

How to Hire a Contractor

Ask the contractor:

- “Do you have a Workers’ Compensation Board (WCB) account? What is the number?” Phone the WCB to make sure the account is paid up. You don’t want charges for incidents coming back to you!
- “What are your qualifications?” Ask for references of previous customers (from the last year and from previous years). Visit the sites (or at least call them).
- “How long have you been in business?” Too short a time may signal a business which has changed its name a number of times for legal reasons.
- “How long have your employees been working for you? Are they trained? Who trained them?”
- “Who will be in charge of my job? Are they qualified? Will they always be at the site until completion of the work?”

Check with:

- Canadian Home Builders’ Association—Alberta
- Consumer and Corporate Affairs
- The Better Business Bureau, or
- Contact your local Roofing Association

Ask people you know and trust to give you the names of reputable contractors. It pays to do some front-end work.



Think

There is nothing more important than staying focused on the task you’re doing. Think about how to do the job right (safety). Think about what equipment you need for the specific job. Think about survival.



For more information, refer to current applicable Occupational Health & Safety Legislation.

The Alberta Construction Safety Association’s mission is to provide quality advice and education for the construction industry that will reduce human suffering and financial costs associated with workplace incidents. This brochure is part of a series, **The Toolbox Brochures**, which are available on a variety of safety topics. If you have any questions or comments please contact:



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Residential Roofing



Making Safety A Way Of Life



The Alberta Construction Safety Association

Roofing Risks

Fall injuries range from broken bones and abrasions to permanent disability or death. If you don't follow safe work procedures when roofing, you could:

- Drop objects on other workers resulting in injuries or death. You won't physically feel this one, but you'll live with it for the rest of your life!
- Cause chronic back injuries—from repetitive motions and lifting bundles incorrectly.

Protect Yourself

Use the right equipment for the job:

- Toe boards (side guards)
- Life lines and harnesses
- Good boots (low or high boot with good traction)
- Kneepads
- A hard hat for protection from overhead dangers
- A cap, appropriate clothing, sun screen, and drinking water for protection against dehydration
- Work gloves for stripping and handling debris
- First aid kit appropriate to crew size
- Fire extinguisher

Weather Watch

Roofers are some of the first people to tune into the weather forecasts every night and every morning!

Anything that makes the roof slippery is a severe hazard—rain, snow, frost, and dew. Strong winds and lightning can add additional hazards as well.



Keep it Clean

Keeping your jobsite clean is an important step in roofing safety. Don't store anything on the roof that you don't need for the specific task you're undertaking. Use it, secure it, or take it down.

Even harmless looking objects on a roof can be dangerous. Loose pieces of metal can act on us as large razor blades. If they get caught up in the wind, they can severely injure people on the ground. They can also cause slips and trips if they're stepped on.

Be careful while you're cleaning. Start at the gable closest to the chute so you don't walk over debris.

Get the Training you Deserve!

Professional roofing requires training, experience, and knowledge. If you don't know what you're doing, you're putting yourself and others at risk.

Where Should I Start?

Setup

Take some time to think about how you're going to do the job. Establish a safe plan.

- Choose your equipment.
- Set up scaffolds and ladders. Ask yourself:
 - Is the equipment strong enough?
 - Are the ladders long enough (at least 1 metre (3 feet) higher than the eave)?
 - Is the equipment in good condition?
 - Is the equipment secured and/or stable?
- Set up and secure the materials hoist according to manufacturer's instructions.

Fall Protection

In order to protect workers, as stated in the Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Legislation, the employer is required to develop and implement a Fall Protection Plan at the work site that addresses

any situations where a worker may fall a distance of 3 metres or more. The plan must provide information regarding specific fall protection equipment and methods of response in the event of a fall. A fall protection plan must specify:

- The fall hazards at the work site.
- The fall protection system to be used at the work site.
- The anchors to be used during the work.
- The clearance distances below the work area, if applicable. Have confirmed as sufficient to prevent a worker from striking the ground or an object or level below the work area.
- The procedures used to assemble, maintain, inspect, use and disassemble the fall protection system, where applicable.
- The rescue procedures to be used if a worker falls and is suspended by a personal fall arrest system or safety net and needs to be rescued.

Roof Brackets

- Use roof brackets for material and worker positioning only.
- Secure roof brackets into the roof trusses with 3" nails.
- Make sure the first bracket is within 12" of the gable end.
- Use roof bracket planks that are in good condition—no knots or splits.
- Install the roof brackets no more than 2.4 metres apart.
- Never remove lower planks for use above and do not remove any planks until the entire side is completed.

Working

- Pile and secure all necessary material on the roof.
- Keep a constant eye on the gable if you are near it.
- Always be aware of your location on the roof—ensure the edges stay in your line of sight.