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WINTER'S WRATH IS COMING: 7 QUICK TIPS TO BATTLE-PROOF YOUR ROOF

To avoid cold weather disasters, MRA says the time for action is now

PORTLAND, Ore. – The start of fall season means it's time for homeowners to get ready for winter. That's why leading home improvement trade organizations such as the Metal Roofing Alliance (MRA) are encouraging homeowners to tackle essential roof care and maintenance now so they aren't caught off-guard when colder weather hits.

"Putting a little effort into performing simple roof maintenance now can help prevent costly damage, leaks and more expensive repairs as we head into winter," said Renee Ramey, MRA executive director. "It can also extend the life of your roof and save money on energy costs all season long."

MRA's top tips for how to get your roof ready for the winter season include:

1) Get a professional inspection

Now is a great time to get a professional evaluation of your roof's condition. An experienced pro can safely identify potential trouble spots, point out needed maintenance and recommend proper repairs for minor problems before they turn into major issues. If a replacement is needed, do your homework and check out resources, such as the new MRA's Buyer's Guide, available for free at www.metalroofing.com. Look for worry-free options that will last for decades, hold up to climate extremes and deliver low-maintenance reliability to maximize long-term savings.

2) Clean your gutters

Regular gutter maintenance is essential for helping properly drain water. Year-round contact with wet leaves and dirt build up can not only damage a roof, but overflowing gutters can lead to much more serious problems, including foundation issues and the potential for leaks. Make sure gutters are securely fastened and ready to stand up to the potential weight of heavy snow and ice that may occur in some regions.

3) Trim trees and bushes

Keep your trees trimmed and away from the roof. Doing so will help keep gutters clean and is a good safety precaution, especially in areas prone to wildfire threats or that experience strong winds, snow or ice which can lead to broken branches that can damage roofs.

4) Deal with dirt and debris

Dirt and debris, combined with wet, cool weather can lead to the growth of moss and algae. That can cause rot and displaced singles on roofing material including wood shakes and asphalt. If replacing a roof in climates prone to these issues, choose a smoother, easier to clean material such as metal roofs, which tend to shed debris more easily and naturally resist moss and algae without the use of harsh chemicals.

5) Pay attention to what's underneath

Adding or replacing attic insulation and ensuring proper venting will keep your home comfortable and protected in any season. Have a professional roofer conduct an energy audit in your attic and make sure it includes proper venting. Selecting energy efficient roofing materials with proper coatings that help reflect damaging sun rays can lower energy costs.

6) Put your guards up

Last year, major winter cold snaps led to costly ice dam issues, especially for owners of asphalt roofs. Metal roofs can help prevent ice dams from forming in the first place, but it's always a good idea to take extra steps to ensure safety in areas that experience heavy snow and ice. For example, metal roof snow guards can be installed to help keep frozen precipitation in place and cause it to melt or slid off in small pieces rather than dangerous chunks.

7) Ensure safety above all else

Last but certainly not least, safety is the number one top priority for any type of roof maintenance or care. Rooftop falls can be dangerous and even deadly. Never get on a roof without proper safety gear, in inclement weather conditions, or if you feel unsafe, insecure or unsteady. Better yet, leave all rooftop inspection and maintenance to a qualified, experienced pro who is licensed, bonded and insured.

About Metal Roofing Alliance (MRA)

Representing the residential metal roofing industry in the United States and Canada, the Metal Roofing Alliance (MRA) was formed to help educate consumers about the many benefits of metal roofing. The main objective of MRA is to increase awareness of the beauty, durability, and money-saving advantages of quality metal roofing among homeowners, as well as to provide support to the residential metal roofing industry. For more information, visit MRA at www.metalroofing.com.

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(Suggested caption: MRA says preparing roofs now for colder weather can help homeowners avoid major problems when winter hits)

