

Replace Roofing with Fire-Resistant Materials

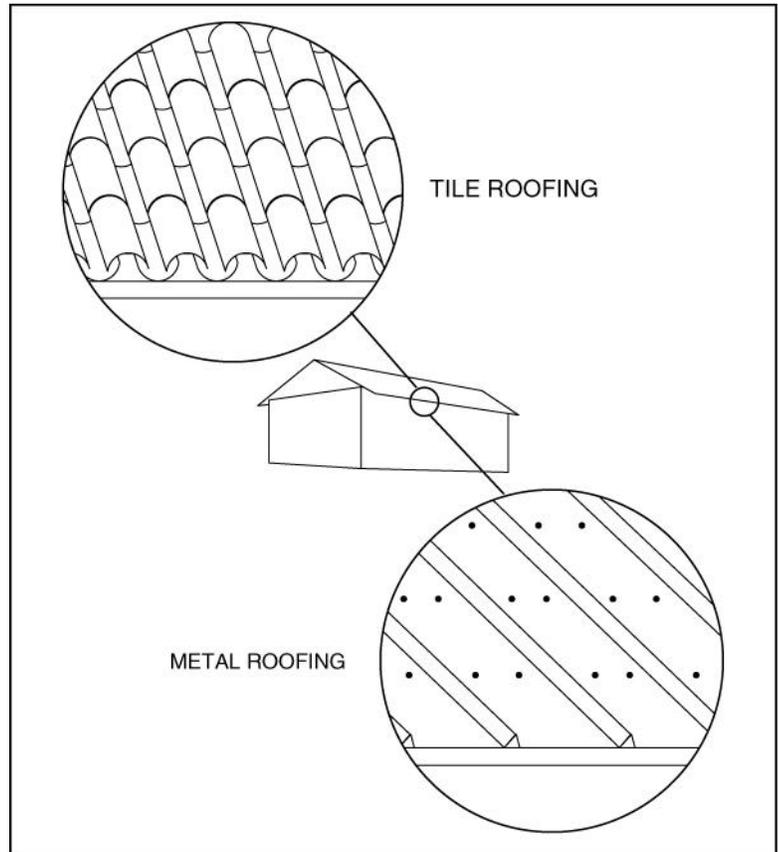


FEMA

PROTECTING YOUR PROPERTY FROM FIRE

Some roofing materials, including asphalt shingles and especially wood shakes, are less resistant to fire than others. When wildfires and brush fires spread to homes or businesses, it is often because burning branches, leaves, and other debris buoyed by the heated air and carried by the wind fall on roofs. If the roof of your property is covered with wood or asphalt shingles, you should consider replacing them with fire-resistant materials. As shown in the figure, you can replace your existing roofing materials with slate, terra cotta (clay) or other types of tile, or standing-seam metal roofing.

Replacing roofing materials is difficult and dangerous work. Unless you are skilled in roofing and have all the necessary tools and equipment, you will probably want to hire a roofing contractor to do the work. Also a roofing contractor can advise you on the relative advantages and disadvantages of various fire-resistant roofing materials.



BENEFITS OF UTILIZING THIS MITIGATION STRATEGY

- Helps to prevent damage to structures due to fire
- Helps to prevent injuries to occupants

TIPS

Keep these points in mind if you plan to have your existing roofing materials replaced:

- ✓ Tile, metal, and slate roofing materials are more expensive than asphalt or wood shingles. However, if you need to replace your roofing, it may be worthwhile to pay a little more for the added protection these materials provide.
- ✓ Slate and tile can be much heavier than asphalt shingles or wood shingles. If you are considering switching to one of these heavier coverings, your roofing contractor should determine whether the framing of your roof is strong enough to support them.
- ✓ If you live in an area where snow loads are a problem, consider switching to a modern standing-seam metal roof, which will usually shed snow from the roof more efficiently.

ESTIMATED COST

If you hire a contractor to replace your existing roof covering, you can expect to pay about \$4 per square foot of roof area for tile or metal roofing and about \$7 per square foot of roof area for slate. For example, a structure measuring 60 feet by 30 feet will have about 1,800 square feet of roof area. For this structure, tile or metal roofing would cost approximately \$7,200 and slate would cost approximately \$12,600.

OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The Federal Alliance for Safe Homes (FLASH), <http://www.flash.org>.

Firewise Communities, <http://www.firewise.org>.

"Five Hot Tips for Homeowners on the Edge," by Herbert McLean, in *American Forest*, vol. 99, no. 5-6. May-June 1993, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1016_v99/ai_14177979.

Hazard Identification and Mitigation Workshop Manual, U.S. Department of Energy, August 2000
http://www.eere.energy.gov/weatherization/hazard_workshop.html.

Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS), <http://www.disastersafety.org>.

Interagency Wildfire Mitigation Program, Rocky Mountain Wildland Fire Information, Colorado State Forest Service, the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management, and supporting partners, <http://rockymountainwildlandfire.info/firewise/index.htm>.

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), <http://www.nfpa.org>.

National Roofing Contractors Association (NRCA) at 1-847-299-9070 or online at <http://www.nrca.net>.

International Residential Code® (IRC®), Chapter 9, "Roof Assemblies," 2006.