



Home Inspection Services Newsletter

May, 2010

Educational: **Foamed Roofing Maintenance**

General Foamed roof information:

Polyurethane Foam is an expensive roofing product that is typically utilized on low sloped roofs (**NOT FLAT**– all roofs must slope to drain).

Application: Foam is sprayed on the prepared decking as a liquid which expands (chemical reaction creates millions of cells). Foam is then top coated with an elastomeric product (this layer protects the foam).

Benefits: Foam is seamless and can be applied over irregular surfaces, is light weight, a good insulator (on the order of R-7), reflects the sunlight (generally white), and has a 25 year type life if properly, applied, and maintained.

Critical application conditions: 1. Clean, dry (free of oils and moisture) surfaces that the foam will bond to. 2. Materials designed for the environment (Arizona heat and dryness). 3. Qualified contractors with significant foam roofing experience.

Inspection of foamed roofs:

When: Foamed roofs should be inspected at least yearly (more often if bird damage is typical or hail storms have occurred).

What to look for:

- **Open blisters:** Bubbles in the foam that have opened (note: an ideal foam roof does not have blisters!)
- **Holes:** Birds often peck holes in the foam (see picture above).
- **Cracked/peeling topcoat:** Caused by the UV in sunlight breaking down this layer. White topcoat should be uniform and continuous
- **Chalking:** Rub your hand on the topcoat; residue is a sign of aging
- **Exposed Foam:** Foam is yellow and should not be viewable. The sun will degrade foam fairly quickly
- **Water ponding:** Dirt left in low areas indicates drainage issues
- **Debris on roof:** Debris traps water and promotes premature degradation. Debris should not be allowed to build up.

Maintenance: We recommend that foamed roofing be maintained by roofing professionals. Many home owners purchase maintenance contracts with foamed roofing companies (these contracts include regular inspections). When necessary (based upon inspections), damaged areas are professionally patched, roofing is power washed, and a new elastomeric coating is applied (may be one or several coats depending on material and condition of the roofing).

Lack or Regular maintenance: Exposed foam will deteriorate; water will seep into and degrade the foam, and the foam/deck bond will deteriorate. At that point, the foamed roof will need to be replaced.

Monthly Question: What is an Air Gap device on an exterior faucet?

Anti-siphon or air gap devices are required by public water providers to prevent “gray water” from being sucked back into the utilities water supply. This can occur with hoses in pools, buckets, etc. An air gap device sells for about \$5.00 and screws onto the exterior faucet threads. The device includes a set screw which prevents removal without damaging the faucets threads.

Maintenance Items for May: Yard watering system

Yard watering systems are now operational (after a wet winter). Since most systems operate at night, we recommend that you manually operate each zone and observe individual sprinkler and drip emitters. Often heads are popped off or clogged (have no water flow). Heads are frequently in the wrong position (due to tree or plant growth).

Safety Tip: Fire Extinguishers

I seldom see these critical fire safety devices during a home inspection. We strongly recommend accessible **fire extinguishers in the garage and in the kitchen.** Both of these areas are more prone to fires. If you currently have fire extinguishers, check them today to be sure that they are fully charged.

Inspection classes for realtors: Please feel free to call on me. I have several prepared power point presentations about the home inspection process but am also happy to come in an answer questions.

Let our experience work for you!



Daryl Gates



Mark Andrews



Lauren Andrews

H&A Services, LLC

(480) 614-0015 (623) 561-1709

www.hainspect.com