



# Home Tips®



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## Q & A

### Fungus On The Roof?

*I've noticed black stains on my fiberglass roof shingles. What is causing the stains and how do I prevent them?*

The stains are a fungus. There isn't much you can do to remove the fungus without damaging the shingles themselves. You can try scrubbing the shingles with a mild bleach solution (one part chlorine bleach to five parts water). But keep in mind that scrubbing your shingles will remove some of their protective granules. It is best to spray the solution on the stained area and let it soak. Then go back and rinse the area with plain water. This way you will not damage the surface. The fungus probably will grow back.

Some roofing contractors said they have had success preventing fungal growth by nailing 6 inch wide strips of galvanized metal every 3 to 4 feet across the entire length of the roof. I guess you have to decide which looks worse, metal strips or black fungus.

The other alternative is to replace the shingles with ones that are fungus resistant. Buy shingles that are labeled fungus resistant or "FS".

### Copper And Galvanized Mixed?

*Several years ago I did some remodeling to an upstairs bathroom. I used copper pipes to extend some existing galvanized pipes. Now the copper has greenish "pit holes" in it and is starting to leak. A friend of mine says this is caused by electrolysis. He said you can't connect copper pipes to galvanized. What do I do?*

Your friend is right. Copper and galvanized pipe should not be connected directly together. Because your copper pipes are starting to leak, you should replace all of the piping that is showing signs of deterioration or where there is a direct copper-to-galvanized connection.

When you replace the pipes, connect the copper to galvanized using dielectric fittings. These can be couplings, unions or nipples. Dielectric fittings separate the two metals preventing the electrolysis that corrodes the pipe. Nipples that are at least 4 inches long do the best job of stopping electrolysis. You may have to go to a plumbing supply house

to find these fittings. Check in the phone directory under "Plumbing and Plumbing Supplies".

### Storm Windows Over Double Pane?

*We would like to make our house as energy efficient as possible and would like to know if it is a good idea to add storm windows over our existing insulated glass windows?*

Even in the northern states with high heating costs, it is not always cost-effective to install storm windows over double-pane windows. The cost of adding the storm windows will only reduce your utilities a small amount resulting in a payback that might take many years to recoup. Storm windows are excellent for single pane or un-insulated windows but do little for insulated windows.

In the Atlanta area, where cooling is the major expense, the storm windows will not do much to reduce solar heat gain. A better choice would be to install solar film on the existing insulated glass windows.

Another solution is to plant trees to shield the hot sun's rays from entering the windows. These may take years to grow enough to be effective but eventually they will make a big difference.

On many of the older homes in Atlanta, you still find the aluminum awnings over the windows. These may not be in style now but they are effective.

### Wood Floor In The Kitchen?

*We're remodeling our kitchen and can't decide if we should install wood floors or not. Will a wood floor hold up to the wear?*

Don't worry, plenty of people are perfectly happy with a wood floor in their kitchen. Floor finishes are much tougher now and they will hold up well under kitchen traffic and spills as long as you take reasonable care of them.

When you choose a wood floor for a kitchen, stay away from ones where the boards have beveled edges. They collect dirt and are hard to clean. Also, avoid a dark-stained floor because excess wear will be very noticeable.

To keep your kitchen floor looking good, wipe up any spills immediately. You can also place throw rugs in front of the sink, dishwasher and refrigerator, or wherever spills are

