

Self-Sticking Roof Membrane

by Charles Wardell

The Journal's pick of curious, interesting, and useful products



Here's a way to cover a low-slope roof without getting tar on your pants. *Peel and Seal*, a self-stick roll roofing, is a 45-mil membrane that consists of an aluminum foil surface, a thin polymer film, and a thicker substrate of rubberized asphalt. It's designed for use on free-draining roofs (ones with no ponding water) with a minimum slope of 1/2 inch per foot.

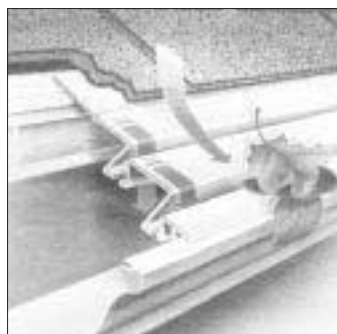
Peel and Seal's defining feature is the fact that it's easy to put on. There's no messing around with torches, mops, or adhesives — just peel off the release paper and press the membrane onto the roof. The manufacturer claims that the only tool you'll need is a utility knife. Because it's an asphalt product, it can be installed directly over modified bitumen and other smooth-surface asphalt roofs (but not over roll roofing: The surface granules will kill the bond). For porous surfaces like wood, concrete, or cracked asphalt, the manufacturer sells an asphalt-based primer.

The product is sold through roofing distributors for \$80 to \$90 per square and comes in widths of 4, 6, 9, 12, 18, and 36 inches. It's available in white or reflective silver. The product literature includes a warning that the stuff is quite bright, so don't forget your sunglasses. For more information, contact MFM Building Products Corp., P.O. Box 356, Coshocton, OH 43812; 800/882-7663.

PVC Gutter Guard

Help is on the way for homeowners who habitually forget to clear debris from their metal gutters. The *WaterFall* is a rigid polyvinyl chloride (PVC) gutter cap that steps down from the eaves of a roof

to the outside edge of an aluminum gutter. The three steps are isolated from one another by channels that are wide enough to let water in but narrow enough to keep debris out. An obvious question is why water doesn't simply cascade over the steps and off the edge of the gutter. The answer is that the *WaterFall* exploits the principle of surface tension. Rainwater flowing over the downward steps clings to the surface of the PVC, following its contour through the narrow channels into the gutter. But twigs and leaves roll off the steps and onto the ground below.



The *WaterFall* is installed without fasteners. A flat tab at the rear slips under the roof shingles, while the front snaps onto the gutter. It's available in white only, comes in 8-foot lengths, and costs about \$1.25 per linear foot. Contact Crane Plastics, 2141 Fairwood Ave., P.O. Box 1047, Columbus, OH 43216; 614/443-4891 or 800/726-7328.

Fiberglass Steps



It's a safe bet that your mason won't like *Continental Fiber Steps*. This line of freestanding fiberglass steps and ramps is available in a range of imitation brick and stone finishes, including fieldstone, flagstone, strata rock, and quarry stone. Each unit includes a slip-resistant walking surface and can be outfitted with black or white aluminum railings. Several heights and styles are

available, including an ADA-compliant handi-ramp that can be used alone or as a retrofit over existing stairs. Ramp options include a straight run, a switchback, or an ell, and can be configured with or without a companion stair.

All steps and ramps are framed with 1/2-inch to 5/8-inch marine-grade plywood that's completely wrapped in fiberglass. The finished steps average one inch in thickness, which means you won't think you're in a bathtub when you walk on them. For more information, contact Kelco Building Products, P.O. Box 216, Scituate, MA 02066; 617/545-9255.

Tight Gliders



Today's windows lose more heat through air leakage between the sash and the jamb than by conduction through the glass and frame. Air leakage is measured in cubic feet per minute per linear foot of crack (cfm/ft.) with a 25-mph wind blowing directly at the window. Casement and awning windows are pretty tight (testing as low as .01 cfm/ft.), but gliders and double-hungs are a lot draftier.

The *New Gliding Window* cuts air infiltration nearly in half, to between .05 and .08 cfm/ft. Each sash moves on an adjustable glide that pivots into locking position when closed. The three-piece locking system, which is controlled by a single handle, pulls the two sash together when engaged, then separates them for easy opening.

The manufacturer says that accessibility figured heavily in the window's design. For instance, the handle is offset in such a way that, when properly installed, it's easy to use from a wheelchair. For more information, contact Andersen Windows Inc., Bayport, MN 55003; 800/426-4261. ■