OTTAWA ROOFING PRO

Flashing, Chimneys & Skylights

Chimney saddles, valley and wall flashing, skylight leaks and new skylight openings

4 Expert Answers from Roofing IQ

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Q1

Skylight shaft condensation in an Ottawa winter?

Condensation on a skylight shaft in an Ottawa winter can be a moisture problem rather than a roof leak; a look at the shaft and the attic tells you which.

Ask whether the shaft is sealed and insulated where it passes through the ceiling and the attic.

A few things a roofer or insulation contractor would look at:

- The curb and the shaft framing: whether the gap between the rough opening and the shaft walls is sealed and insulated, not just drywalled over.
- The vapour barrier continuity: whether the ceiling vapour barrier wraps up and around the shaft or simply stops at the opening.
- The shaft walls themselves: whether they are insulated between the ceiling plane and the roof deck, and whether there is a thermal break at the curb.
- The glass unit: whether the condensation is on the interior pane of a double or triple-glazed unit (a surface problem) or between the panes (a failed seal, which is a glazing replacement, not a roofing job).

The 2024 Ontario Building Code (Div. B, 9.19.1.1.) requires that where insulation sits between a ceiling and the roof sheathing, air must be able to move from that space to the outside. Ask the roofer to check that the baffles near the skylight are not blocked.
If your home is designated under the Ontario Heritage Act or sits in a Heritage Conservation District, talk to the City's heritage planners before changing any roofing or skylight details.

For the condensation itself, the sequence to work through is: seal air leaks at the shaft perimeter from inside the attic, confirm insulation continuity around the shaft, and check that ventilation baffles are not blocked at that bay. If the problem is between the panes, the glazing unit needs replacement regardless of what else is done. A roofer handles the curb, flashing and exterior details; an insulation contractor handles the shaft interior and vapour barrier. You may need both.

If you want a roofer to look at the curb and the outside of the shaft, you can send a request to local contractors from this page.

Q2

Flashing where a flat roof meets a wall in Ottawa?

Flashing at the junction of a flat roof and a wall is a detail worth getting in writing, and the 2024 Ontario Building Code (Div. B, 9.26.1.2.) sets the standard clearly: roofing, including flashing, must be installed to effectively shed water, prevent water and moisture from entering the building, and minimise the ingress of water due to ice damming. The Code also requires that roofing materials be installed in conformance with the manufacturer's written instructions (Div. B, 9.26.2.2.), so the membrane product chosen for the flat section shapes how the flashing detail is executed.

At a wall-to-flat-roof junction, the roofer needs to address several things at once: the flashing that runs up the wall face, how its top edge is covered and sealed, and the transition where the flat membrane meets the vertical surface. The membrane standard the Code references depends on the product: EPDM must meet ASTM D4637, TPO must meet ASTM D6878, PVC must meet CAN/CGSB-37.54, and modified bitumen must meet CGSB 37-GP-56M and CSA A123.23. Each of those products has its own manufacturer instructions for how the flashing termination is formed and sealed, and the Code says those instructions govern.

For a permit, the City of Ottawa's list names installing asphalt shingles as exempt. Replacing or repairing a flat-roof membrane, or doing flashing work, is not on that list, so confirm with the City before work starts. If the wall is part of a designated heritage property or sits in a Heritage Conservation District, talk to the City's heritage planners as well.

When you get quotes, ask each roofer to spell out in writing:

- which membrane product and standard they are using, and how the flashing integrates with it
- how high the base flashing runs up the wall, and how the top edge is terminated and sealed
- whether any wall cladding or parging needs to be removed and replaced to set the counterflashing
- what the price per square foot is for any rotten sheathing or blocking found once the old membrane is off, since published Ottawa-area quotes show that range at about $3 to $6 per square foot as an extra
- what disposal is included, and whether the quote covers the flat-roof tear-off separately (published Ottawa-area prices for flat-roof tear-off run about $1.50 to $3.50 per square foot)

Ask the roofer for a WSIB clearance certificate before work begins. The homeowner exemption from obtaining a clearance applies to the home you live in, not a rental or investment property. The Construction Act requires an owner to hold back 10 per cent of the price of services and materials as they are supplied; for a larger job, ask a lawyer about release timing.

After the job is done, keep the signed written contract, the itemized quote, the written warranty, and photos of the roof and wall junction both before and after the work, because those documents are what you will reach for if a question about the repair comes up later.

Q3

Flashing around a dormer on my Kanata roof leaking?

Dormer flashing leaks are a repair job, not a full replacement, and there are too few published Ottawa prices for flashing work to quote a range. Ask any roofer you contact to give you a written scope and price before work starts.

Flashing is the metal or membrane material that seals the joint where a dormer wall meets the roof slope. The 2024 Ontario Building Code (Div. B, 9.26.1.2.) requires roofing, including flashing, to be installed so it effectively sheds water and prevents moisture from entering the building. When that joint fails, water can travel along the sheathing or a rafter before it shows up as a stain on a ceiling or wall inside. A roofer will look at the step flashing along the dormer sides, the head flashing across the top, and the counter-flashing or caulked cap over it.

A few things that affect what the repair involves: whether the leak has been going on long enough to rot the sheathing or framing beneath the flashing, whether the existing shingles around the dormer can be lifted and re-laid without damage, and whether the flashing itself needs to be replaced entirely or just re-sealed and re-fastened. If sheathing has to come out, published Ottawa-area prices for sheathing replacement run about $3 to $6 per square foot as an extra item. Ask the roofer to price that separately so you are not surprised if it comes up at tear-off.

For the permit question: the City of Ottawa lists installing asphalt shingles as a project that does not need a building permit, but that exemption covers shingles, not structural repairs. If the roofer finds rot in the rafters or dormer framing, that work likely needs a permit. Confirm with the City's Building Code Client Service Centre if the scope grows beyond flashing and shingles.

Before you hire anyone, ask to see a written quote that itemises the flashing work, any sheathing replacement, and disposal. Under the Consumer Protection Act, 2002, if a roofer gives you an estimate, the final charge cannot exceed it by more than 10 per cent. You can also search the contractor's WSIB clearance online to see whether they have a current clearance. For a job like this, the most useful question to put to a roofer before you sign is: if you find rot in the dormer framing once the flashing comes off, what does that add to the price and does it change the permit situation?

The request form on this page sends your job details to local roofing contractors listed in the Ottawa Construction Network directory.

Q4

Leak at a roof-to-wall joint on an Ottawa addition?

A roof-to-wall joint depends on flashing, so the flashing is one of the first things a roofer will check. Too few published Ottawa prices exist for flashing repairs to give a reliable range, so ask each roofer to quote the scope in writing before any work starts.

The 2024 Ontario Building Code (Div. B, 9.26.1.2.) says roofing, including flashing, shall be installed to effectively shed water and prevent water and moisture getting into the building. The Code also requires valleys between shingled slopes to be flashed (Div. B, 9.26.4.3.), and where a chimney on a sloping roof is more than 750 mm wide on its upper side, a saddle is required (Div. B, 9.26.4.8.).

A few things a roofer will look at to scope the repair: whether the flashing has separated from the wall cladding or the shingles, whether caulking was used as a substitute for proper metal flashing, whether the sheathing or framing behind the wall cladding has taken on moisture, and whether the shingles at the base of the wall have adequate coverage. The 2024 Ontario Building Code (Div. B, 9.26.7.1.) requires at least two thicknesses of shingle over the entire roof, and (Div. B, 9.26.7.3.) a head lap of at least 50 mm.

On permits: the City of Ottawa's list of projects not requiring a building permit names installing asphalt shingles. Flashing repair is not named on that list, and we found no City of Ottawa statement either way for flashing-only work. Confirm with the City's Building Code Client Service Centre before work starts if the scope goes beyond shingle replacement. If your addition is on a designated heritage property or in a Heritage Conservation District, talk to the City's heritage planners first.

From indoors, check the attic above the addition for frost on the sheathing, damp insulation, or water staining that can help you trace where the water is entering. Take photos and share them with the roofers who quote the job.

The Construction Act requires an owner to hold back 10 per cent of the price of services and materials as they are supplied. For a larger job, ask a lawyer about release timing. You can also search the roofer's WSIB clearance online before work begins.

Before signing, ask each roofer to name, in writing, every flashing piece they will replace at the wall and what they will do if the sheathing behind it is wet.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Ottawa Roofing Pro. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified contractors and your local building authority (the City of Ottawa or your own municipality) before starting any roofing project, and do not go on a roof yourself. Roofing work in Ontario must meet the 2024 Ontario Building Code (O. Reg. 163/24). Information is current as of November 15, 2026 and may change. Visit **ottawaroofingpro.ca** for the latest answers.