



# Home Tips®



• CHRISTIAN BUILDING INSPECTORS, INC., 1003 STAR COURT, NORCROSS, GEORGIA 30093, 770-925-8518 • MAY 2001 •

## Q & A

### Home Warranty Worthwhile?

*We are buying a 15 year old house and would like to know what do you think about purchasing a warranty? The inspector said the furnace was rusting and the roof was close to the end of it's life.*

Your inspector was probably right about the condition of the house. Around every 15 years in the life of a home the roof shingles, heating system, air conditioning system and water heater will need to be replaced. This is normal for systems in

**HOME  
WARRANTY  
INCLUDED**

your house. What some people do is take out a home warranty to cover the replacement cost just in case something wears out within the first year of ownership. This is understandable since most of us scratch together every penny we can to come up with a down payment and to cover the moving expenses. If something does wear out during the first year such as a roof, a \$4,000.00 expense could put a heavy burden on the old budget.

What some people do not understand is warranties are mainly for repairs and do not normally cover replacement cost. Some of the more popular warranties that Realtors are using will not cover the cost of replacing roof shingles. It only covers the cost of repairing a leak. The same could be true about heating and air conditioning systems.

If you want replacement costs covered in your warranty, expect to pay more for the warranty. Also, read the fine print to be sure the particular system you want covered is spelled out in the contract. Some contracts have a "pre-existing condition" clause which means if the item was damaged or worn-out before the home was purchased, that item will not be covered.

The bottom line is "know what you are buying". Make sure you understand the conditions of the warranty and everything is spelled out in plain English. If it isn't, have the company address the issue on a cover letter so you will have something in writing. It is always a good idea to contact the Better

Business Bureau of Metro Atlanta at 770-488-4910 or <http://www.bbbonline.org/>.

### Algae Stains On Roof Shingles?

*Our roof shingles have algae stains that turn the roofing black. Is there anything to put on the roof that will kill the algae but not harm the shingles?*

According to the Journal of Light Construction there is a method that will work. It is important that not only the proportion of the ingredients be correct but that due caution be taken to protect other surfaces.

The formula is three parts fresh Clorox bleach to one part water, to which is added half a cup of TSP (trisodium phosphate) or TSPPF (phosphate-free) per gallon. Spray it with a garden sprayer on the affected areas at the rate of one gallon per 50 square feet of roof.

This must be done with caution as this mixture will kill grass under the downspouts, any vegetation under the gutters and cause harm to the metal gutters. All plantings below the roof should be thoroughly wetted and covered with plastic. Water must be kept running in the metal gutters to dilute and wash away the solution as long as it is dripping into them.

Thoroughly rinse the plastic, the surrounding area, and any vegetation when you have finished spraying the roof. Don't rinse the roof, however. It will take a few weeks before the algae stains are gone.

When cleaning a roof, care should be taken to minimize walking on or abrading the roof shingles. Cleaning a roof with bleach and TSP is effective but not permanent. In humid areas where roof algae is common, the algae may return as soon as one year after cleaning.

Source: Henri de Marne

February 2000 Issue Journal of Light Construction

Editors note:

If you have galvanized roof vents or galvanized pipe flashing, you may notice that the area directly below these items will not have near the algae growth. This is due to the zinc coating on the metal. Zinc has been found to help control algae growth. There is a product called "Z-Strip" that is a 3 inch wide strip, made from a zinc alloy, that can be installed along the top of the roof parallel to the ridge. These strips release zinc ions, which are carried down the roof by rainwater and helps to prevent the algae from growing. The average roof can be protected for around \$80.00. If you are interested, you can contact the manufacturer for more information or place an order by contacting Wespac Enterprises, PO Box 46337, Seattle, Washington 98146 or call (800) 845-5863. They will ship anywhere via UPS. The website is <http://www.z-stop.com/>

