



# “Up On Top” Newsletter

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## Self-Adhered Roofing Membranes

How would you like to avoid the smell of hot asphalt or the liability of open flames on your next reroofing project? Then a self-adhered roof membrane may be just what your looking for.

In the rush to provide environmentally friendly, nontoxic, odorless, colorless, tasteless, benign, harmless, super-reflective energy-efficient roof membrane materials, self-adhered bituminous and nonbituminous roof membranes are being reintroduced to the roofing marketplace. The concept is not new; the first self-adhered roof membrane systems date back almost 30 years. There have been some relatively modest improvements and modifications to old formulations, but the basic self-adhered roof membrane properties remain essentially the same—they stick to their substrates without extraneous adhesives.

Original self-adhered roof membrane systems were produced from asphalts altered with polymer modifiers. Plastic films were applied to top surfaces of the membranes and parting sheets to the bottoms. As a material roll was set in place, the release/parting paper on the bottom side of the sheet was removed to expose the sticky bottom side of the membrane. To ensure continuous contact of the sticky bottom side with the substrate, lawn rollers were used to press the membrane into place. Various surfacings were used to protect the ultraviolet (UV) sensitive waterproofing material from exposure.

The "new" self-adhered roof membrane systems come in two varieties—bituminous and polymeric. Various surfacing materials or UV stabilizers are factory-included and replace the original

plastic films and field-applied surfacings. But parting sheets remain on the bottom sides of the sheets to be removed in the field. As a material roll is set in place, the release/parting paper on the bottom side of the sheet is removed to expose the sticky bottom side of the membrane. To ensure continuous contact of the sticky bottom side with the substrate, rollers are recommended to press the membrane into place. Various surfacings/stabilizers are being used to protect the UV sensitive waterproofing material from exposure. Notice any similarities?

Self-adhered roof membranes are, by their very nature, more expensive to produce than "normal" roofing materials—whether they are bituminous or polymer-based membranes. Asphalt modifiers and parting sheets add to the cost of self-adhered sheets, and the pressure-sensitive self-adhered backers on nonbituminous roof membranes may cost more than the sheet itself without consideration of the inclusion of the parting sheet. The additional cost to produce self-adhered sheets is ostensibly offset by the no-longer-necessary adhesives used to bond traditional membranes to substrates.

The self-adhering properties of all self-adhered roof membranes directly are affected by ambient temperature at the time of application, moisture accumulation on substrates, surface conditions of substrates and whether the membrane comes under full sun load shortly after installation.

With careful consideration of weather conditions, substrate composition, and jobsite environment, self-adhered membranes may be just the solution for your next reroofing project.

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