

ASPHALT SHINGLES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Homeowners and businesses alike are more focused than ever on building “green”, and on how their actions affect the world around them. Demand is high for eco-friendly products that minimize the impact on the natural environment. At the same time, the customer still demands that there be no compromise on the performance and look that both protect and enhance his property's value.

Canadian-made asphalt shingles offer many environmental advantages, such as:

1. Shingle products may be recognized by home construction programs, such as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) or other similar programs, for their “recycled content”, local availability, or other LEED benefits.
2. Canadian-made asphalt shingles are made close to most major Canadian urban centres, minimizing the carbon footprint needed for transport, and possibly qualifying for LEED “regional material” credits.
3. Since shingles are a relatively lightweight roofing option, there is no need for additional framing/lumber to support the structure.
4. Asphalt shingles have a relatively long life span, making them a sustainable construction material option.
5. Typical Canadian roof construction designs can easily handle two layers of shingles, reducing the need for disposal until such time when recycling and material recovery technologies will have progressed further.
6. Shingle manufacturing remnants (such as cut-outs, trim etc.) are already being used in road paving compounds, where their asphalt/fibrous content enhances the pavement deformation resistance and old shingles can also be recycled into suitable raw materials for paving roads, parking lots and driveways.

(Over)

7. Reclaimed shingles from re-roofs and factory remnants are also used as a fuel/energy source, especially in high energy-use facilities such as cement kilns.
8. Should old shingles need to go to municipal landfills, there is no identified concern related to groundwater contamination.
9. Canadian shingle manufacturing facilities comply with all stringent government requirements for clean air emissions, and most plants use closed water systems.
10. Asphalt shingle roofs have proven to be an excellent and compatible mounting surface for solar water heaters and photo-voltaic cell systems.
11. Light coloured shingles, such as white, have a relatively high reflectivity and high emissivity, mitigating urban heat island effects, and may qualify for Energy Star compliance. (Note: Currently Natural Resources Canada has determined that Energy Star ratings for roofing materials do not apply to Canada.)

When considering the environmental impact of various roofing options, asphalt shingles offer these benefits, all the while maintaining excellent durability, value and aesthetics, coupled with ease of installation and maintenance.

For more information on this subject or other asphalt shingle technical issues, you may contact CASMA by e-mail at casma@casma.ca, or visit our website: www.casma.ca. The information contained in this bulletin is for general education and is not intended to replace advice from a qualified contractor or direction on usage/installation from the manufacturer. Consumers should be aware of the safety hazards associated with work on roofs and, before doing so themselves, should consider following CASMA's advice of using qualified contractors. This bulletin may be reproduced with permission on condition that it be reproduced in whole, unedited, with attribution of copyright to CASMA.