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## In This Issue...More on Why Roofs Leak

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In the last issue we presented a graph that showed that the single most likely reason your roof will fail, by a wide margin, is because of the contractor who installed it. Few people are surprised by this, but they really don't understand why. In this issue we are going to make it completely clear!

### You Are Going To Do What!?

You decide to buy a new car. You go to a couple of dealers until you find what you are looking for, buy it, and take it home. The place you buy that car may be important, but you are more interested in the car and its features, right? You bet, because a Ford from one dealer is the same as a Ford from any other dealer. Roofs aren't like that. If cars were sold like roofs things would work quite a little bit differently. After you signed the paperwork several large semi trailers would appear at the front of your house and would unpack THOUSANDS of parts and pieces. Then the dealer's service crew would start to assemble your new car, from scratch, right there in your driveway. Just think of all those parts! Piston rings in this pile, tires over there, rolls of upholstery material for the seats stacked in a pile (which only got a little bit wet when it rained), an engine block sitting near a bunch of gears for the transmission. You get the idea. And if they actually did that, can you imagine what your finished car might look like?

**Now here is the important question:** If your new car is going to be assembled at your home by the local dealer are you going to be more concerned with whether you buy a Ford or Chevy or are you going to be more concerned with who that dealer is planning to send out to put it together??

When you select the type of roofing system to install, as important as that may be, all you have really done is decided to buy a Ford or Chevy. The contractor you select is going to assemble that roof "in your driveway", not on a high-tech assembly line.

### You Don't Grade On "The Curve"

I remember back in school that my teachers would often grade "on the curve". So, you could get an "87" and still have an "A". With roofs an "87" is a lawsuit waiting to happen. The specific method used to install a roof varies from product to product and application to application, but they all have one thing in common, they

are extremely labor intensive to install. Each step is a chance to make a mistake that might end up as a roof leak. In most cases each step of the work is a fairly simple (low skill required) process that gets repeated hundreds if not thousands of times as the roof is installed. It may not be difficult to install the roof properly, but it does take care. You expect and need for your new roof to be 100% leak free, no grading on the curve here!

### It Isn't All Their Fault

The roofing industry does not enjoy a good reputation. There are two major reasons for that:

(1) It is not easy to correctly "assemble your car in your driveway". Correctly installing a roofing system is NOT difficult, but it does take care. Many roofing contractors tend to hire people with lower level skills, but those people also tend to have poor work habits and often...they "don't care", which is where the problems come in. There isn't a lot you can do about that, except to look for contractors with good reputations for good quality work.

(2) There are lots of bad contractors out there. Why do those bad contractors stay in business? Because YOU, the purchasers of their services, continue to hire them! Why would anybody intentionally hire a poor contractor? Nobody does. But most purchasers do a very poor job of screening the contractors they consider. They just assume that a Ford is a Ford, and after all Ford is a big company... They don't realize that a roof system is a package. It is material AND labor. It is a Ford and the dealership's service department's "assemble it in your driveway" crew.

Finding a good contractor takes some work, but it isn't really that hard, especially considering the amount of time and money it will take to deal with a bad installation! The next issue will share some unique methods (that are also highly effective) that will help you find qualified contractors. (And asking for references isn't one of them.)