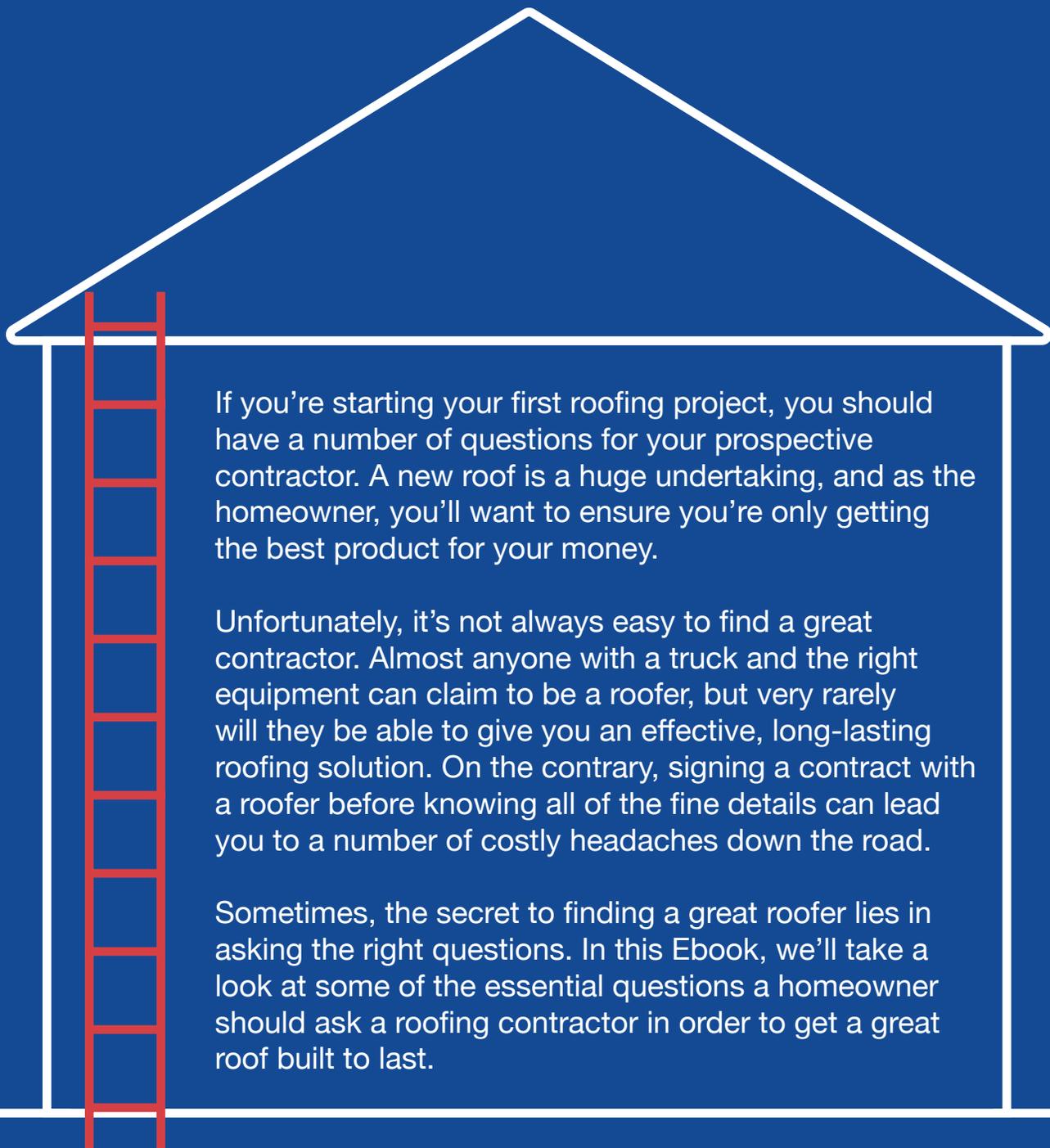


BONE • DRY
ROOFING COMPANY



**QUESTIONS TO ASK ANY
ROOFING
CONTRACTOR**



If you're starting your first roofing project, you should have a number of questions for your prospective contractor. A new roof is a huge undertaking, and as the homeowner, you'll want to ensure you're only getting the best product for your money.

Unfortunately, it's not always easy to find a great contractor. Almost anyone with a truck and the right equipment can claim to be a roofer, but very rarely will they be able to give you an effective, long-lasting roofing solution. On the contrary, signing a contract with a roofer before knowing all of the fine details can lead you to a number of costly headaches down the road.

Sometimes, the secret to finding a great roofer lies in asking the right questions. In this Ebook, we'll take a look at some of the essential questions a homeowner should ask a roofing contractor in order to get a great roof built to last.

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INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

There is a maxim in the roofing industry that goes, “Choose your team first, then choose your equipment.” Almost anyone with a truck and tools can claim to be a roofer, but that doesn’t mean that he or she will do a good job. A trustworthy and reliable roofer may take longer to find, but hiring a team that prides itself on quality work will always pay off in the long run.

Before getting into the fine details of your roofing project, the first step is to get to know your contractor.



1. What is your full company name, phone number, and physical address?

As with any big project, buyers need to take every precaution to ensure that they'll be able to hold the seller accountable for the finished product. Knowing the contractor's basic information is an essential part of securing yourself and your home against shoddy workmanship and fraud.

Consider the following possibilities:

- Something was installed incorrectly
- The roof is left in an unfinished state
- The roof gets damaged before the warranty has run out

If something goes wrong, you need to know when someone will be available to fix it. Even if the project goes perfectly according to plan, having all relevant contact information will allow you to stay in constant contact with the company. Good contractors will make themselves easily available to ease your mind and respond to all of your questions, comments, and concerns.

It's also vital to get the contractor's address. Any reputable roofing business will be more than happy to have you come in to meet with a representative and see examples of past work. Beyond being a good sign that the company is legitimate, a physical address will also give you the option of showing up and speaking with someone in person if no one is answering the phone. (This is also part of the reason why it's always better to find a local contractor.)

If the roofer uses a post office box as their mailing address, make sure you get the address of the company itself. And if the roofer won't provide you with a physical address, or doesn't have one, it's time to look elsewhere.

2. How long has your roofing company been in business?

After getting all the necessary contact information, find out more about the business itself and its history. Find out how many years the company has been in business and ask the representative to tell you about some of the projects they've completed in the past.

Longevity is a good sign. Just because it is a newer company doesn't mean it will have substandard service, but a company that has been in business for twenty years or more wouldn't have been able to survive that long without providing a great product and creating lasting relationships with its customers.





3. Can you provide homeowner references?

While hearing about the company's history in their own words is an important part of familiarizing yourself with your roofer, it's equally important to see things from a client's perspective. A trustworthy firm should have no problem providing you with references of past customers; after all, if they did a great job, why not get some free endorsement?

Ask your contractor for local job sites you can visit to see examples of their previous work in person. If possible, follow up with the homeowners directly and ask them about their experience working with the roofer. In particular, ask the homeowners if the job was completed on time, if the final cost reflected the initial estimate, and if they feel satisfied with the finished product.

Any business will naturally want to paint itself in the best light and will likely recommend only their best and most-satisfied customers. While this certainly does not invalidate their input, hearing only from the happiest clients may not give you the full picture. Consider asking for some of their most recent clients as well in order to get a better idea of what you can expect from the company if you were to hire them today.

Likewise, you might also try asking for references from a few older clients that the roofers served three or more years ago. In addition to giving you a better overall perspective, these clients will help you gauge how well the contractor creates roofs that are built to last.

Keep in mind that some past customers won't want their past information given out, making it impossible to get a reference from them. However, those who are willing to talk about their experience can give you valuable insight into your prospective roofer.

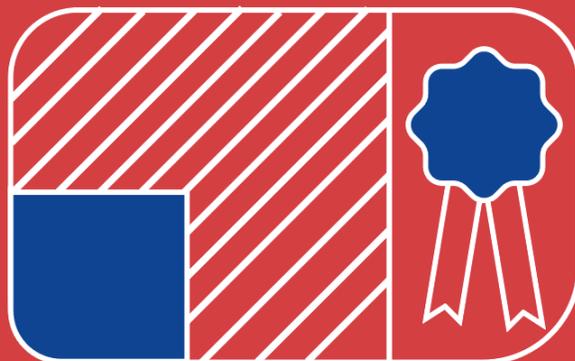
4. What are your industry memberships and affiliations?

In addition to strong references, the best and most reputable roofers will often hold memberships in a variety of trade and professional associations related to their business. By this point, you'll know how customers view the contractor and how the contractor presents itself; asking about memberships and affiliations will give you insight into their reputation within their industry.

Ask about what associations the roofing company is affiliated with. Memberships in reputable state and national roofing contracting boards, such as the National Roofing Contractors Association, are a good indicator that your prospective contractor is the real deal.

For contractors that work with commercial building owners in addition to homeowners, find out if they belong to any associations related to the industries they build for. Roofing for large-scale buildings like shopping malls, restaurants, warehouses, and government-owned facilities are huge undertakings. If the contractor has a good reputation for delivering on huge projects among others working in the same field, chances are that they'll also be able to deliver on smaller projects, namely your home.

Membership in a variety of associations relevant to their clients often signifies the contractor's dedication to customer satisfaction, which is a very good sign.



LICENSING, INSURANCE, AND QUALIFICATIONS

Getting to know the roofing contractor is part of the battle, but it doesn't stop there. Before signing any documents, you'll also want to know the company's qualifications, including how the company is insured and what licenses the contractor holds.

Going with an unqualified or unlicensed roofing contractor can lead to costly repairs when something goes wrong. Here are a few questions you should ask in order to protect yourself and your investment:



5. Does your company have a valid and current roofing contractor license?

Many cities and counties will require a contractor to get a license in order to work in the area, so be sure to ask your prospective contractor if he or she qualifies. Contractor licenses help safeguard homes by ensuring that only tested and certified roofers are allowed to operate on them and give homeowners some recourse should something go wrong.

While licensing requirements can vary by city, county, or state, getting a contractor with a valid license is another vital step toward protecting yourself against shoddy workmanship. If you're unsure of what regulations are in place where you live, or to confirm that the contractor's license is up to date and legitimate, check with your local licensing office.



6. Does your company meet the manufacturer qualifications for the materials that will be in use?

In addition to city and state-mandated licenses, manufacturers of certain roofing materials may require the contractor to undergo special training and certification in order to use their products. Special equipment will generally come with the manufacturer's specification sheet containing the proper installation methods and details about the types of fasteners, adhesives, and materials compatible with the roofing product.

Ask your prospective contractor which roofing products the company is qualified to install, and see if you can get a copy of the specification sheet. As a general rule, the more roofing products the contractor is qualified to install, the better equipped they'll be for your project. The specification sheet can also serve as a reference point for inspecting the roof after project completion.



7. Does your company offer workers' compensation?

Even with the best contractors, accidents will happen. In the case of an employee getting injured on the job, you'll want to find a contractor that offers worker's compensation.

Without worker's compensation, you as a homeowner may be held responsible for medical bills and other expenses. Homeowners insurance alone may not cover these types of accidents, leaving you to pay for damages out of pocket.

Ask your prospective contractor if his or her employees are covered, and if they're not, keep searching.



8. Does your company carry general liability insurance?

General liability insurance should also be addressed. While worker's compensation will cover your contractor's employees in the case of an accident, general liability insurance will help cover damage to your home.

General liability insurance protects you against damage to your home caused by workers during roofing repair or replacement. As with worker's compensation, your homeowner insurance will only cover so much, and damages caused by an uninsured contractor could end up falling on you to fix.

Ask to see your contractor's insurance certificate. If you're still not convinced, don't be afraid to ask for a copy of the contractor's policy, call their insurance company directly, and ask to see the credentials. Remember, you can't be too careful.

TIMEFRAME, ESTIMATES, AND OWNER EXPECTATIONS

Once you've decided that the contractor is legitimate and have found out their qualifications, you can start asking questions specific to your project. Getting an accurate price estimate and timeframe for your project will both help you make the necessary arrangements and allow you to better judge one contractor from another in order to find the best fit.



9. Will your company provide an accurate written estimate for the cost of the project?

Signing your name on a contract without getting a detailed estimate first can be a recipe for disaster. Unfortunately, no one can predict every issue that might arise, but a good roofer will be able to give as close an estimate as possible so that you'll be adequately prepared to pay.

Make sure you get a thorough price estimate of the job before going ahead with the project. This estimate should include the cost of removing the old roof, adding the new roof, the cost of replacing existing roof structures (such as those affected by rotten plywood or water damage), material costs, and anything else that might come up during the project.



10. What is the cost of plywood should your team find rotten or soft roof decking?

Part of getting an accurate estimate is understanding the costs of potential problems that might come up. In the roofing industry, many problems are rooted in soft or rotten roof decking; unfortunately, it can be very hard to dispute an over-inflated cost for plywood sheeting once the roof is already up.

Ask your contractor for the dollar amount per plywood sheet that will be used to replace damaged decking. In addition to saving you from potential nasty surprises once the job is done, finding out the cost per plywood sheet will also help you better compare one roofer's estimate to another's prior to project commencement.

11. How long will the job take?

Time is money, and you'll need to know how long you can expect the job to take. Beyond the timeline for the project's completion, your contractor should also be able to outline the company's policy for weather-related delays.

Make sure to ask if the contractor will be starting any other jobs before your roofing project is completed. It may not be a deal-breaker, but hiring a contractor that's solely focused on your home is always a plus.

12. What is your procedure in the case of inclement weather during work days?

Any respective contractor will have a backup plan in case of unpredictable weather conditions. In general, the roof should be covered in plastic sheeting or tarpaulin to ensure that everything underneath stays dry, but the specific measures may vary from one company to the next.

Be sure to ask what the plan is for extended delays due to rain. The contractor should have someone come back by the house to ensure the covering is keeping everything dry and secure all coverings in the event of high-speed winds.



SERVICES OFFERED

So you know the roofer, and you know what your expected price range will be. Now it's time to get into the fine details of the project itself, and the full range of services offered by your prospective contractor.

13. What is your full scope of work?

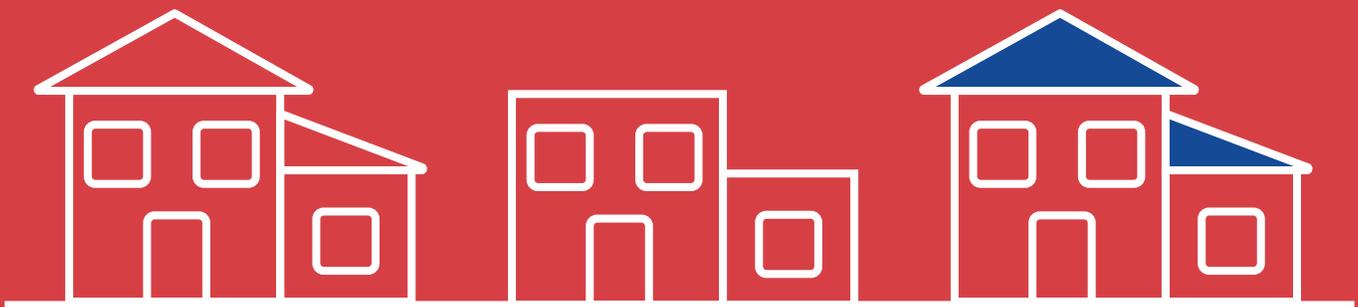
While you'll already have a good idea of who your roofer is and how the company operates, try to find out as much as possible about the work they can do for you. What is the scope of their work? Do they offer a variety of roofing options? What about solar panels or value-engineered roofing systems?

You may or may not end up going with these options for your roof, but it's always good to leave yourself with multiple options.

14. Will you remove my old roof?

If you think you can save money by simply having a new roof built on top of the existing one, you may be setting yourself up for costly repairs in the future. Without pulling up the old shingles, you may never know if the deck beneath is soft or rotten, and problem areas that are left underneath your new roof will only lead to bigger problems in the future.

Some contractors will claim that they can save you time and money by eyeballing the roof and judging if it's in good shape or not, but don't fall for it. The worst problems can be hidden from view, and even if none exist, it's always better to get a whole new roof rather than risk it.





15. Will you install drip edge or edge material when you install the new roof?

Drip edge is a small piece of aluminum that is placed under each shingle at the point where it extends off the roof, letting rainwater and other runoff flow into the gutters instead of behind them. Drip edge installation can go a long way in boosting your roof's longevity.

Some roofers won't install drip edge unless you ask for it, so make sure to get a definitive answer. Without drip edge, your home will likely incur water damage over time, so don't put your money down until you've gotten confirmation that it will be installed.



16. Do you offer a preventative maintenance program?

As the saying goes, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." In addition to building a great roof, the best contractors will also have programs in place to keep their roofs pristine for years to come.

Find out if your prospective roofing company offers a preventative maintenance program, and what it entails. Regular inspections and upkeep will help you protect your new roof and identify potential problems before they become too costly to repair.

WORKMANSHIP AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Just because the contractor is legitimate doesn't mean that he or she will be able to give you the best possible roof. Here are a few questions you should ask in order to get to know more about the quality of roof you can expect from your contractor.



17. How does your company inspect for quality workmanship?

How will the company ensure a high level of craftsmanship while their team builds your new roof? After the job is done, how will it be inspected for quality? Both of these are valid questions that you should ask your contractor.

It's important to find a contractor that will have someone on hand to oversee every step of the project and measure the best results. Depending on your local regulations, a building compliance inspector may need to visit your home and inspect your roof's progress at specific stages.



18. Will there be someone on-site that will be in contact with me?

The importance of having a representative on-site can't be overstated. No matter the project, accidents can happen: you'll want someone with whom you can voice any concerns you may have, and who will know what to do should a problem arise.

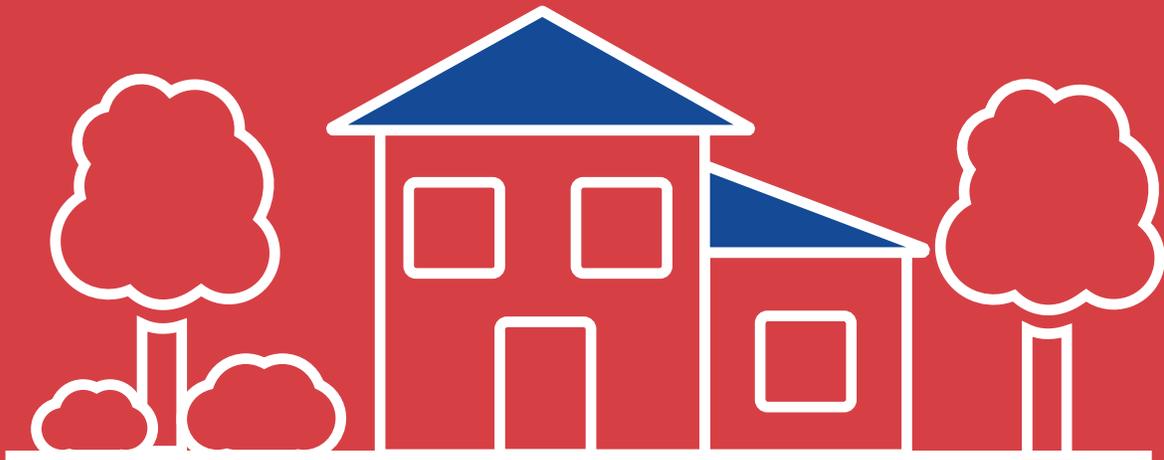
Before you leave the house, make sure you know who is in charge and have his or her contact information on hand. Sometimes, work crews will show up to a project without knowing who the project manager is. If you can't get a straight answer, call the company and ask. If no one picks up, send the crew away until you can get in touch with someone.

19. How will you protect my lawn and landscaping during the project?

Roofing projects can wreak havoc on the lawn and landscaping, so you'll need be sure that the contractor you hire won't build your roof at the expense of the rest of your home. Often, homeowners getting a new roof only think about the roof, and not what's underneath it.

Make sure you don't come home to a beautiful new roof but a trashed lawn. Ask the contractor what the company will do to protect other areas of the home, including equipment placement, what traffic patterns the work crew will use to avoid trampling bushes and greenery, where the ladders will go, where old shingles will be discarded, and so on.

As with every other aspect of the process, don't forget to ask how the contractor will fix the problem in the event of an accident.





20. Where will the refuse container be placed?

When your old roof is removed to make room for the new one, the leftover refuse and litter needs to go somewhere. Any reputable contractor will supply their own refuse container, but the placement of the container is an important consideration.

Beyond helping you organize your yard so everything is out of the crew's way, there is another important consideration: asphalt driveways can crack under extreme pressure. If the container is haphazardly left there, you may end up with another costly project on your hands.

Ask the contractor where the refuse container is going to be placed, and if the team is going to put it on top of your driveway, what provisions will be taken if the asphalt cracks?



21. How will you protect my gutters?

Some roofers will tell you that how the team gets onto the roof is almost as important as the roof itself. Some projects may require the gutters to be taken off completely, but if they remain, what steps will be taken to protect them?

Your contractor might use ladder stabilizers, which function like big arms that rest on the side of the roof, keeping the weight of the extension ladder off of the gutters. These can keep your gutters from getting torn-up or even broken off during the roofing process.

Other contractors will loop tarp under each gutter hanger, poke a hole in the tarp using a 16 penny spike in order to hold the tarp and gutters in place, and install roof jackets to keep debris from reaching the gutters.

No matter the procedure that the contractor prefers, make sure that due diligence has been taken to keep your gutters safe.

PAYMENT AND WARRANTY INFORMATION

Even before the project begins, you'll need to know what happens after the project is finished. After all, if you've already signed a contract and committed to paying for your new roof, you don't want any surprises to spring up at the last minute.



22. What are the payment terms?

Make sure you clearly understand how you'll be paying for the project. The last thing you want is to sign off on a project that you aren't prepared to pay for.

Inquire about any deposits that may be necessary. No matter the final cost, the deposit shouldn't be more than roughly 10% of the original total estimate, and shouldn't be paid until the materials are offloaded at the work site.



23. Can you provide the manufacturer's warranty?

It's important to have a copy of the manufacturer's warranty for any materials your contractor is using for two reasons: for one, it lets you know what your rights are in the event that a defective product was used on your home.

The second reason you need a copy of the manufacturer's warranty is that it will give you details on certain circumstances that could void the warranty, such as performing regular maintenance or using the wrong types of fasteners. Make sure you know what can and can't be done on your roof before you let the crew start working on it.



24. Do you offer a contractor's warranty for your roofing work?

Finally, make sure you know exactly how your contractor guarantees its work. Find out everything that's covered under your roofer's warranty, and how many years your roof is covered for. Some warranties may only last a year, but the best in the industry will last 25 or more.

Ask if the contractor offers an additional warranty. If so, how long is the warranty in effect, and what does it cover? Make sure any workmanship warranties cover potential issues that might arise from it.

**Finding a great roofer isn't always
easy, but doing the research and
asking the right questions
will always pay off
in the long
run.**

Looking to replace your roof in the near future?

Set up a call with Bone Dry Roofing to receive a free inspection and on-site estimate. We'd be happy to answer any and all questions you have.

REQUEST A FREE INSPECTION

SOURCES:

[6 Questions to Ask Roofing Contractors When Hiring](#)

[15 Questions to Ask a Roofer Before Hiring](#)

[Checklist of Questions to Ask Before Hiring a Roofing Contractor](#)

[10 Questions to Ask When Getting a Roofing Estimate](#)

[EMR – Experience Modification Rate](#)

[OSHA's Recordkeeping Rule - Who Keeps Records](#)

[Hiring a Roofer: It's Not an Estimate, It's an Interview](#)

[Value Engineering: Protect Your Roof, The Environment, And Your Bottom Line](#)

[New Roof and Gutters – 4 Things Everyone Always Gets Wrong](#)

[Getting a New Roof: Should You Also Consider Gutter Replacement?](#)