent installations are reporting considerably less useful life in the region of 8-15 years of useful and aesthetically pleasing lifespan. Cedar and pine wooden shingles which at one time had a life expectancy of 25-40 years have also been experiencing a dramatic fall off in life expectancy again in some instances to 8-10 years.

While rubber roofing manufacturers offer a warranty period of 50 years, which is non-prorated, the anticipated lifespan could quite easily last for 75 years or longer according to manufacturers following testing procedures that have been conducted to determine the validity of their warranty period. Amongst the added benefits, rubber roofing generally provides a much more attractive look and is believed by many professionals to give a significant added value to the property. Couple this with the fact that customers report that rubber roofs give added insulation and it is easy to see why this alternative represents excellent overall value. There are at the time of writing no approved tests that support this particular claim.

### ■ Life Cycle and Warranties

It is important to realize that asphalt shingles have a life cycle that can last in many instances less than 10 years. Rubber, metal, concrete tiles and aluminum are all considered to be much superior to asphalt and in support of that fact all manufacturers will offer warranties of between 40-50 years. It should be pointed out however that the terms of the warranties need to be carefully scrutinized to ensure that they offer relevant protections, which is not always the case.

Of particular interest is the consideration of a prorated warranty, which by definition covers only the time left versus a non-prorated warranty, which allows for total material cost replacement up to the end of the warranty period. Also check the fine print on whether the warranty is transferable and if there are any charges associated with the transfer since some manufacturers will charge for this and failure to comply will invalidate their warranty.

### ■ Stylish and Practical

Rubber roof profiles cover various styles from cedar shake look-alikes to tile and slate, which after installation are virtually impossible to differentiate from the original. Rubber roofs have been tested to the standards of Miami Dade Hurricane testing of 150 miles per hour, offer hail resistance and class C fire rating and will support walking on when necessary without problems.

### ■ Made in Canada

Currently there are two Canadian manufacturers of rubber roofing products both of which were founded in the late 1990s. One is based in Alberta and the other is in Ontario. Those companies are Euroshield and Enviroshake and their product selection can be viewed on the following websites and contain detailed and comprehensive information that will answer most of the questions which may be asked. They are [www.euroshieldroofing.com](http://www.euroshieldroofing.com) and [www.enviroshake.com](http://www.enviroshake.com)

With regard to choice of installers both manufacturers will give a list of approved installers on their respective websites although in the case of Enviroshake the product can be purchased through a number of wholesale roofing supply companies allowing for wider though not necessarily better options to install. Euroshield on the other hand has adopted a policy of offering the product only through a select number of Ontario installers, which currently numbers 40 but will reach 80 by the end of this year. This policy was instituted to ensure where possible that the quality of installing is maintained to the highest levels and standards of workmanship and therefore customer satisfaction.

Both companies have met with considerable success inside and outside their respective provinces. However Euroshield has only recently launched into the Ontario market as of August 2009. Both companies are now aggressively marketing into the USA where their successes are expected to be replicated with a resultant generation of more manufacturing jobs in Canada.

As a result of their marketing efforts both companies are reporting enquiries from the Caribbean, Europe, India, China and Australia and where the experience gained by the successful installations of rubber roofing can be qualified by the extreme temperature variations that Canada offers. Both companies look forward to significant growth both in the Canadian and overseas markets as potential customers adopt a comprehensive valuation process to their roofing requirements. ■

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