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To All Members of the Roofing Metal Heating Associates (RMHA), Area Roofing Contractors, Roofing Material Distributors, or Manufacturer Representatives of Roofing Materials:

The RMHA is starting a program to forward electronic pictures of custom and local roofing system installations via email.

The RMHA hopes the Picture Reports will provide visual information to help all roofing industry professionals learn about unique projects and how other roofing professionals approach roofing system installations. Furthermore, we invite you to share these photos with others in the roofing industry who may find them informative.

There are no charges to receive the pictures, and you don't have to be a member; however, whether you are a roofing contractor, material distributor, or a manufacturer's representative, we hope you may consider membership in the future.

We also hope that area Roofing Contractors, Distributors, or Company Representatives will submit photos of roofing system installations to share with others within the local roofing industry.

If you are interested in receiving the Picture Reports, contact me via email or call my cell phone

Regards,
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Questions?

by Charles McGarvey
Roof Surveys and Informational Services

If you were asked these two questions, how would you immediately answer each?

However, before finding out what the questions are, put yourself in the position of a witness during legal proceedings and understand that you are testifying under oath. You don't know the questions and, when asked, you don't have time to think about anything other than answering the questions based on your personal experiences.

Question 1:
What is the difference between a residential steep-slope roofer and a commercial low-slope roofer? The question is not, "What is the difference between a residential or commercial roofing contractor?" which is a completely different question and answer.

Question 2:
Which produces a higher-quality roofing system installation: union or non-union labor?

Don't read any further until you have thought about how you would answer these questions while under oath to tell the truth.

Well, many years ago I was in this situation. I think back on my answers, and while many may disagree or will have their own answers, I would still give the same answers today.

1) What is the difference between a residential steep slope roofer and a commercial low-slope roofer?

Answer: While there is an obvious difference in materials and working on different roof slopes between a residential roofer and a commercial roofer, the waterproofing skill differences between the two can be very different. With different materials and construction variables, a quality-oriented residential steep-slope roofer will likely have developed stronger waterproofing skills to prevent leaks than a commercial low-slope roofer.

However, this does not mean a commercial roofer lacks waterproofing skills; their major advantage is the ability to assemble various low-slope roofing material components during a roofing system installation. If those components aren't put together properly, the roofing system can leak or fail completely.

A simple example of the skill differences between a steep-slope residential roofer and a low-slope commercial roofer is how they construct daily water cutoffs, so if it rains overnight during a roofing system installation, water doesn't leak into a residence or building. Steep-slope roofers commonly use large tarps and the water-shedding effects of gravity to shed water off the roof; however, low-slope commercial roofers must construct tie-ins between new and existing materials that may experience several inches of ponding water on the tie-in.

Thus, in my opinion, even though a residential roofer may have more waterproofing skills, if he is put on a low-slope commercial roofing system installation without commercial roofing system training, but more importantly, "experience," he may destroy the building during future rains. Why? Because correct material component installation skills are very different from waterproofing skills, and while both are important, they differ.

Furthermore, the reverse is also true: if a commercial low-slope roofer is put on a residential steep-slope roofing system, he may destroy the building during future rains because he lacks waterproofing skills.

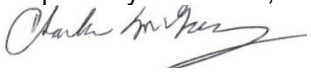
Yes, some roofers are skilled enough to do both, but very few can switch between the two types of roofing system installation on a daily basis.

2) Which produces a higher quality roofing system installation: union or non-union labor?

Answer: This is an age-old question, but my answer was very simple. The quality of a roofing system installation has nothing to do with union or non-union labor; it depends directly on the experience and knowledge of the foreman responsible for the installation.

The best foremen I have ever worked with were originally residential roofers with 10 or more years of experience who later trained for several years in installing commercial roofing systems. They are the best roofers, and that has nothing to do with union or non-union membership.

Respectfully Submitted,



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