

Reader Feedback

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Letters

“BEST PRACTICES: ROOFING WITH ASPHALT SHINGLES,” BY JLC STAFF WITH MICHAEL CHOTINER (MAY/14)

Richard Giudice: Excellent article. The only thing “missing” is the age-old question: Should the thin plastic covering be removed from the shingle sealant strips? If not, why does the manufacturer even put sealant strips on the shingles? After a bad summer in 2013 with hailstorms, every roofer I talked to effectively said “Oh no, the strips don’t need to be removed.” ... Huh? Then what’s the purpose of the sealant?

Greg Bublitz: Richard, the thin plastic strip is designed to keep the sealant strip from sticking to the shingle next to it in the package. If the plastic strip becomes stuck to the sealant strip while in the package and releases from the back of the shingle where it is intended to be, then it should be peeled off of the tar strip at installation. However, it does not need to be removed from the back of the shingle at installation. This plastic strip only lines up with the tar line while in the package and not on the roof. Some manufacturers print “Do not remove” right on the plastic strip.

“BIAS AGAINST THE BUILDING TRADES?” (IN THE NEWS—REGARDING THE PORTLAND PRESS HERALD’S OP-ED BY DAN KOLBERT, JLC ONLINE, 6/12/14)

Icesailor: I personally think it is part of the plan to continue to privatize public education at the expense of those who can’t afford a private or charter-school education. What I learned in the Los Angeles City School System in the 1950s, graduating in 1962 in their industrial arts/vocational program, has followed me my entire working career. In L.A., you could be a poor student but excel in shop classes and feel you were worthy of something. They didn’t send you to shop classes as a punishment. It kept a lot of students in school and graduating from high school.

I spent my working life in Massachusetts, which has an excellent vocational system. But [this system] is still a dumping ground for many students. [The department of education] doesn’t include the test scores of “voke” students in state test scores, but some of the smartest and most well-trained mechanics come from state vocational trade schools. As a Licensed Master Plumber who was in business in Massachusetts for almost 40 years, and in the building trades for over 55 years, I can tell anyone that these students from vocational schools

are far better mechanics than the ones who go to college.

Shawn McCadden: [Dan Kolbert’s op-ed is] well said and well written. It’s sad to think that in an economy where so many people are working for minimum wage our schools and our government don’t see the opportunity to help people embrace the trades to earn a good living. There would be no need to increase the minimum wage if our youth were given trade skills. Let’s help them earn more money instead of “giving it to them” one way or another.

Dancing Dan [aka author Dan Kolbert]: I should add that the task force’s proposed requirements were voted down by the full school committee [during the week of June 9].

Q&A: SHOULD CAULK GUNS BE PUSHED OR PULLED? (FEB/07)

Quixote: This business about pushing or pulling the caulking gun is the biggest non-issue I’ve heard about in recent years. I’ve always pulled the gun, but that’s not to say I don’t provide enough hydraulic pressure to wet all the surfaces. Folks who espouse the “push the bead” dogma just don’t know how to control the bead any other way. With practice, it’s totally possible to pull the gun and fully wet all the joint surfaces and fill the entire joint in one pass.

George: Quixote, it’s not a “non-issue” [for some]. When pushing a bead of caulk, you should match caulk flow with travel speed so that a small bead of caulk is always in front of the tip. If the bead disappears, you need to slow your travel or increase the flow. If the bead enlarges, you do the reverse. By pushing the bead ahead of the tip, caulk is forced into the joint, the bead is consistent, and the tip tools the bead (in many cases eliminating the need for separate tooling for appearance).

None of the above is true if you pull the bead. The only time that I might pull is with a wide joint where I intend to tool after application. If the bead is wider than the tip, it’s easier to see if you are applying enough caulk to fill the joint if you pull.

Keep ‘Em Coming

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