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JLC's

Letters

Drip-Edge Details

To the Editor:

In the drawing showing the nailing requirements for asphalt shingles (*On the House*, 8/00), I noticed that you show the felt underlayment installed over the metal drip edge on the rake edge of the roof. I believe that the *Uniform Building Code*, and most manufacturers, require the drip edge on the rake edge to be installed over the underlayment. Am I missing something, or was it drawn wrong?

Steve Hutchings
Missoula, Mont.

Harrison McCampbell responds: The Uniform Building Code, *like the CABO code and the other model codes, simply requires all flashing to be installed "as per shingle manufacturer's printed instructions." When you look at any of the manufacturer's instructions or recommendations, they may show metal drip edge on the eaves and rakes, but they never demand it.*

The underlying message is that if you use it, here is how we would like to see it installed. But they never come out and say to use it, which gives the codes no power of enforcement. Only the SBCCI code, in Section 1504 (for asphalt shingles on commercial buildings), specifically requires edge metal, but the section applies only to commercial buildings, not homes.

As to whether the rake metal should go under or over the felt, either way is acceptable. The most important issue is to be sure to have some rake metal in the first place. The rest is academic. Just make sure that the underlayment along the rake (and eaves) reaches slightly — 1/2 to 3/4 inch — over the edge.

Insulating Under a Metal Roof

To the Editor:

In the question on insulating a cathedral ceiling under a metal roof (*On the House*, 6/00), the drawing shows an air space between the poly vapor barrier and the bottom layer foam. Is this okay? It seems like moisture could get trapped in that space.

Also, is it okay to mix XPS and Polyiso foam in the different layers? Specifically, I am wondering if it's acceptable to use a foil-faced polyiso for the uppermost layer (silver side up) to help keep the heat out, since the roof I am insulating faces west.

Bill Decker
via email

Henri de Marne responds: The fact that the drawing shows an air space between the poly and the bottom of the rigid insulation is purely coincidental; it's determined by the depth of the rafters. The insulation could be installed flush with the bottom edge of the rafters, leaving a larger air space above. Regardless, there is no reason for moisture to be trapped in that space. The poly, if properly installed, should prevent air convection and moisture migration into that space. If any moisture should get into it, it would be on the warm side of the assembly and would not condense.

It's okay to mix polyiso and XPS. Be aware that for the aluminum face on the polyiso to function as a reflective surface, it must be clean and shiny when installed. The question is, how long will it remain so with air currents passing over it?

Rain Screen or Smoke Screen?

To the Editor:

Let me begin by complimenting you and your staff on an excellent publication. It is the one piece of mail that gets my immediate attention.

In Minnesota, moisture issues have become the focus of much attention lately in residential stucco installations. For years, stucco contractors have used felt in lieu of the *UBC*-required Grade D Building Paper. Your article entitled

"Choosing a Sheathing Wrap" (8/00) should be mandatory reading for all of the detractors of the stucco industry who insist that felt is not the equal of building paper.

However, there is one point that I would like to make about the argument on solar-driven vapor: Since the early '60s, stucco contractors in Minnesota have been installing stucco successfully over lignocellulosic fiberboard (a highly vapor-permeable sheathing). The assumption by Mark Bomberg that vapor is driven into highly permeable sheathings does not hold water (pardon the pun) in this part of the country. I say assumption because I do not see any basis in fact or scientific evidence in the article that proves the point.

I was just getting brainwashed to believe the phrase "barrier cladding" from the EIFS fiasco, and now in this article we are supposed to believe that stucco is a "reservoir cladding." What's next? "Bipolar cladding" or maybe "vapor-challenged cladding"? Get real! Portland cement stucco has been a universally accepted product for over 110 years, and the use of naturally occurring hydraulic cement stucco goes back to the Roman Empire. The fact that we are now seeing moisture problems associated with virtually every type of cladding indicates that there is a fundamental change to the way we now engineer buildings. Joe Lstiburek himself said it perhaps best in his *Builder's Guide*. He attributes today's problems to several changes: thermal insulation, tighter building enclosures, and new materials and hvac systems. EIFS was no more the cause of the moisture intrusion problems in the Carolinas than stucco is here in Minnesota.

Now we are supposed to engineer in a rain screen system to evacuate incidental moisture that passes through/around the primary cladding? How much more complex is this going to get? Maybe instead of engineering in more complexity we should be looking at engineering it out. It is perhaps time that we get our government representatives involved and spend some serious money on some meaningful scientific study. An architect friend of mind put it quite succinctly: We spend more tax money on testing road paints than we do on testing how our buildings go together. Can we get to the bottom of all of this and move on?

Steven Pedracine
Executive Director
Minnesota Lath & Plaster Bureau
St. Paul, Minn.

Correction

To the Editor:

Page 2 of June's *Window & Door Resource Guide* incorrectly states that our new skylight with the snap-in sash is clad in vinyl. Actually, it has an aluminum exterior cladding.

Stacy A. Einck
Andersen Windows
Bayport, Minn.

KEEP 'EM COMING! Letters must be signed and include the writer's address. *The Journal of Light Construction* reserves the right to edit for grammar, length, and clarity. Mail letters to *JLC*, 186 Allen Brook Ln., Williston, VT 05495; or e-mail to *jlc@bginet.com.*

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