CALGARY ROOF REPAIRS

Inspections & Maintenance

Roof inspections, after-storm checks, maintenance, lifespan and buying a house with an older roof

4 Expert Answers from Roof IQ

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Q1

Is the builder responsible for a leaking roof on a new Calgary house?

If your Calgary house was built after February 1, 2014, the builder carries a mandatory warranty under Alberta's New Home Buyer Protection Act that includes five years of coverage on the building envelope, which includes the roof. A leak that traces back to faulty construction or materials within that window is the builder's problem to fix, not yours.

What the Building Envelope Warranty Covers

The five-year building envelope protection is meant to catch exactly this kind of defect: water getting in through the roof, walls, windows or foundation because something was built or installed incorrectly. If your roof is leaking and the house is under five years old, document everything now. Photograph the leak source inside the attic, the water staining on ceilings or framing, and any visible defect on the roof surface from the ground. Note the date and weather conditions. Then contact your builder in writing, keep a copy, and give them a reasonable opportunity to inspect and repair.

If the builder disputes the claim or goes silent, the warranty is administered through a warranty provider approved under the Act. Your purchase documents should name the provider; if you cannot find them, the Service Alberta website lists approved providers. You can also file a consumer complaint with Service Alberta if the builder refuses to honour a legitimate warranty obligation.

A few things that can complicate the claim. If a storm caused the damage, your home insurer may be the right first call rather than the builder, since the Insurance Bureau of Canada confirms that standard home policies cover hail and wind damage. The builder's warranty covers construction defects, not storm events. If both are possible causes, document carefully and let the adjuster and the builder each assess; do not let one party's denial close the door on the other.

If the house was built before February 1, 2014, the mandatory warranty does not apply. Your options then depend on what your purchase contract said, whether the builder offered their own workmanship warranty, and how long ago the roof was installed. A roofer's typical workmanship warranty runs one to five years; manufacturer warranties on shingles cover materials but usually require proper installation as a condition.

For a house built after 2014 that is now out of the five-year window, or where the leak clearly follows a hailstorm rather than a construction flaw, the path shifts to your insurer. Calgary sits in what the City describes as "hail alley," the most hail-prone part of Canada, so storm damage is a realistic cause even on a relatively new roof. Report promptly, photograph from the ground, and check your policy's proof-of-loss deadline, typically 30 days.

One practical note: before anyone goes onto the roof, check the attic first. Water stains on the sheathing or rafters, daylight visible through the deck, or frost on the framing in winter all help pinpoint whether the problem is a construction defect, a failed flashing, or storm damage. Leave the roof surface inspection to a qualified roofer; working at height without fall protection is an Alberta OHS requirement, not a suggestion.

Whichever route applies, start with written documentation of the damage; a local roofer can inspect and write it up, and our form is a quick way to reach one.

Q2

What does a roofer look for on a Calgary roof inspection?

A thorough roof inspection in Calgary covers more ground than most homeowners expect, because local conditions add several failure points that roofers in milder climates rarely see.

What a roofer checks, and why it matters here

The shingles and surface material come first. The roofer looks for cracked, curled, cupped or missing shingles, granule loss in the eavestroughs or on the ground, and the circular bruising or soft spots that hail leaves behind. After Calgary's hail seasons, that bruising can be subtle on newer shingles and easy to miss from the ground, which is why a close-up inspection matters.

Flashings and penetrations are where most leaks start. The roofer checks the metal at every valley, chimney, skylight, plumbing stack and roof-to-wall joint. Flashings that have lifted, cracked or lost their sealant let water in long before a shingle fails. Vent boots, in particular, crack in Calgary's freeze-thaw cycles and are a common source of slow leaks.

Eave protection and underlayment are inspected where visible, usually at the eaves and rakes. The National Building Code requires eave protection extending at least 900 mm up the slope, to a line at least 300 mm inside the inner face of the exterior wall. In Calgary's climate, with roughly 128 freeze-thaw cycles a year, this layer is the last line of defence against ice-dam water backing up under shingles.

The roof deck is assessed for soft spots, bounce or visible rot. A roofer walking the surface can feel delaminated or saturated sheathing that looks fine from below. If the deck is compromised, the cost of replacement sheathing (roughly $2 to $4 per square foot, usually priced per sheet beyond an included allowance) should appear in any quote.

Attic conditions matter as much as the exterior. The roofer, or a separate attic check, looks for water stains, frost deposits, daylight through the deck, and whether ventilation is adequate. The code requires vent area of at least 1/300 of the insulated ceiling area, with at least 25% at the top and 25% at the bottom. Poor ventilation is the leading cause of ice dams and premature shingle failure in Calgary, and replacing shingles without fixing it just repeats the problem.

Drainage and eavestroughs round out the inspection. Blocked or sagging eavestroughs back water up at the eave, accelerating ice-dam damage. The roofer checks that water drains freely and that downspouts direct it away from the foundation.

What the inspection report should include

A useful report documents every deficiency with photos, notes the age and approximate remaining life of the roof, flags any hail or wind damage relevant to an insurance claim, and identifies whether the work needed is a repair or a full replacement. An insurance-grade report with measurements typically costs $450 to $700; many roofers provide a basic inspection free when quoting a replacement.

A note on doing your own check

You can safely look over the roof from the ground with binoculars, check the attic for stains or frost, and clear debris from eavestroughs from a properly footed ladder. Alberta's OHS Code requires fall protection for anyone working at 3 metres or more above the level below, so leave the roof surface itself to the roofer.

If your roof is due for that kind of check, local roofers can book an inspection through our free form.

Q3

Should my attic be checked during a Calgary roof inspection?

Yes, and any roofer who skips the attic is giving you half an inspection. The attic is where roof problems show up first, often weeks or months before a stain appears on your ceiling.

What a good Calgary attic check covers

The inspector looks for water stains, dark streaks or soft spots on the sheathing (the plywood or OSB decking), which point to an active or past leak. Frost on the underside of the decking in winter is a reliable sign that warm, moist air is escaping from the living space and condensing up there, which eventually rots the wood and grows mould. Daylight visible through the decking or around a vent means the roof has a gap that water and pests can enter.

Ventilation gets checked too, and this matters more in Calgary than in milder climates. The National Building Code requires attic vent area of at least 1/300 of the insulated ceiling area, with at least 25% of that at the top (ridge or upper vents) and 25% at the bottom (soffit vents). When ventilation falls short, heat builds up in summer and accelerates shingle aging, and in winter the temperature swings that come with Calgary's roughly 128 freeze-thaw cycles a year drive ice dams along the eaves. A roofer who replaces shingles without fixing ventilation is setting the new roof up to fail early.

Insulation depth and coverage also affect the roof's performance. Thin or uneven insulation lets heat escape unevenly, which is a direct cause of ice dams. The inspector should note whether the insulation is blocking soffit vents, which is a common problem in older Calgary homes.

If the decking shows soft spots, delamination or rot, that changes the cost of any repair or replacement significantly. Decking replacement typically runs about $2 to $4 per square foot, and roofers usually include a small allowance in their quote with an agreed per-sheet price beyond that. Knowing the decking condition before you sign a contract prevents surprise charges mid-job.

From a safety standpoint, you can do a basic attic check yourself: look for stains, frost or daylight with a flashlight, and note whether you can see soffit vents from inside. That is useful information to bring to any roofer's inspection. Leave the roof surface itself to a professional; working at height on a sloped or wet surface carries real fall risk under Alberta's OHS rules.

A paid roof inspection in Calgary typically runs $150 to $400 for a standard report, or $450 to $700 for an insurance-grade report with photos and measurements. Many roofers will include an attic check at no charge when they are quoting a full replacement, but confirm that before they arrive so it is not skipped.

After a hailstorm, the attic check becomes even more important. Hail that cracks or bruises shingles can let water track down to the decking without producing an obvious ceiling stain right away. Getting the attic documented early strengthens your position with the insurer if a claim follows.

When you book an inspection, ask the roofer up front whether the attic is part of it.

Q4

Does a roof inspection report help with Alberta insurance claims?

A professional inspection report can meaningfully strengthen your position with an insurer, though it is the adjuster who decides coverage, not the roofer or the report.

What the report actually does for you

When a Calgary roofer inspects after a hailstorm or wind event, a thorough report documents the number of impact marks per square, the size of the hail strikes, the condition of the metal caps on ridge vents and plumbing boots, and any lifted or creased shingles. That physical evidence gives you something concrete to compare against the adjuster's scope of loss. If the adjuster's scope misses damage the roofer found, you can point to the report and ask for a re-inspection or bring in a public adjuster. Without it, you are relying on memory and photos alone.

The Insurance Bureau of Canada advises homeowners to document damage thoroughly with photos and to report promptly, typically within 30 days for a proof-of-loss form. A written inspection report with measurements and photographs is a more organised version of that documentation, and it carries the roofer's professional observations alongside your own pictures.

A paid inspection in Calgary runs roughly $150 to $400 for a standard report. An insurance-grade report with detailed photographs, measurements and a written scope of damage costs about $450 to $700. Many roofers will inspect for free if they are quoting a replacement, but a free inspection report may be less detailed and is clearly tied to a sales interest, so weigh that when you use it with your insurer.

One thing to be clear on: a roofer's report does not guarantee a claim will be approved. Only your insurer decides whether the damage meets your policy's threshold, what depreciation applies, and how your deductible works. The report is evidence, not a ruling.

A few practical points for Calgary specifically. After the August 2024 hailstorm, adjusters were handling more than 130,000 claims across Alberta, which meant long queues and, in some cases, rushed inspections. Having an independent roofer's report in hand before the adjuster visits gives you a baseline to work from. Calgary sits in what the City of Calgary calls hail alley, the part of Canada that sees the most hail, so adjusters here are experienced with impact damage, but that also means they move quickly and a documented second opinion has real value.

Before you authorise any repair work, your insurer should see the damage first. The IBC recommends confirming who a contractor is and who they work for before letting anyone start. Be cautious of door-to-door offers the day after a storm; get the inspection report in writing, and do not sign a repair contract until you have spoken with your adjuster. A contractor who offers to cover your deductible is a warning sign worth raising directly with your insurer.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Calgary Roof Repairs. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified, licensed contractors and your local building authority (the City of Calgary or your own municipality) before starting any roofing project. Information is current as of November 1, 2026 and may change. Visit **calgaryroofrepairs.com** for the latest answers.