

Tarco ROOFER'S REPORT

How to Win the Waiting Game

Underlayment Protects While Shortages Loom

One of the most frustrating problems faced by roofing contractors is how to cope with materials shortages. When demand surges, shortages of clay and concrete occur, and roofing contractors may experience prolonged delays in the delivery of tiles to work sites.

In the Florida roofing industry, there is a strong demand for tiles even under normal circumstances. Add to this the demand for tiles to replace hurricane-damaged roofs and severe shortages can result.



Long Delays and Tough Decisions

Tile shortages create logistics problems for roofing contractors, who are experiencing delays in the delivery of tiles. Supplies of other common roofing materials, such as saturated felt and asphalt shingles, have rebounded but the waiting period for new tiles can still be 20 to 40 weeks or more.

Roofers face important decisions about how to protect a building when they cannot be assured of the delivery of tiles in a timely fashion. One such roofing contractor is Mike Solomon of Always Roofing, Inc. Solomon is

also President of the Palm Beach County Roofing & Sheet Metal Contractors Association (PBCRSM) (Website: www.pbcroofers.com).

Always Roofing mainly is involved in new construction rather than repairing or replacing roofs that have been damaged by hurricanes. Nonetheless, shortages of tiles have affected the company. Solomon was forced to tear-off and replace new underlayments on several occasions because the top-layer deteriorated before tiles could be installed.

Faced with unpredictable delivery times for tiles, Solomon searched desperately for a tile-roofing underlayment with greater exposure limits, one that would provide longevity. He needed an underlayment that could serve as a primary roof in the interim period while awaiting delivery of tiles. "These days we have no prediction at all on tile deliveries," says Solomon. "They could be delivered in a month or it could take nine months."

Solomon had been using a rubberized modified-asphalt

product, which was easy to install but was not warranted for exposures more than 30 to 90 days. "When these membranes are left out in the sun too long, the film begins to deteriorate," he explained. "It looks bad and makes it impossible to install the tiles." Previously, it was not a problem because tiles would be installed over the underlayment within a few weeks. "As the weeks passed and tile deliveries were still delayed, we watched our profits go down the drain." Solomon had to absorb the costs of tearing off the failed underlayment and starting over. In some cases, he could not even recover the cost of materials because the underlayments were not warranted for long exposures.

The Perfect Tile Underlayment

Solomon was one of the first contractors to learn about patent pending LeakBarrier® Fast90™ tile underlayment from Tarco. "When I heard that it had long exposure limits, perhaps even as long as nine months or more, I was sold on the product almost immediately. And the more we worked with the product the more we liked it."

Always Roofing installs many high-end residential tile roofs. These are large roofs for million-dollar homes, typically 100 squares (10,000 sq. ft) and sometimes 600 squares (60,000 sq. ft or more) or more of roofing.

"It was costing us to replace the failed underlayment," said Solomon. "Leaks weren't a problem but the polymer film would deteriorate, exposing the asphalt underneath. At that stage, the roofers could not complete the job without tearing off the underlayment."

Made for Tile Roofing

Fast90 has a mineral-surfaced topside, which protects the underlayment from ultraviolet radiation and provides traction to roofers. According to Steve Ratcliff, President of Tarco, it was especially designed for tile roofing and it is the only product like it on the market; in fact, there is a patent pending.

"Fast90 is a lot like tried-and-true 90-pound felts," says Ratcliff. "It is made from premium quality organic mat that is proven for tile roof systems but there is one major difference: No hot-mopping of asphalt is required for its installation. The bottom side and the side-lap seam have a self-adhering compound of high-tack, SBS-modified asphalt, which is protected by a release film for easy installation."

The upshot is that Fast90 not only has a long exposure limit but also is easy to install. Even 90# has exposure limits, typically about six months. Since delivery times can be as long as nine months, a contractor is rolling the dice if he installs anything but Fast90.

"At this stage, unless I had my tiles already delivered on site and ready to install, I wouldn't think of using anything but Fast90," says Solomon. "I have been burned too many times. And even when I do have the tiles, I still use Fast90. My crews are finding that it is easy to install. It handles the weight of the stacked tiles well and the mineral-surface provides good traction."

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