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Home Inspection Services Newsletter

November 1, 2005

Educational Section: **Life of Concrete Tile Roofs**

Concrete tile is often guaranteed by the manufacturer for **30 to 50 years**. Wow! I don't have to think about my roof until 2050! Then why does the installer typically guarantee a roof for **1 to 5 years**?

First let's discuss the tile. The manufacturer's warranty is a good thing if the tiles were defective to start with (bad thing). For a handful of broken tiles, believe me, the manufacturer doesn't have any in stock and has discontinued them. You can buy them in the distributor's bone yard for \$2.00 each if you can find the same style and color.

Second, a tile roof is generally considered to be a shed roof. This means that it is meant to shed water. It is not water tight. The under-lament (felt paper) under the tile is a water proof membrane. So the life of the roof is often determined not by the tile but by the underlayment.

Third, the underlayment type, thickness, and application vary based upon age of application, slope of the roof, installation issues, etc. The underlayment can be damaged by movement of the tile (wind and weather), excessive heat (poor ventilation), birds and rodents, UV (sun exposure), and normal aging.

Yes, you can't take your tile roof for granted. We recommend that the roof be inspected twice a year (before and after monsoon season is a good time). We will remind you in our newsletter. If you want to do it yourself, view the roof with binoculars and have the following repaired: Broken and cracked tile, slipped tile or out of place tile (once the water proof membrane is exposed to the sun, aging accelerates), debris on the roof and debris in the roof flashing (especially in the valleys), and open cement joints.

Should the roof be walked on? Firstly, it is dangerous (tile can be very slippery). Second, if you don't do it right you can break tile. Thirdly, regular movement of tile may contribute to the deterioration of the waterproof membrane. We recommend leaving the tile walking to professionals.

Questions of the Month:

What is an anti-siphon device and why are they important?

An anti-siphon or air gap device is utilized to prevent the cross connection of potable water with waste water (grey or brown water). Municipalities mandate anti-siphon devices on outside faucets, irrigation systems, washing machines drain lines, etc. The purpose is to prevent contamination of municipal water. You recognize these devices on the end of outside faucets, on the drip/sprinkler irrigation connection to main water line, and as the tall stand pipe for a washing machine drain.

Safety Tip of the Month: Dryer lint can be a fire hazard

It's not easy to pull out the dryer, disconnect the exhaust hose, and vacuum the hose and dryer. People will go for years without cleaning those areas. That lint can fully or partially block the exhaust and is a fire waiting to happen. The regularity of cleaning depends on the amount of use and the type and method of piping outside the home (vertical exhaust through the roof clogs quicker). We suggest cleaning it, mark the date on the calendar, clean it again in 6 months and then decide how often cleaning needs to take place.

Maintenance or Inspection Items for November:

(Each month, we select appropriate items so that over a 12 month period you are reminded to attend to most common household maintenance items.)

Inspect the roof: Monsoon season is over (thank heaven)

Check under all sinks for leaks: Fill and drain sinks, observe and feel both the water feed and drain plumbing for leaks.

Let our experience work for you. Over 10,000 inspections performed!



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