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What to look for in a Contract



Get It In Writing



Contracts



Tips



Terms & Definitions

The following is an example of a standard roofing contract you can expect to receive from most roofing contractors. We have taken the time to dissect the simple details of a standard roofing Contract to show you what you may actually get when you sign a contract that reads like the one below. We have also given you an example of what each description should read. Your roofing contract should be written with details that ensure you get done to your roof what the Contractor told. A vague or poorly written roofing Contract should be a red flag.

Orange County Roofing and Roof Repair Contractor

LACK OF PRIDE ROOFING

Customer Mr. and Mrs. San Clemente
Address: 1234 San Clemente Ave.
City: San Clemente, Ca

EXAMPLE OF A VAGUE ROOFING CONTRACT :

- Remove roofing and haul away all debris
- Inspect wood and replace or repair as needed at nominal cost
- Install high grade roof sheathing
- Install all new fasteners to roof sheathing
- Install all new roofing/felt paper
- Fasten all paper down to protect from any high winds
- Install new edging metal flashing to roof edges
- Install new valley metal flashing to all valleys
- Repaint, reseal, and install all sheet metal flashing to match roof
- Repaint and reseal chimney flashing
- Fasten all asphalt shingles, concrete tiles and shakes with new fasteners
- Install all new ridge capping
- Clean all trash
- All Permits to be pulled

CONTRACT PRICE: \$ 5000.00

Payments Below

Deposit: \$ 650.00

50% Payment on material delivery

Balance on Completion:

Start Date:

Completion Time:

The above is a good example of Contract that at first glance appears to have everything you need in it. In our opinion that roofing contract example is a very vague contract that is lacking the necessary details that will protect you in case a dispute comes up. You should be aware that if a dispute ever arises about the workmanship or materials provided for your roof that the Contract will be the sole source for figuring out if the Contractor did what he was supposed to do. If the Contract is vague or lacking details like the example we gave you it will be easy for the Contractor to do in some

shape or form what he wrote he would do even if it is nowhere near what he told you he would do or what you expected he would do. Do not sign a vague Contract.

STAY WET ROOFING

Customer: Mr. and Mrs. Anaheim
Address 1234 Anaheim St.
City: Anaheim, CA

EXAMINATION OF THE VAGUE ROOFING CONTRACT :

Remove roofing and haul away all debris.

PROBLEM: What roofs are to be removed? This is not clear . Are you expecting the bay window in the back of the house or a detached garage to be done or included? Maybe you have a shed that you think should be included. The contact needs specific about the areas to be roofed. Also, does your city require that the removed roofing be hauled to a recycling facility and recycled? If so your Contractor will be required to show proof of this at some point in the permit process.

Did you know that the city you live in may required a deposit (as much as \$500.00) when the permit it pulled to ensure that recycling is properly done. This may be included as a cost to you for the cost of the permit. You may be able to get reimbursed for this if the contractor properly disposes and recycles the roofing as per your local city building code requires and has proof of this. You better make sure this is in your Contract or you may be in for a surprise.

Inspect wood and replace or repair as needed at nominal cost.

PROBLEM: First off, what does "as needed mean " and who decides this? You guessed it, the contractor. It will be a good idea to walk around your house and get an understanding of what type of wood damage you may have and what the costs involved for replacing it. No doubt, this needs to be specifically written into the Contract.

What you may not know is that many roofing contractors don't like to do wood repair . It slows down the job and it takes direct involvement in the job on their part. Direct involvement on their part is something most roofing contractors prefer to avoid at all costs. They want to sign the job and forget about it until it is time to collect. Even if they don't mind the extra job control their roofers may not have the carpentry skills required to complete some of the harder tasks. Those are just two reason your contractor will avoid wood work if they can.

You can tell if you're dealing with a Contractor that likes to avoid wood work because they fail to mention anything about it when speaking to you about the job or they will write in their Contracts that "wood work is included". This is a major red flag in my book. This little clause give you (the home owner) piece of mind that the contractor will be taking care of all the necessary wood work and you won't have to deal with this, whew! You may be thinking. In fact this clause guarantees only two things. One, the minimum amount of wood work will be done and (two) if there's an expensive or time consuming wood repair needed it will not get done.

Do you think for a second the Contractor is going to spend an extra day on your job and pay for or out of his own wallet? That is just naive and incorrect.

Keep in mind that just the willingness by a Contractor to do every little type of wood work you need is not good enough. There are several types of wood repairs you may need to have done and some of the more complicated ones may not get done correctly . Some of the wood work you will need to have done will need a specific type of lumber that can be found at the big box home improvement stores such as: kiln dried wood or rough on all four sides. Will the roofer do the necessary priming and painting of the wood before to wood is installed? We like to prime all six sides of the wood and apply one coat of paint before the wood is hung. Then after it is hung (in the case of fascia) we go over the front one more times to give the front an extra needed coat of paint. Many Contractors like to do this after the wood is installed to keep the job going. If you wait to do this until after the wood is hung you will not be able to completely prime and paint every surface as needed. Do they even offer these services? If you have to ask then that means no. But, they will say yes and then probably do a half hearted job at it just to try and satisfy you.

Did you know that most roofers are going to install your wood with common nails and poor quality primers? Poor quality roofing and framing nails turn rusty in a few years and the rust will show through the newly painted wood in some cases. This is a problem that cannot be corrected after the fact.

Did you know that even galvanized nails are no good for hanging wood fascia? That's right, you will need a contractor who knows to and will use "hot-dipped" galvanized nails. These are very expensive and that is probably the biggest reason most contractors will not mention this and do not use these. Plus, because Contractors rarely use hot dipped nails they are a special order . You should know that a galvanized nail is not hot dipped. And you should also know that EG nails stands for electro plated galvanize nails. And, electro plating is the weakest form of galvanization that is offered. Ask a roofer what kind of roofing nails does he use and he probably will either not understand the question or proudly answer "EG Nails". Jim (the former manager at Pacific Supply in San Juan) used to tell me that I was the only one who buys 16d hot dipped nails. He didn't even know why I would use them. When I told him I used them for

fascia he mentioned he has common nails in stock that everyone uses and they are much cheaper. I told him "yeah, I know".

Install high grade roof sheathing.

PROBLEM: What type of sheathing is he talking about? Is he going to include OSB (organic strand board), Plywood, CDX plywood and what about size of the sheathing? Would you believe I have seen jobs done with quarter inch OSB board for decking? Amazing.

Here's something that should scare you. Some cities do not require a sheathing inspection. That's right. The Contractor can do whatever he wants and no one will ever be the wiser. Well, at least until later on. Another thing I see is the Contractors will substitute the proper sheathing for filling in the gaps between the existing 1x6 that is already installed in the case where you previously had a wood shake or wood shingle roof installed over space sheathing. This is just horrible but it does meet "minimum building codes".

That's right I said "minimum building codes". I have to just chuckle inside when I hear a home owner or Contractor say "it's to code". What most home owners and Contractors don't know is that building codes are the minimum you can do and not what is the best or right thing to do. It really means you can't install any product any worse or it won't even pass the minimum code standard. Not much of a standard in my opinion. Roofing is notorious for having weak building code standards. That is why it is so important you hire someone who wants to go above and beyond. Sure, it will cost more upfront but it will save you time and money in the end, believe me.

Install all new fasteners to roof sheathing.

PROBLEM: What type of fasteners are they going to use? Staples are minimum requirement according to most building codes. Nails are highly recommended by us and you may need to use screws in some instances. When it comes to nails you need the Contract to specify what kind of fastener for each purpose and what length the fastener will be. You would be surprised to see a single type of nail to be used everywhere they can to prevent having to buy multiple boxes of nails. That saves the Contractor costs and your job suffers. That's what you'll probably get shopping around for a good price or if you simply choose the wrong Contractor.

Another problem is your not seeing how the sheathing will be fastened. What I mean by that is how many fasteners will be used per sheet and where will they be placed. This is good to know especially if the city is not checking the sheathing. If you see this written you will at least know the Contractor is aware of the importance. The minimum building code standard for nailing sheathing is every 12" inches on center (in the field area) and six inches on edges. That's a minimum of 36" fasteners per sheet. We typically nail about 50% more. When it comes to nailing more is better to a certain extent.

Install all new roofing felt paper.

PROBLEM: What kind of felt paper and where? Did you know there are several types, grades, and weights of roofing felts? You can buy 1st quality or lower quality seconds of just about any roofing material including roof felts. There are many types of roofing felts manufactured at different weights such as: 15lb, 30lb, & 40lb, and then there super light weight synthetic roofing felts. You may be thinking why so many different weights and types? They make the variations for different applications. Most roofers just think that make different weights just because of pricing. Of course they choose the cheapest price for your job. After all, if you tell the roofer you're getting three or four bids he will assume price is important to you so he will look to make the cheapest roof he can and then convince you he is better than everyone else. Nine times out of ten if you hire a cheaper roofer you'll just end up with cheaper products and for sure cheaper labor. That doesn't sound like your saving money to me. I think we both know what that leads to.

Fasten all roofing felt paper down to protect from any high winds.

PROBLEM: What kind of fasteners are they using? Are they using very thin staples which may rust or plastic top round head fasteners for more coverage and protection for your roofing felt? You may need to know this if you are left with your roof only covered with roofing felt and a rain storm comes your way. This happens all the time. Roofing felt that has been cheaply installed will blow off even in mild winds. You may be thinking that would be the roofers problem but you will soon find out otherwise. Most roofers may look uneducated and not to bright but when it comes to roofing related problems they will become a worthy adversary. Don't think you will be able to boss these guys around once a problem arises. They have probably dealt with much bigger problems and more difficult customers than you. They have the edge at every turn when problem arise. The only way to defend yourself is by hiring the right guy. Hire the right guy and you won't have to worry about any of this.

Install new edging metal to roof edges.

PROBLEM: Are they using baked on enamel drip edge metal or galvanized metal? The size the metal is critical for protecting the edges of your home. Most Contractors will use the smallest metal than can buy. I believe this is mostly because they have decided the customer doesn't care as much about quality as they do about price. And, in some cases (probably a lot) they are right.

Install new valley metal to all valleys.

PROBLEM: What color, galvanized or painted, what size 18" or 24" and is it ribbed or not?

Repaint and reseal all sheet metal to match roof.

PROBLEM: Here's a big problem. Where does it say replace all sheet metal? It doesn't. If you want it replaced make sure it is specified. Did you know that almost every new roof I see has the old flashing re-used? If you ask the roofer about something like this he will know you have been tipped off and he will answer "of course" we always replace the flashing. What else can he say? No, we never do unless you ask and then I say I always do. But the fact is most roofers love to use the old flashing and it saves them thousands of dollars every year. Would you know that every time I order a roof to be removed the Tear-off Contractor asks me "do you want to save the flashings or throw them away"? And, of course every time I say No! Throw them away. You think I just made this up? No, I didn't. They have to ask because almost every roofer tells them they have to save the flashings and if they fail to the roofer will cry and moan to them about it and then ask for a discount because now he has to buy something he didn't want to. Ridiculous isn't it? I think so. But, this is the nature of roofing. The salesman or Owner looks good, sounds good, acts good, and then does bad things to your job. I don't know how they sleep. But, I am told they sleep very well. I wish I could tell you how to find these guys before you waste your time meeting them or even worse hire them but I can't. I can tell you how to avoid them. The answer is right in front of you. If it was a snake it would have already bitten you.

If you are going to insist on meeting with a few of these guys rather than going straight to the source I would recommend you don't show your hand and tell the roofer anything. Just be vague about what you want and let him guide you where he thinks you need to be. Let him recommend how he thinks your roof should be done and the products he thinks you should be using. By educating yourself in advance and not giving away the fact that you have been educated in roofing you will see low ball and scrimp and save roofing coming from a mile away. I guess the real question will become why are you meeting with them in the first place?

What type of sealant and paint do they use? Did you know that most roofers will use the cheapest sealant and paint they can buy? Unlike us who will only use the best sealant I can buy and hand paint everything with a Premium, paint and primer, they will use simple tar and spray paint. I laugh every time I see a roof that I know costs \$20+ thousand dollars and you can see the contractor scrimped and saved with tar sealants that leave ugly black rings around every pipe and what is left from a faded coat of Krylon spray paint barely covering every flashing.

Repaint and reseal chimney area.

PROBLEM: Once again I have to say "Buyer Beware". Notice it does not say they are going to replace sheet metal. If you want it replaced then make sure it is specified. There could be as many as four different types of sheet metals that should be replaced. Behind every chimney is a piece of metal called saddle stock. It measures 4" x 14" inches and it is usually made from 26 gauge galvanized metal. This will need to be replaced unless it is a custom made piece and the metal is thicker than the normal 26 gauge metal. The sides of the chimney will either have tin shingles or in the case of a tile roof it will have tile pan metal. Both of these metals will need to be replaced. On composition roofs we often see they re-use just about all the old metal. It's horrible. The other two types of metal around the chimney is roof to wall metal that goes in the front of the chimney for most types of steep and sloped roofing materials and counter flashing which is used to wrap around brick faced chimneys. In the case of a brick chimney you should have the old counter flash metal removed and replaced. This is because in order to remove the old roof you will have to lift up that roof flashing. Once it is bent up it never goes back down completely. Most roofers will just beat it down until it looks nothing like it used to and then apply a ton of black roofer's tar to all the popped open joints. You don't want to be paying thousands of dollars for work like that do you?

Fasten all asphalt shingles, concrete tiles and shakes with new fasteners.

PROBLEM: The contractor should specify whether he is planning to use staples or nails. Keep in mind staples are that are not recommended in certain applications and nails are the preferred choice of fastener for most roofing shingles and tiles. How many nails per shingle is he going to use? Did you know that the Contractor can legally use as few as four nails per shingle? Did you know that roofing installed in high wind areas needs to be nailed a specific way? This needs to be in your Contract. In the case of tile roofing you really need to know what kind of nail they will be using for what purpose. Did you know the tile roofing even has minimum requirement for the head size of the nails used to secure tiles? Another thing worth knowing is that it is acceptable to use EG Roofing nails to install your tile. Do you know what Contractor is using what nails for what purpose and why? This is critical because your roof system is made using thousands of nails. How would you like thousands of mistakes made on your home? It happens all the time. Don't expect the building inspector to catch this either. He is not going to nor is he even looking for this.

Install all new ridge capping.

PROBLEM: The Contract needs to specify the manufacturer and the class of the product. Did you know that Contractors use 2nd grade roofing materials that look exactly like #1 grade materials. The only difference is that 5-10 years later they will wear out. Typically long after their warranty is up. Why do you think some bids are so much cheaper than others? This is just one of the many reasons bids are cheaper than ours. The list could go on and on. What I am mentioning here is just a small list of obvious things I can think of.

Clean all trash.

PROBLEM: Does this mean the job will be cleaned daily or when the job is completed? What do you think? Where is all the trash going to be stored? If it doesn't say it probably means in your driveway. I see jobs all the time where the driveway is stacked high full of trash. If your Contract doesn't say the job will be cleaned up on a daily basis don't expect it to be done. If it doesn't say the trash will be put into a container on a daily basis then expect your driveway to be the trash facility.

All permits to be pulled.

PROBLEM: But, what about the mandatory city inspections? There are certain inspections that must be approved before and during the project. Does he guarantee it will pass all inspections?

CONTRACT PRICE: \$5000.00

Payments Below :

Deposit: \$ 650.00 50% Payment on Material delivery Balance on Completion

(Deposit exceeds 10%) This should say: Owner to pay directly (On Final Inspection)
for supplies. (To protect from any liens.)

Start Date: Needs to be filled out Completion Time: How many days?

There are so many variables which can adjust the price and the outcome of your satisfaction. Many roofers write these contracts this way in hopes the consumer will overlook the details so they can cut corners and save money on the project.

Luckily for you if you would like to avoid all of the above **"Roofing Problems"** and just hire someone to take care of your home and roof you have the option of simply calling us. When you call us you really don't have to get other bids. All of pricing is standard and competitive. It doesn't change a thing if you get one or a100 bids, my bid won't change. We use nothing but the best products. Most Contractors just say that but we really do. Using the right products will increase the cost of your job in some cases but in many it will actually decrease the cost. That is because some of the products will last longer. Replacing parts of your roof will quickly erase in savings you may have gotten by hiring a cheaper Contractor. Often saving \$1,000-\$2,000 is the most expensive way to go in the long run.

South County Roofing has recently completed roofing leak repair jobs in these cities:

Aliso Viejo, Anaheim, Anaheim Hills, Brea, Buena Park, Capistrano Beach, Corona Del Mar, Costa Mesa, Coto De Caza, Cypress, Dana Point, Dove Canyon, Foothill Ranch, Fountain Valley, Fullerton, Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, Irvine, Ladera Ranch, Laguna Beach, Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel, Laguna Woods, Lake Forest, Mission Viejo, Modjeska Canyon, Newport Beach, Newport Coast, The City of Orange, Orange Park Acres, Placentia, Portola Hills, Rancho Santa Margarita, San Clemente, San Juan Capistrano, Santa Ana, Silverado Canyon, Stanton, Trabuco Canyon, Tustin, Villa Park, Westminster, and Yorba Linda.

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