



SAGGING, BUCKLING,  
OR JUST PLAIN UGLY?

**SIGNS IT'S TIME TO REPLACE YOUR ROOF**



Replacing your roof isn't tops on anyone's project list. Even if re-roofing your home isn't one of the fun weekend projects you're looking forward to tackling this summer, a new roof can improve your home's comfort, energy efficiency, and resale value. Roofing repairs can help restore a roof that's sustained small amounts of damage, but how do you know when it's time to completely replace your roof? In this ebook, we'll look at

- **How long you can expect your roof to last, depending on its composition;**
- **Roof issues that signal it's time for a complete roof replacement;**
- **Options to replace your roof.**

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# How Long Does a Roof Last?

## Natural Lifespan

Different roofing materials have different anticipated lifespans for “typical” mixed weather conditions. The natural lifespan of rubber/EPDM roofs is 10–16 years. Traditional asphalt shingles tend to last for 15–18 years, while architectural shingles typically last for 24–30 years. Concrete tile or steel roofing can have an expected lifespan of more than 30 years—sometimes up to 60–70 years.

If your roof is nearing the end of its normal life expectancy, it is rarely cost effective to repair damage piecemeal. You will likely save money in the long run by replacing the entire roof when you start to have problems.

## Damage

Iowa’s severe weather can cause a roof to age much more quickly than its natural life expectancy would predict. The blistering summer sun can cause UV damage, buckling, and warping; years of intense heat (particularly when followed by freezing winters) can cause shingles to dry out and crack. In winter, snow and ice can cause [ice dams](#), cracking, and water infiltration. The cumulative damage can allow water to penetrate the shingle layer and damage the roof deck underneath as well as encourage the formation of dangerous [mold](#). If your roof is deteriorating or even has a few minor areas of damage, these issues will only worsen in the baking summer sun and as the [snow and ice](#) pile up, melt, and refreeze in the winters.

Year-round storms can also cause extensive damage to your roof with hail, high winds, heavy rain, and blowing debris. Although you can replace individual shingles that have blown off in windstorms or been damaged by impact, if many are missing or cracked as a result of weather incidents, it may be time for a whole new roof.

Moss and algae are other threats to your roof that can cause damage subtly over time. If these silent threats are allowed to build up and not regularly removed, they can eat into shingles. This can cause granule loss, leakage, water infiltration, structural damage, and mold formation.



# Fatal Flaws: Spotting the Issues

Replacing a few shingles can be a simple, economical choice if you have minimal, contained damage or wear on your roof. If many shingles or large areas of your roof are broken, cracked, or otherwise damaged, however, it may be a better option to replace your roof completely.

If you see the following roof issues, it's probably time for a complete roof replacement.

- **Widespread warping or curling of shingles.** This can be a sign of improper installation or poor roof ventilation, which could be costing you money in lost energy and possibly allowing water infiltration.
- **Peeling.** If you have a painted roof, keep an eye out for blistering or peeling. Just like a sunburn, this indicates your roof has sustained significant damage from the sun's rays, and more serious problems may be around the corner.
- **Significant granule loss.** Granules on asphalt shingles protect your home from solar radiation and weather, helping to preserve your roof's integrity. Granule loss is natural over time but can be accelerated by damage from storms or hail (indicated by indentations or divots). Look for bald patches or a significant amount of granules in your gutters and roof runoff.
- **Roof leaks.** Leaks around vents, chimneys, or ducts can often be repaired by replacing flashing and re-sealing vent and pipe openings, but if you have extensive leaking inside your home, your roof deck may have suffered significant water damage. You will likely need to replace your roof and may need to do additional structural repair and remediation in areas that have had prolonged moisture exposure. Having small leaks professionally inspected early can help prevent this kind of extensive damage.

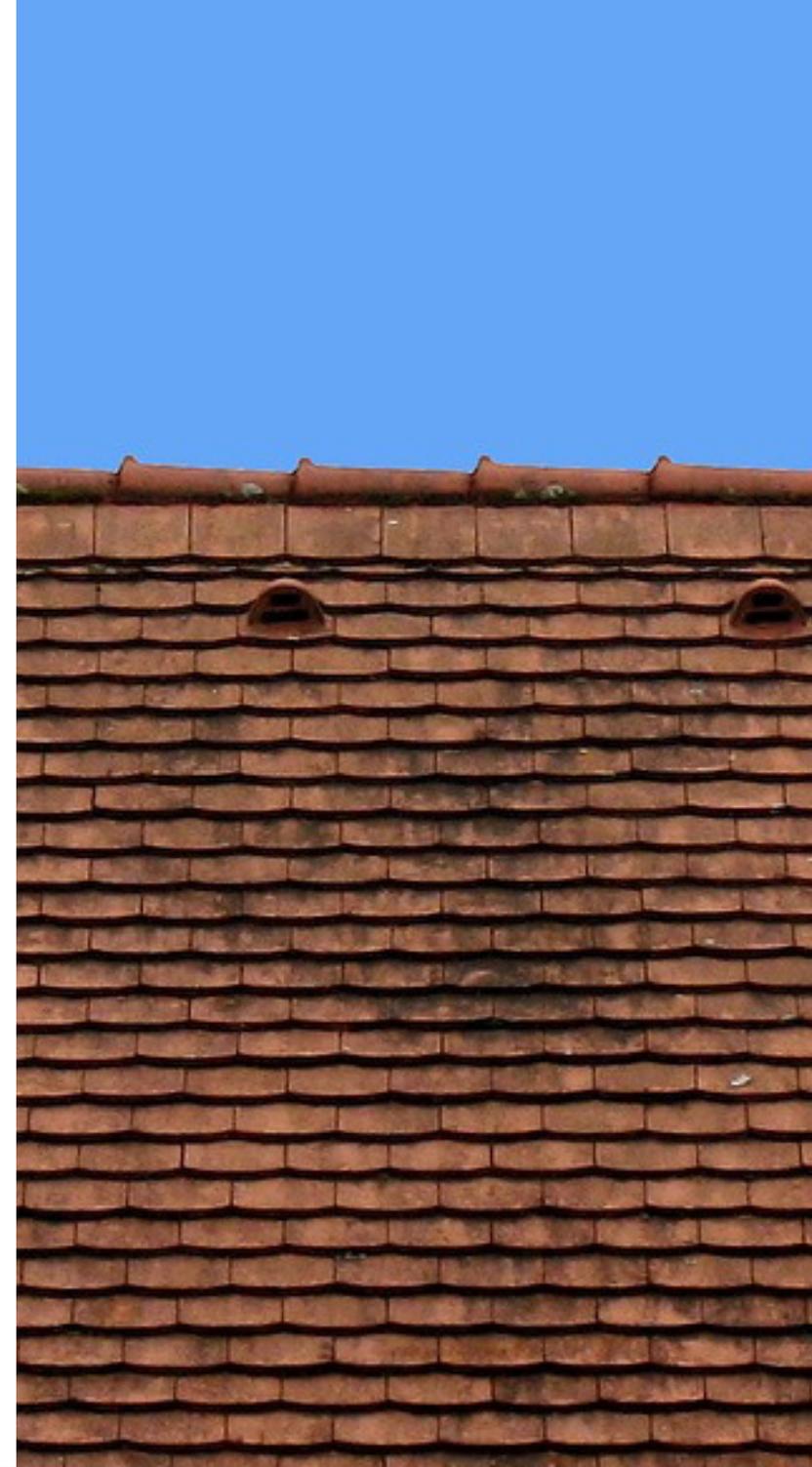
**TIP: Granule wear that appears in horizontal lines on shingles, a few inches beneath the edge of the shingles above, can be a sign that the seals around the shingles have broken down. This makes it much more likely that water will leak under the shingles into the roof decking or into your home, causing significant damage and possibly dangerous mold.**

- **Sagging.** A sagging roof can be a sign of inadequate structural support. This condition can be caused by poor original construction, damage, or natural deterioration over time. A sagging roof can be extremely dangerous! It should be evaluated promptly by a professional to prevent collapse.

- **Increased energy bills.** If your energy bills are out of control, check to see if there has been a gradual, unexplained increase in your usage (i.e., one that doesn't seem to correlate to severely hot or cold weather). Increased energy use could be a result of losing heat or air conditioning due to insufficient attic ventilation or a damaged/leaky roof. A new roof can help better insulate your home from the elements, reducing the amount of energy you use heating and cooling your home and lowering your utility bills.

You can extend the life of your roof by having it professionally inspected yearly, performing regular **preventive maintenance**, and attending to issues promptly. Despite your best efforts, however, your roof won't last forever. If you have harsh weather conditions, a darker roof that absorbs more heat, a flat or gently pitched roof, or a south-facing roof surface that gets a lot of sun, your roof may age faster than expected. A professional inspection can help you determine whether your roof's issues can be addressed individually or whether it's time for a new roof.

**TIP: Energy Star-certified metal and architectural shingle roofing materials have pigmented coatings or cooling granules designed to reduce heat gain. This can lower the surface temperature of a roof by up to 50° F, decreasing the amount of heat that enters your home. These materials can reduce peak cooling demand by 10-15 percent overall, allowing your home to stay more comfortable while using less energy.**



# Time to Replace? You've got Options!

If you need a new roof, a vast array of attractive, affordable roofing materials is on the market today, including rubber/EPDM roofing, traditional asphalt shingles, [architectural shingles](#), [stone coated steel](#), and many other options.

## Rubber

If you have a flat roof or one with a very shallow grade, you may have experienced pooling, leaking, or water intrusion. The best way to prevent this is to install a seamless rubber roofing membrane, which is nearly 100% effective at keeping out water. A rubber roofing membrane also helps to prevent the detrimental effects of UV rays, which can extend the life of your roof and reduce your energy costs. Rubber roofing also comes in attractive shingle finishes, which provide a more traditional look with the same waterproof advantages.

## Architectural Shingles

[Architectural shingles](#) are similar in construction to traditional three-tab asphalt shingles but are sturdier, heavier, and much more durable. They are offered in a wide array of color, texture, and pattern choices and can be crafted to look like expensive slate, cedar shake, or tile roofs at a fraction of the cost. Although they usually cost around 20–30% more per square than traditional asphalt shingles, they are more economical in the long term due to their longevity, durability, and reduced maintenance costs. Warranties on architectural shingles typically last 30–50 years (up to 75 years for the highest quality architectural shingles). They are also better able to withstand severe weather; some can handle up to 120-mph winds (versus standard shingles, which can typically resist only 60–80 mph winds).

## Stone-Coated Steel

One of the most versatile choices is steel roofing, which can be manufactured to look like more natural or traditional materials like slate, cedar, shake, or clay without the drawbacks and expense of those materials. Steel roofs are tough, durable, and low maintenance, lasting an average of 40–70 years before needing to be replaced and typically coming with a 50-year warranty. Steel roofs can withstand up to 120-mph winds, resist corrosion and fire, and effectively seal out moisture (preventing the formation of harmful mold, mildew, and rot.) They are an excellent choice to keep protect



# CONTACT US!

Hedrick Construction's roofing experts perform all kinds of roofing inspections, including damage inspections after a storm or other severe weather event, routine annual roof inspections, and free estimates and recommendations for roof replacement for homes in the Ankeny, Ames, and Huxley areas.

We'll make recommendations about whether repair or replacement is most appropriate in your situation and provide you with a free estimate for recommended roofing services.

**Contact us for all your roofing needs.**

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