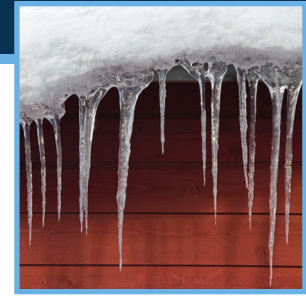


Roof Repair After a Snowstorm



Be safe

Ensure your own safety before inspecting your roof.

Insurance

Prepare to file an insurance claim by gathering copies of your homeowner's policy, or track down your policy number(s), and call your insurance company as soon as possible after the event to request an assessment. The insurance company must determine two things when assessing the amount of your loss:

1. Is there sufficient damage to the roof system to declare it a total loss?
2. What is the size of the roof system, and how many shingles will be needed to replace it?

Your insurance company may or may not select your roofing contractor for you.

You should call a professional roofing contractor and ask for a similar assessment. To locate a professional roofing contractor, [click here](#). If there are any discrepancies between the insurance adjuster's findings and the roofing contractor's findings, you may request a reinspection. During a reinspection, the insurance adjuster meets with the roofing contractor to review your roof damage together. Reinspections are common.

In a situation where a widespread disaster has occurred, the insurance company may establish special procedures. Keep your receipts for temporary repairs because your insurance company is likely to reimburse you. If your home is uninhabitable, find out whether living expenses will be reimbursed.

Before making repairs

Unlike interior damage and external damage you can see at eye level, inspecting roof system damage involves climbing a ladder on a potentially unsound, storm-damaged structure. Be sure to proceed with caution, and do not attempt an inspection alone.

- Do not attempt to climb a ladder and assess roof damage in the dark.
- Wear sturdy shoes or boots, a long-sleeved shirt and work gloves.
- Except in extreme situations, do not attempt roof system repairs. The puncturing of a blister (shingle expansion caused by trapped gases such as air or water vapor) or the spreading of a coating or mastic covers up evidence a roofing contractor needs to ascertain the problem. Roof openings should be temporarily covered with tarpaulins to minimize snow and rain damage.
- For safety reasons, do not attempt to remove ice dams or shovel snow off your roof because you may cause more harm than good in some instances. The roof covering, flashings and gutters may be damaged during attempts to break up ice or by dragging a snow rake across the roof. Snow removal from a rooftop while standing on the ground typically results in snow being left on the roof's higher sections, which may lead to ice-dam formation above where a water and ice-dam protection membrane is installed. Where snow and ice buildup on a rooftop is an urgent problem, it is preferable to have a professional roofing contractor address it.
- After a snowstorm, be aware of possible structural, electrical or gas-leak hazards in your home. Contact your local city or county building inspectors for information about structural safety codes and standards.
- For additional information, homeowners can access the Consumer section of the National Roofing Contractors Association's (NRCA's) website at www.nrca.net/consumer. NRCA provides an online listing of its members in its Find a Contractor section.

How do I repair my roof?

Your roof is your home's first line of defense against natural disasters and the most vulnerable part of your home exposed to weather. When a snowstorm causes destruction to your roof, dealing with the aftermath can cause distress. The following information will help you through the process of restoring your roof system.

Selecting a roofing contractor

Often following a natural disaster, unprofessional contractors will try to take advantage of unsuspecting homeowners. If it is necessary to hire a roofing contractor, you should keep a healthy skepticism about the lowest bid. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Price is only one criterion for selecting a professional roofing contractor; professionalism and quality workmanship also must be considered. Take some time to evaluate potential contractors before any reroofing work begins.

A professional roofing contractor should have:

- A permanent place of business
- Knowledge of various roof systems
- Proof of insurance and an effective safety program
- Evidence of industry professionalism, such as proof of training, manufacturer certifications, association membership, business account balance statement, etc.
- Continuing industry education
- Financial stability
- A written proposal
- A license and/or be bonded
- Warranties
- References in your state (Proceed with caution if the contractor only provides out-of-state references.)
- A maintenance program

Beware of a contractor:

- Whose references are all out of state
- Who only wants cash
- Who wants money before materials are on site
- Who offers “specials” or “extra-cheap” work

Other help

Special loans or grants may be available to assist you with repairs. Possible sources include:

- Federal Emergency Management Agency
 - www.fema.gov
- American Red Cross
 - www.redcross.org
- Small Business Administration (homeowners might qualify)
 - www.sba.gov
- Local governments
- Private lenders

