

**SERVICE WORKS**

**“UP ON TOP” NEWS**

**Curb Your Roof, Not Your Enthusiasm**

A pre-fabricated roof curb is the square metal box that surrounds any penetration (i.e. exhaust vent, HVAC unit, skylight) to keep the structure watertight. A roof curb is an important component in a weather tight roof system as a majority of leaks stem from an improperly manufactured or installed curbs.

Curbs must be designed to follow the slope of the roof and to let water run off and to keep the mounted equipment level. They must be structurally sound so that fewer angles are required to support the weight of the units on top. Curbs should be insulated and a minimum of eight inches above the finished roof. Curbs should be welded or sheet-screwed to a metal, wood, or tectum deck or to the structural steel. On a concrete roof deck, ram setting is the most popular. The curbs are insulated with rigid fiberglass insulation to reduce con-

duction. If the insulation is not applied at the factory, the roofer must cut in insulation at the job.

Pressure treated nailers are provided not only for receiving the roofing felts but also for eliminating noise transfer. Curbs are manufactured from 14 or 18 gauge galvanized or galvalume material and internally reinforced with angles placed every 24 inches on center for a curb with any dimension of 36 inches or longer. They can be fabricated to any height or roof pitch with options such as aluminum, stainless steel, burglar bars, wider nailers, and many other custom specifications.

How do you fit a new unit of a different size onto an older existing curb? The solution is often a curb adapter, which is an engineered sheet metal transition from the old curb dimensions to the

required size of the new unit. Often with a curb adapter a roofing contractor is not needed, just the mechanical contractor to tie the unit to the adapter.

Is a pre-fabricated curb guaranteed to never leak? No, but more often than not if there is a leak at a unit it is because someone servicing that unit has left the door open where the filters are stored. Rain pours in along with all other debris on the roof and then drains down inside the duct. Often times a “roof leak” is not really a roof leak at all but an open door or defective HVAC unit.

Communication is key to a successful curb installation. Communication between the roofing contractor and the mechanical contractor to insure that the properly sized curb is speced, installed, insulated, and flashed into the surrounding membrane system.



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Installation of the structural red iron supports

Installation of the pre fabricated curb

Installation of the curb adapter

The completed unit