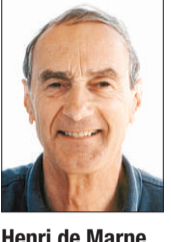


Homes Plus

Sump pump is needed addition

Q. I have lived in a house for 33 years that was built in 1961. I have a very high water table, and, during some springs, I get water seeping into the basement. It comes in through hairline cracks in the basement's concrete floor. I have to use a submersible pump that is usually about ¼- to ½-inch deep, deeper if I don't do anything about it.

A. There is no reliable way to seal a residential concrete floor to keep water out; the hydrostatic pressure is too great. If you use a submersible pump, you must have a sump to put it in, as it needs to be immersed in water to operate. You must be using a floor pump that needs to be turned on and off manually. A submersible sump pump is the only practical way to keep the rising water table from pooling onto the basement floor. If you have a problem only occasionally, the sump pump should not be running all the time, but even if it works 24 hours a day, isn't keeping the basement dry worth it? The depth at which the sump pump is installed can be determined so that the pump will come on only when the water rises to a level close to the base of the slab. Make sure that the pump's discharge is able to flow away from the foundation or you will be recirculating the water.



Henri de Marne
Home repair

New roof requires more than shingles

Ventilation, installation are just as vital as materials

By ARLENE MILES
Daily Herald Correspondent

You've lived in your house for 20 years and you suspect it's time for a new roof. All you need to do is call a few roofing contractors, get some quotes and go with the lowest one. After all, a shingle is just a shingle, right?

Wrong. Shingles are just one component of roofs. What you're getting these days with a roofing job is a whole roofing system, and the quality of the system, as well as the installation, can make the difference between protecting the value of your home and jeopardizing it.

Four components go into a roof — the shingles, or roofing materials themselves; ventilation, insulation and drainage. Virtually every roofing supply manufacturer has a system of products, comparable in quality across the board from low to high. What the installer does with those products is crucial.

"You can take the best roofing product in the world, but if you do not adjust the system to the situation, you're going to run into trouble," said Michael Prate, chairman of the Steep Slope Roofing Committee for the Chicago Roofing Contractors Association. Prate also owns Prate Installations, a residential and commercial roofing company in Wauconda.

Most roofing professionals will tell you that the industry is rife with shady contractors who cut corners on installations or don't write detailed contracts, which allows them to escape responsibility when the roof begins to exhibit problems.

"Our industry has a black eye,"



Using a pitchfork, Peterson Roofing worker Darek Andruszkiewicz, tears up a section of the roof of a home in Arlington Heights.

Roofing 101

- Read a glossary of the terms and parts of a roofing system you will need to know when comparing quotes from contractors — Page 3

said James Peterson of Peterson Roofing Co. in Arlington Heights. "So what we've learned over the years is to offer customer service above and beyond what is expected."

The best way homeowners can protect themselves is through education, and the way to do that is to thoroughly investigate the companies you get quotes from

as well as ask as many questions as possible. Even before obtaining proposals, there are several things you should do to make sure you are contacting a reliable contractor. Check various Web sites, such as the Better Business Bureau and the state attorney general's office.

Peterson also recommends consumers go to www.laborindex.com to check out the legitimacy of contractors.

"You can go to some of the other sites which will show no complaints against a contractor," he said. "But Labor Index will show you all of the names a contractor has operated under and you can find out the companies who have changed their names

every few years because of complaints."

To find reliable roofing professionals in your area, consult associations like the Chicago Roofing Contractors Association and the National Roofing Contractors, but don't overlook recommendations from your local building supply store or from friends.

"Word-of-mouth is a fantastic way to find a reputable contractor," said Jim Kirby, associate executive director of technical communication for the National Roofing Contractors Association. "Contractors want to build business in a particular area and you don't do that by providing bad workmanship."

Pay attention to how each con-

tractor inspects your roof, too, as this is crucial in determining whether you will get an adequate roofing system.

"If someone comes out and just measures and doesn't check for insulation or ventilation, that just doesn't cut it," Prate said.

Checking for proper insulation and ventilation is imperative because if either or both are poor, the situation can cause a buildup of moisture, which leads to mold and ultimately deteriorates a roof more quickly.

"We like to get up inside the attics to take a close-up look at the number of ventilation holes," Peterson said. "We also look for

See **ROOF** on **PAGE 3**

How to spot an aging roof needing replacement

With the unusually harsh winter just past, it's not unusual for roofing problems to suddenly appear. Repetitive freeze-thaw cycles are primary culprits in damage.

"Snow melts during the day, runs down the roof, then the water freezes again, expands inside the components and tears things apart," said Jim Kirby of the national Roofing Contractors Association.

Areas particularly prone to this type of damage are the valleys, or the low points in the roof where snow tends to gather in the first place, as well as down toward the edges, along the gutter lines.

Although a leak may suddenly appear, don't be so quick to assume that you need an entire new roof, especially if your cur-



Mike Chrouser of Peterson Roofing, right, works with Darek Andruszkiewicz to remove old shingles and other materials before tacking down the new roof.

rent one isn't very old. The fault may lie with the installation.

"When I inspect a roof, I look to

see if it can be repaired because I'm not one to automatically replace it," said Bill Marcum of

Pro-Tech Roofing in Des Plaines. "I know that when my car breaks down, I don't necessarily want a new car. This is the same thing."

For isolated leaks, it could be something as simple as a chimney cap or flashing improperly sealed at critical points.

Older roofs, however, will exhibit danger signals that indicate it is time for replacement. These include:

- Water stains on ceilings.
- Warped, cracked or missing shingles.
- Shingles that are dried out and almost break when touched, as well as blistered or curled shingles.
- Excessive loss of shingle surface granules. Look for granules in rain gutters or near down spouts where they empty on the

ground.

For safety reasons, most industry experts suggest that you don't climb up on a roof yourself. Use a pair of binoculars before climbing up on a ladder.

Once you've contracted with a roofing professional, expect the installation to take about one day. Most roofing jobs these days are tear-offs, and not reproofs where new shingles are placed over old ones.

A tear-off will allow the roofer to get down to the roof deck to install a complete system, which may include new venting and insulation.

Also expect your roofer to clean up and completely haul away all old roofing materials.

— Arlene Miles



Fran Broude is president of Coldwell Banker in Northbrook.

Large inventory, low rates are a rare mix

By JEAN MURPHY
Daily Herald Correspondent

Those who reap great benefits are often those who see opportunity where all others see ruin.

Colbert Coldwell, founder of Coldwell Banker LLC, knew that in 1906 when he started his company out of the ashes of the San Francisco earthquake and subsequent fires.

And more than a century later, one of his successors knows the same is true in today's real estate market.

"People who want a new home who are not taking advantage of this buying opportunity should be," said Fran Broude, president and chief operating officer of Coldwell Banker LLC in Chicago, southeastern Wisconsin and northwest Indiana. "This is an incredibly good time to buy a home."

The current combination of low interest rates and high inventory has created a "very appealing time for buyers," Broude said.

In the real estate business for many years, Broude is happy to comment

Market profile

on the state of the Chicago area's real estate market.

How is the housing market in the Chicago area faring?

"The Chicago market is improving. My top sellers tell me that we are returning to a more normalized market. It is still not the robust market of two or three years ago, but people are making more decisions and we are seeing more momentum in the last 90 days."

How does the Chicago area market differ from the national market?

"We are more insulated in the Midwest so we do not see the wild swings that they see in the coastal markets. The coastal markets enjoy the spikes, but they are also victims of greater falls. Here we see slow, steady appreciation and I suspect that that will continue. Even in a

bust year we generally see three to four percent in appreciation."

What differences do you see between the city and suburban markets?

"There is a larger variety of housing and price points in the city than there are in the suburban markets. So there is usually less of an inventory buildup in the city. And in the suburbs, the inventory buildup that occurs is more prevalent in the upper bracket prices than it is in the more medium-priced houses."

Are rising gas prices having an impact on where people choose to buy?

"Access to public transportation has always been important to home buyers, but it is even more important today than it was a few years ago. So buyers want to purchase a home that is convenient to their place of employment. They aren't willing to settle for long commutes as they once were."

home to sell taking advantage of this market?

"Some are still hesitating and that is a shame because interest rates are low and there are lots of choices out there. But they do have to get used to a longer process to purchase a home because there are more places to look at and because of new financial guidelines — the mortgage approval process is more time-consuming. But it is still an incredibly good time to buy."

What steps need to be taken to strengthen the Chicago area real estate market?

"The market is what it is. There is never anything magical that can be done. All we can do as Realtors is educate our buyers and sellers and point people in the right direction for financing."

"With sellers we try to help them remove some of the emotion that they may have attached to their price. We can also educate them about what they may be giving up in terms of

Are first-time buyers who have no

See **MARKET** on **PAGE 4**

Roof: Contractors can provide alternative bid quotes

Continued from Page 1

details in the flashing, the brick, chimney, walls and underlayments."

When you receive the proposal, pay close attention to the contents. In addition to the quote for the work, make sure that contractor's insurance certification covers any subcontractors who may work on the job. If it doesn't, or if you are shown a subcontractor's certification instead, you may end up being liable if an accident occurs while your roof is being replaced. Also look for contractors who follow Occupational Safety and Health Administration guidelines.

"The hardest part is when people ask for references, because a supplied reference is not going to say anything bad," Prate said.

Contractors with nothing to hide will allow you come into their office to access their files and get contact information of former customers. If possible, ask these individuals if they know of other homeowners who have worked with the company and ask them about their satisfaction.

One of the most difficult things to do once you have your quotes in hand is to compare them because everyone writes them differently. A crucial aspect is the warranty offered because a weak one will lead you to believe you are covered for defects in products or poor workmanship when you really are not.

"Everyone is going to tell you that they're offering a 30-year warranty," said Bill Marcum of Pro-Tech Roofing in Des Plaines. "Check into what type of warranty is offered and who is involved in it. If it just comes from the roofer, then what happens when he wins the lottery and goes out of business? You want one that will be

Roofing glossary

Commonly used terms that will help make sense of what goes into a new roof.

Architectural shingle:

Shingle that provides a dimensional appearance.

Asphalt plastic cement:

Asphalt-based sealant material used to seal and adhere roofing materials. Also called mastic, blackjacket, roof tar, bull.

Blistering:

Bubbles or pimples in roofing materials that is usually moisture related. In shingles, blisters are either moisture under or trapped inside the material.

Buckling:

When a wrinkle or ripple affects shingles or their underlayments.

Counter-flashing:

The metal or siding material that is installed over rooftop base flashing systems.

Cupping:

When shingles are improperly installed over an existing roof or are overexposed, they form a curl or cup.

Deck:

The substrate over which roofing is applied. Usually plywood, wood boards or

planks.

Drip-edge: An installed lip that keeps shingles up off the deck at edges, and extends shingles out over eaves and gutters, and prevents water from backing up under shingles.

Eaves: The roof edge from the fascia to the structure's outside wall. In general terms, the first three feet across a roof is termed the eave.

Flange: Metal pan extending up or down a roof slope around flashing pieces. Usually at chimneys and plumbing vents.

Flashing: Materials used to waterproof a roof around any projections through the roof deck.

Flashing cement: Sealant designed for use around flashing areas, typically thicker than plastic cement.

Hand-sealing: The method to assure sealing of shingles on very steep slopes, in high wind areas, and when

installing in cold weather.

Ice dam: When a snow load melts on a roof and refreezes at the eave areas. Ice dams force water to "backup" a roof and cause leakage.

Nesting: Installing a second layer of shingles aligning courses with the original roof to avoid shingle cupping.

Pitch: Ratio of the rise of the roof to the span of the roof.

Power vents: Electrically powered fans used to move air from attics and structures.

Racking: Method of installing shingles in a straight up the roof manner.

Rigid vent: Hard plastic ridge vent material.

Roof louvers: Rooftop rectangular shaped roof vents. Also called box vents, mushroom vents, airhawks, soldier vents.

Self-sealant: Sealant installed on shingles. After installation, heat and sun will activate sealant to seal the

shingles to each other.

Selvage: The non exposed area without on rolled roofing, designed for nail placement and sealant.

Soffit ventilation: Intake ventilation installed under the eaves, or at the roof edge.

Tear-off: Removal of existing roofing materials down to the roof deck.

Telegraphing: When shingles reflect the uneven surface beneath them.

Underlayments: Asphalt-based rolled materials designed to be installed under main roofing material, to serve as added protection.

Valleys: Area where two adjoining sloped roof planes intersect on a roof, creating a "V" shaped depression.

Waterproof underlayments: Modified bitumen-based roofing underlayments that seal to wood decks and waterproof critical leak areas.

backed up by the manufacturer where you can be guaranteed that someone will come out and fix any problems that may occur."

Another task homeowners should do is to pull out line items and compare each individually. Doing so will show discrepancies in the grades of products used by individual contractors.

"For instance, when you look

at ice and water shield, there is a generic kind that costs \$30 a roll, but costs can go up to \$95 for the better ones," Prate said.

The same accounts for flashings around architectural walls and chimneys, sealants, numbers of recommended vents, and the like. Higher line item costs should translate into higher quality products.

Examining your quotes will also show you why you shouldn't necessarily go with the lowest bidder.

"We offer two contracts, Proposal A and Proposal B," Peterson said. "Proposal A is what we believe you should have. Proposal B is the industry standard, but it may be missing ventilation, better underlayment, proper

flashing, etc. We will tell you why we believe you should have Proposal A, but it's up to you."

Consider a proper roof a long-term investment, one that will enhance the look of your home and raise its curb appeal, even if you are planning to sell it within several years.

"The roof is the cover of your home and if you do it wrong, you

have the potential of damaging everything inside the building," Kirby said.

Most of all don't be afraid to ask questions. If you don't understand terminology or the importance of a better ice and water shield, ask for explanations until you do.

"At some point, you're going to have to put a little bit of faith in the contractor," Prate said.

That isn't as hard as it sounds. The more you educate yourself, the easier it will be to select a roofer.

"You'll know by the way they answer your questions," Kirby said "The more they explain what they're going to do, the better off you'll be."

A good roofing contractor will also honor your request to add an upgraded feature to a line item that you may have found on another proposal to make the bids more comparable, Kirby added.

As far as cost goes, that's a difficult one to judge with the variety of options available. The roofing area of a ranch is considerably more than for a two-story home with the same overall square footage. The roof's slope also is a cost consideration. Think of it this way — you'll spend more on your next car, but you'll keep the roof longer.

After learning all you wanted to know about residential roofing and then some, choosing the shingles may be the least of your worries. Laminated shingles are the most popular. Choose a color that will coordinate with other elements of your home including trim, siding and brick. Light colors work well on ranches to add height and size, while dark shades do the opposite and are appropriate for two-story homes. Soft earth and wood tones are the most popular colors.

Roselle, Mount Prospect condominiums included in Rick Levin auction

Rick Levin & Associates Inc., a Chicago-based real estate auction marketing firm, will conduct a multiple-property auction of condominiums in Skokie, Roselle

and Mount Prospect at 7 p.m. June 26 at the Hyatt Rosemont, 6350 N. River Road in Rosemont.

Properties in the auction include:

- Twenty-five condominiums located at Park Street Crossing, 225 E. Main St. in Roselle. Six of the condominiums will be sold absolute, regardless of price. Pre-

viously priced up to \$521,900, the condos have suggested opening bids from \$175,000.

- Two row houses, located at Founders Row, 1 to 15 W. Emer-

son St., Mount Prospect.

Complete bidder's information packages are available at the scheduled open houses. A cashier's check, as earnest

money, is required to bid. For a brochure on the auction, call Rick Levin & Associates at (773) 252-4500 or visit www.ricklevin.com.

www.remax-advisors.com

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 568 N. TRIUMPH, HAINESVILLE \$195,000 Overlooking a park & tennis courts, newer townhome in very desirable area, offers a lot of square footage for the price under \$200K, 3 minutes to the Metra, convenient to I-94, 1 yr warranty, and sellers are motivated. Kathy Knoll / Warren Bremer 1-847-359-5588	 126 GOVERNORS COURT, HAWTHORN WOODS \$1,145,000 This perfectly built spec home is ready for a new owner. Home has gorgeous detailed trim work, solid cherry doors, hardwood flrs, travertine marble flrs, maple cabinetry, and radiant heat floors. Must see, call today! Michelle Dorfman 847-217-1984	 25539 NORTHBRIDGE, HAWTHORN WOODS \$899,500 Solid all brick 2 story custom home in perfect condition. Featuring oak trim moldings, 6 panel doors, hardwood floors, gorgeous oak kitchen island w/breakfast bar, ultra master bath w/large whirlpool, huge finished basement. Michelle Dorfman 847-217-1984	 49 MARK DRIVE, HAWTHORN WOODS \$650,000 The home has updated kitchen w/granite counters, wide plank hardwood floors, dual air & heat, 2 fireplaces, and finished english basement with full bath. New items include: windows, roof, gutters, driveway, well pump, lighting. Michelle Dorfman 847-217-1984
 ONE BIRCH LAKES DRIVE, HAWTHORN WOODS \$569,000 Beautiful two story cedar home has been updated and shows extremely neutral. Perfect for entertaining with its very own theater room and over sized recreation room with built in bar. Call today for your private showing. Michelle Dorfman 847-217-1984	 6 RUTGERS, HAWTHORN WOODS \$549,900 Open floorings two story w/ vaulted ceilings, open oak staircase, 6 panel doors, and choice of master bedrooms. Gorgeous lot with hot tub and expansive deck make entertaining a dream! Alice Scifo 847-431-8054	 7 PIPER LAKE, HAWTHORN WOODS \$485,000 Newly updated Luxury Ranch Home on 1 acre offers a new Stainless Steel Kitchen, 2 Fireplaces, Hardwood Flooring, Outstanding Master Suite with Luxury Whirlpool Bath & Walk in Closets! Kathy Knoll / Warren Bremer 1-847-359-5588	 71 LOCHLEVEN, INVERNESS \$564,900 Smashing Alexander model in Inverness on the Pond. This open flowing floorplan features volume ceiling, skylights and recent updates. Finished lower level and much more await you. Come see what you have been missing. Alice Scifo 847-431-8054
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