



- TITLE:** A Roof Dilemma: Surface Defects Requiring Repair or Surface Imperfections Not Requiring Repair?
- DESIGNATION:** RCI-TA-007-2014
- OBJECTIVE:** To provide recommendations for addressing whether imperfections in the surface of a newly installed roof are considered to be surface defects impairing the performance of the roof, or are surface imperfections and simply aesthetically distracting.

### A. BACKGROUND

In the course of normal activities, consultants or others acting on behalf of the owner can be largely responsible for the development of observation criteria, observations, and acceptance of finished roofing systems. During construction and installation, roof materials are often at risk of becoming scratched, dented, or subjected to other types of physical action, such as oil canning, that result in surface imperfections that are cosmetic and surface defects that require repair.

Often, the owner cannot discern whether the resulting roof's performance will be affected or if the imperfections are simply cosmetic.

The contractor typically relies on the manufacturer to support a claim of unimpaired roof performance.

The roof consultant is usually retained by the owner to inspect a roof and render an opinion about the condition of the roof, commonly including these types of surface "imperfections."

Determining whether the imperfections will affect the performance of the roof or are simply cosmetic may create a conflict between the owner/roof consultant and the contractor/manufacturer.

### B. CONSULTANT ROLE

How does a consultant determine if the imperfection will affect the performance of the roof? Without industry standards or code requirements, it is often left to the consultant to develop criteria for determining whether the roof's performance will be affected or if the condition is simply cosmetic. Some of the important considerations are:

- i. The number and severity of the imperfections
- ii. Whether the imperfections require repair
- iii. Whether the material can be repaired
- iv. How easily repairs can be made

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This Technical Advisory is intended to serve only as a general resource and to identify potential issues for consideration by industry professionals. Each person using this Technical Advisory is solely responsible for the evaluation of the Technical Advisory in light of the unique circumstances of any particular situation, must independently determine the applicability of such information, and assumes all risks in connection with the use of such information. The materials contained in this Technical Advisory do not supersede any code, rule, regulation, or legislation and are not intended to represent the standard of care in any jurisdiction.



- v. If the imperfections or repairs will shorten the life of the roof
- vi. If any repairs will affect the life of the roof
- vii. If the imperfections or repairs will lead to leaks, deterioration of materials, or other unintended consequences
- viii. If the imperfections or repairs will affect the warranty

### C. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that designers discuss the expectations of the end product with the owner at the beginning of the design process and discuss acceptable surface imperfections with the owner at that time.

- i. Project specifications should address how the acceptance or rejection of surface imperfections/defects will be determined, and by whom.
- ii. The specifications should clearly outline the types of surface imperfections/defects for the project type and their identification (percentage or quantity), as well as specify their corrective requirements, and thus provide a level of acceptability to the owner.
- iii. Consideration should be given to including a statement in the specifications that the final acceptance of the finished roof surfaces will be at the discretion of the owner/consultant.

If the pricing has been developed yet the project has not been constructed, a modification to the specifications may be helpful to the owner and the contractor, avoiding conflict after the roof assembly is installed.

Levels of acceptance must be reasonable to achieve so as to minimize the impact to the cost or duration of the project.

Similar considerations shall be utilized when requiring repairs or replacement of materials.