

Sustainable Roof Restoration Increases the Viability of Solar

By Mike Feazel | Wednesday, October 2, 2019



Like peas and carrots or peanut butter and jelly, roof restoration and solar just go together. With 80% of U.S. roofs made of asphalt shingles, solar providers are quickly discovering that the strength and health of the roofs they hope to equip with new solar panels is a critical key.

THE EXTRA COSTS OF POOR ROOFING

Since the early 2000s, many roofing manufacturers have begun to combine lower levels of asphalt with crushed limestone fillers in the shingles they produce. Less asphalt equates to lower waterproofing protection, lower weight and a much-shorter service life than the traditional shingles of the 1990s that offered a 30-year warranty.

Some manufacturers continue to uphold high quality, but the predominant shift has caused an epidemic of leaks, attic mold and massive appearances of roof mold, which is not an actual mold but the result of airborne algae that produces black streaks and stains on many north and west-facing roofs.

The roofs that formerly lasted 20 to 30 years may now fail in as little as seven to eight years. One of the carryover results is the understandable reluctance of building owners to purchase and install new solar panels on a roof that is failing at a faster rate than they'd thought.

If a building owner purchases and installs new solar but needs a new roof within a couple of years, the cost and hassle isn't small. A typical cost for detaching and resetting is \$1,500 to \$2,500, in addition to suddenly being without solar services during the time of the roofing repair or replacement.

COULD FAULTY ROOFING CREATE A SOLAR DECLINE?

Nationwide, the solar industry has endured dramatic upheaval in 2018 for reasons ranging from policy change to materials shortfall and delays. [According to Seia.org](https://www.seia.org), the U.S. solar market surpassed two million installations in the first quarter of 2019, just three years after reaching the one million installation milestone.

The industry is expected to reach three million installations in 2021 and four million installations in 2023. In terms of power usage, the first quarter of 2019 marks the highest first quarter on record, albeit a 37% decline from the fourth quarter of 2018 and a 10% increase from the first quarter of 2018.

On the whole, solar is continuing its modest rebound. Informally, however, some providers note the need to proceed with caution as the discovery of faulty roofing causes a small but growing stream of project cancellations and unexpected delays.

RESTORATION IS THE BETTER WAY



Property owners have an eco-friendly and much less expensive alternative to roof replacement. In a nutshell, it is a shingle rejuvenator in the form of a sustainable plant-based spray that when applied to existing shingles that can extend the life of asphalt roofs by five years per treatment. By repeating the process every five years, a property owner can extend a roof's life by as much as 15 years for around 15% to 25% the cost of replacement.

The decision to protect is an easy yes when property owners see the increased life span of the roof and the additional protection they'll get. They can move with confidence on a solar project without the added expense of a roof replacement or the worry about the additional cost and hassle of a near term need to detach and reset.

The case for roof rejuvenation is especially high in a climate such as Colorado that is prone to offer very little in insurance reimbursement for hail and wind and a desert climate that is extreme, high and dry.

In all, the ability to inspect and protect an asphalt roof before a solar installation is a benefit. As an added bonus, the sustainability of solar energy is perhaps even doubled (or more) by the earth-friendly benefits of restoring an existing roof with a plant-based and bio-friendly alternative to additional asphalt. Like baseball and hot dogs or macaroni and cheese, it's a situation where everyone wins.



Written by Mike Feazel [Roof Maxx](#)

[Mike Feazel](#) is the Co-Founder and CEO at [Roof Maxx](#). For over three decades Mike has been an industry leader, co-founding Roofers Success International, the nation's #1 roofing contractor university. To find the nearest Roof Maxx dealer or to get more information about becoming a dealer visit www.roofmaxx.com.