



Strong winds caused damage around Hermiston in November 2015, including this roof on a home on SW 12th Street.

Catching roof repairs early can prevent major damage

STAFF PHOTO BY JADE MCDOWELL

Shingles that have curled up, separated, cracked or lost their coating of granules are signs a roof repair is needed

By JADE McDOWELL
EO Media Group

A leaky roof can bring more than water into a home if it's not caught right away.

Mold, mildew, warped flooring and disintegrating drywall are all reasons for homeowners to make sure they are keeping their roofs in good condition.

Steve Hoffman, owner of Hoffman Home Services in Hermiston, said when shingles start separating, curling up, breaking off or losing their granules (the sand-like coating protecting them from UV damage) it's time to have a professional inspect the entire roof and make repairs where necessary. The problem is that most people don't spend much time looking up at their roof, and water dripping in through a roof can sometimes be soaked up by insulation for a long time before any liquid starts making its way into a visible location inside the house.

"A lot of people don't realize they have [a leak] until it's too late," Hoffman said.

That's why it's important for homeowners to pay attention to what their roofs are looking like. In addition to damaged shingles, accumulations of moss are also

a warning sign. If the moss grows unchecked it will hold moisture onto the roof, hastening damage to the shingles.

Metal roofs won't start shucking shingles, but the panels do tend to loosen over time, creating a path for wind to tear the panels off the roof during a storm. Building owners should keep an eye out for the tell-tale screws.

"A lot of times on older metal roofs, screws will be popping up," Hoffman said.

Once water does work its way into the home, there isn't always a steady drip of water falling onto the floor. Sometimes the leak manifests itself in a brown water stain on the ceiling, a new crack or a large build-up of mold in the attic. According to Popular Mechanics, "What can make a leak especially difficult to locate is the fact that water doesn't necessarily drip straight down. It can travel along roof panels or lumber in the attic before dripping onto your insulation and leaving the telltale yellow water spot on your ceiling."

If homeowners do notice signs they may have a leak, the sooner they deal with it the better, which is why roofing businesses like Hoffman Home Services offer 24/7 emergency repairs.

Oftentimes a small repair can forestall more expensive fixes down the road, but eventually every roof will reach a point where it needs to be replaced completely. Hoffman said modern composition shingles can last as long as 30 years, while older three-tab shingles will last more like 12 to 15 years.

In addition to keeping an eye out for visible damage, homeowners can help keep their roofs working well by keeping gutters and downspouts clear so that water and ice don't back up onto the edges of the roof. They can also make sure edges are sealed down and that ventilation is not blocked.



STAFF PHOTO BY GARY L. WEST

Shingles on a roof in Hermiston show signs of wear and begin to curl in this file photo.



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