



## What causes Ice Dams on my roof?

Ice dams form when the upper part of the roof is warm enough to melt snow and the eaves are cold enough to freeze the runoff into icicles. What typically causes a roof to be warm is air from inside the house seeping into the attic and heating it up. When water from melting snow gets to the cold spot where the eaves begin, it re-freezes and creates a dam, and then a pool of water accumulates behind it.

At that point, two things usually happen, the water in the pool rises high enough to migrate back up the roof and under the shingles, exposing the surface of the roof to rotting. Second, water flows over the dam to form icicles at the roof's edge.

One immediate solution is to remove snow from the roof before it melts by using a snow rake, a wide metal rake with a long handle. This only deals with the problem in a one-time fashion. The best way to permanently stop dams from forming in the first place is to keep the attic cold.

The installation of proper attic ventilation and the sealing off of heat from inside the building are the most effective methods of assuring a cold roof. We make sure that you have at least 300 square inches of airflow both entering and exiting a roof of a building without a vapor barrier in the ceiling and 150 square inches of airflow for a structure with a vapor barrier in the ceiling. This is done by installing adequate soffit and roof vents.

Once the attic is properly ventilated, it's also very important to seal off any penetrations in the attic floor that allow heat to escape from your house into the attic. These can be areas around piping, wire penetrations, unsealed soffits over kitchen cabinets, recessed lights.

You'd be amazed by how much air comes thru the gap between the sheetrock and top of wall stud on interior partition walls. Chimneys can be an issue but in most cases you need to maintain a 3" clearance for both insulation and sealing materials around them.

Advantage Construction, Inc. is an **Owens Corning Top of the House** certified installer, which means we have been specifically trained to install a complete roofing system; so your attic insulation, attic ventilation and roofing shingles all work together to provide high performance and energy efficiency for your home.

Give us a call, **763-354-8441**. We can permanently put an end to your ice dam problems.