

# LESSONS LEARNED:

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS

## OBSERVATIONS AND LESSONS FROM THE SCHOOL OF EXPERIENCE

### ROOFING WARRANTIES

This “**Lessons Learned**” provides important information regarding the benefits you receive when a roofing contractor’s proposal includes a 10, 15 or 20 year warranty from the roofing materials manufacturer. These warranties are usually independent of a warranty offered by the installer. The warranties offered by the roofing manufacturers vary, but generally fall into one of the following three categories:

#### **Materials Only**

Covers defects in materials only, not defects in the installation workmanship. Claims are paid on a pro-rated basis based on the remaining life of the material and generally do not include repair labor.

#### **Limited Dollar Amount**

Covers defects in the materials supplied by the manufacturer and the installation workmanship of those materials. The manufacturer’s financial liability is limited to a preset amount stated in the warranty. When that amount is reached, the warranty no longer provides any coverage.

#### **Unlimited Dollar Amount or No Dollar Limit (NDL)**

Covers defects in the materials supplied by the manufacturer and the installation workmanship of those materials. The manufacturer’s financial liability is not limited to any amount during the warranty period.

With the exception of the “materials only” warranty, a fee (dependent on the size of the roof) is usually required for the warranty. In the case of “unlimited dollar amount or NDL” warranties, premium materials, upgraded details, and application by a select contractor are often required.

When you read the fine print of the various warranties, you will discover that there is a listing of items that are often excluded from coverage and may void the warranty, such as:

- Materials used in the roof are neither provided nor approved by the manufacturer (such as unapproved fasteners, insulation or sealants)
- Improper or lack of maintenance
- Ponded water
- Natural or man-made disasters
- Physical abuse
- Building movement or structural defects

Having a roofing warranty will not prevent roof leaks. The manufacturer will repair leaks once they occur (provided they are covered under the roofing warranty), but generally will not replace insulation that has become wet or repair interior damages resulting from leakage. A roofing warranty is not a maintenance or service agreement, and will generally require that the owner be responsible for maintaining items that are not included but associated with the warranted items.

Finally, this all leads to the question, “Is it really worth ‘buying’ a warranty for a new roofing system?” Provided you understand the limitations of the warranty, it can provide you with some relief if latent defects in the materials or workmanship are encountered. The fundamental truth is that a warranty will never substitute for a properly designed, professionally installed and monitored (by third party quality assurance consultant), and properly maintained roofing system.

We hope this “**Lessons Learned**” has given you a better understanding of some of the major points of roofing warranties. Unfortunately, there is not enough space on this page to fully explore the finer details of this subject, so should you have any questions regarding roofing warranties or any other roofing issues, please contact your nearest ECS office.

Respectfully,  
**ECS Corporate Services, LLC**

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