



March 3, 2014

The board would like to update you in a further effort to reduce leaks...

- There has been more snowfall this winter than in any other year since we were constructed (1992), including 2011 when we had the massive storm in February.
- Saturday night we had another 4.2 inches. More is predicted.
- This is the 3rd coldest Chicago winter since records have been kept beginning in the late 1800s. This causes the snow on our roofs to linger longer, increasing our risks.
- Our homes were not designed or built to withstand such prolonged severe weather.
- Roof leaks are primarily caused by ice damming, which is described in the association rules as follows...

Ice Dams. Roof leaks in the winter may be caused by what are called "ice dams". Ice dams occur when snow accumulates on the roof and then melts at the roofline because of the escaping heat from your home. Gravity causes the melt water to flow downward to the edge of the roof, where it is colder and the water may freeze. As additional snow melts, the water is "dammed" by the ice and will be forced to flow up the roof. Roofs are not designed to protect against an upward flow of water, so the water will be pushed under the roofing shingles and potentially into your house.

The simplest way to avoid this is to periodically rake the snow off your roof so that it never gets a chance to build up. Roof rakes can be purchased at hardware stores, and come with seven (7) foot extensions, which can reach 28 to 35 feet. They are inexpensive and easy to use. Do not use shovels or picks to remove ice or snow from the roof as you may permanently damage the shingles. Do not climb onto the roof.

If you experience persistent roof leaks during the winter, you may need to install additional insulation to prevent heat loss.

- This explanation was written 22 years ago by Pulte, with some minor editing since then. But it is not entirely accurate. Roofs **are** designed to protect against the upward flow of water, but only up to a point. A water and ice shield (the waterproof membrane) is installed under the shingles to protect against leaks. Our architect's specifications, written according to national standards and Palatine building code, required one layer (3 feet) of membrane under the shingles. During the roof replacement we increased that to 2 overlapping layers, or 5.5 feet – double the national standard of protection.
- A valley exists where the siding on a vertical gable meets the shingles of a sloping roof. At the time that we were constructed membranes under the siding in a valley were not required by the building code.
- 24 of our owners have valleys between their home and one of their neighbor's. If there is a leak it could impact either or both homes. Valleys can exacerbate ice damming because there is no gutter and the valley does not slope to shed water.

- In our 22 years we have been blessed with mostly milder winters and very few leaks. Until this year only 2 of the 24 homes on either side of a valley have experienced leaks. In both cases we added membrane under the siding and the leaks stopped.
- Because the other 22 homes next to a valley had not experienced a leak in 22 years, our architect advised us against spending money to add membranes. Doing so was not required by the building code.
- But this year 7 owners that we know of have unfortunately been impacted by leaks, 5 of them next to valleys, and 2 which caused major damage. Because of this we have decided to proactively install gable membranes by the valleys this year. If this prevents a serious leak for even one more owner, it will be worth it. But this cannot be done until we have a sustained period of warm weather.

There are probably only four things that can be done to reduce ice damming.

1. Add a membrane under the siding in a valley (what we will be doing come warmer weather).
2. Knock the snow off the roofs, the cost of which is an owner responsibility. Our concern is, however, that it should be done professionally by a licensed roofer or our installation warranty could be voided. And it can be difficult and dangerous to do even for a pro. We suggest that you call the association if you think snow should be knocked off your roof, and we will recommend qualified contractors. Do not use contractors that the association has not approved in order to maintain our warranty.
3. Add insulation. Even though the rules do not specifically assign this responsibility to the homeowner, because insulation is on the interior of the home it is a homeowner responsibility. The board will take steps to specify this in the rules and maintenance chart. The current amount of insulation in our attics was approved by Palatine's Director of Engineering when we applied for a building permit for the new roofs.
4. Install heating cables in the gutters or at the edge of the roof. The association currently has no rules or policy on doing this.

If we had experienced the severe weather of this year before the new roofs had been installed it is our belief that there would have been even more leaks and damage in the past. And doubling the membrane protection and gutter size probably helped a lot this year. As we said, this winter was more brutal than any in Charter Hall's history. Last year, with a more average amount of snowfall, there were no leaks reported in our new roofs.

Winter is not over. There are 4 inches of new snow on your roofs right now from Saturday night, with more likely to come. We encourage you to be on the lookout for any signs of leaking, particularly directly under a valley, and report it to DD immediately so that we can discuss our options.

As always, please contact us with any questions, issues, or suggestions. You can email us at info@desirablewellings.com or call us at 847-776-8222. Remember – we can't fix what we don't know about.

Thank you.
The Board of Directors