

Home Safety

Roofs Can Be The First Defense Against Fires

(NAPSA)—The recent devastating wildfires in California that caused billions of dollars in damage reinforced how vital it is for homeowners to take a second look at what their roofs are made of.

Experts say that different types of roofs—depending on whether they're constructed of wood, tile or asphalt—can often mean the difference between safety and disaster. They add that while some materials offer valuable protection, others can actually encourage fires. Here's a rundown:

Wood Roofs

Several decades ago, wood roofs were considered upgrades to the material then commonly used by builders. And, aesthetically, the wood shakes blended in nicely with the wooded landscape of many neighborhoods. Today, however, many local building departments don't allow wood roofs because of their inherent fire danger.

Tile Roofs

Builders have turned to the use of tile roofs, but be ready for sticker shock. Due to the roofs' excessive weight, special framing may be necessary, which can be a major expense. Tile also requires special installation that is labor-intensive. All this can add up to 50 percent more than the cost of an asphalt shingle roof. Plus, tiles don't always protect against water damage.

Asphalt Shingles

There's a reason asphalt shingles have exploded in popularity since 2000. Industry experts say they provide the look and feel of



Certain roofing materials can resist—or encourage—fire.

wood shake and tile roofs with much better protection, less cost and longer life.

“Most fiberglass asphalt shingles are rated Class A by Underwriters Laboratories, which is the highest fire protection rating available for roofing shingles,” says Dave Harrison from GAF Materials Corporation, North America's largest roofing manufacturer. “And the shingles come in a wide range of colors and styles that emulate the look of natural materials such as wood, stone or slate.”

Harrison says the new patterns and color palettes offered by GAF can provide a prestigious look that could increase the value of a home for as little as half the cost of other materials. Plus, asphalt shingles are relatively easy to maintain and repair.

For more information on roofing problems and solutions, or to watch a free video on avoiding roofing disasters, visit www.gaf.com or call (888) LEAK-SOS.