RESIDENTIAL INFORMATION BULLETIN

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FIRE DAMAGE TO ASPHALT SHINGLE ROOFS

Recently, some regions across North America have experienced severe wildfires which have, in some cases, infringed upon residential areas. Occasionally, these fires (which might arise from an adjacent forest area or neighbouring houses) may come close to a shingled roof without the roof burning or igniting. Typically, asphalt shingle roofs can withstand the effects of these fires because the shingle roof systems (deck, underlayment if required, and the shingles themselves) are produced to conform to stringent tests regarding resistance to external fire hazards. Such tests include ASTM E 108 and CAN/ULC S107. The question often arises, "If the shingles were near another fire, but they didn't burn, will they still perform as intended, or do they need to be replaced?"

The granule surface on the shingles provides a significant degree of heat resistance from nearby fires. Usually, a simple visual appraisal of the shingle can identify if the product is suitable to leave in place, i.e. as long as the product does not appear melted (to the point where the granules have sunk into the shingle asphalt, or the asphalt has "drooped"), it is likely unharmed. Unless the shingles have been subjected to many days of close-proximity high-temperature flames, there should be no reduction in the product's flexibility or long-term performance. If there are concerns that exposure to heat has made the shingles brittle, compare shingles from the side of the roof "facing" the fire to shingles on a protected side of the home, by gently flexing a small piece of a few shingles. Remember, it is not abnormal for older roofs to be more brittle than recently installed roofs.

Asphalt shingles are not as susceptible to fire effects as other exterior building materials may be, such as wood shakes, vinyl siding, or other plastic-based products. As a general rule, if the shingles have not actually ignited, and if they show no obvious signs of softening, it can be safely assumed that they will continue to perform their watershedding function.

For additional information on any of IKO's products or application requirements, visit us on the web at www.iko.com, or contact us in Canada at 1-888-766-2468, or the United States at 1-888-456-7663.