

# HOME MAINTENANCE

## Your Home's Roof Plays Defense Against Harsh Weather

(NAPSA)—Chants of “*Defense! Defense!*” may be routine at basketball games, but it turns out the thrust of the message—the need to protect against bad stuff that might lie ahead—applies equally as well to your home’s roof.

Roofs are actually the first line of defense against rain, snow, cold air and harsh weather in general. And so if you’re smart, you’ll want to check what kind of shape yours is in twice a year.

That means being on the lookout for missing shingles or deteriorated flashing (the metal that seals bends and joints on skylights, chimneys, etc.). More than 90 percent of roof damage occurs in these two areas, and catching it early can be key to preventing bigger problems.

Here are more hints that can help:

### Knowing When To Inspect

Check your roof every spring after severe weather and every winter before the worst weather sets in.

### What To Look For

- Examine the roof edge for damage from wind, rain or ice dams. The dams occur when water freezes and backs up under the roofing system.

- Inspect for signs of mold, algae and mildew such as dark spots and discolored shingles. Inadequate or faulty shingle underlayment can be behind this.

- Look for blistering or peeling paint due to poor attic ventilation.

### Roof Maintenance

Leaves, sticks and other debris can cause water to back up and flow under a roof, so clean out your gutters and roof drains regu-



**Up on the roof, you can see if your home is ready for rough weather.**

larly. Also, check that all gutters are securely fastened to the house and that downspouts are pointing away from your home.

### What To Do If You Spot Damage

If your inspection reveals roof damage, work with professional roof contractors who are bonded, insured and use quality materials. They can help you prolong the life of your roof and keep you from having to spend money on costly future repairs.

A free service that helps homeowners find a qualified roofing contractor is available from North America’s largest roofing manufacturer, GAF Materials Corporation. Call (888) LEAK-SOS or visit [www.gaf.com](http://www.gaf.com).