

Haag Engineering Shingle Gauge™

There are many changes ongoing in the asphalt composition shingle marketplace. Where manufacturers traditionally sold shingles graded by warranty periods (typically a range between 20 and 50 years), many manufacturers have started selling all their **laminated and premium** shingles with lifetime warranties. These shingles still have grades similar to what existed in the past, but there is no longer an obvious differentiator such as warranty period, other than probably price. They now sell what we might call good, better, and best grades of lifetime warranty shingles. And then some manufacturers have an additional upper grade we might call a premium shingle. Note that standard 3-tab shingles are not currently part of any lifetime warranty program but retain the traditional year-based warranty.

The Shingle Gauge™ sold by Haag Engineering Co. was calibrated for shingles manufactured through 2009. Our extensive testing found that shingles from every manufacturer that had similar warranty periods had different thicknesses. For that reason, our gauge has always had a thickness range for each warranty grade. And we found during testing that the same shingle grade from the same manufacturer had thickness variations. So the Haag Shingle Gauge™ provided the best possible guide to determine the shingle warranty. Our gauge remains accurate within standard manufacturing variations for shingles installed before 2010.

Haag currently is securing lifetime warranty shingles from the many manufacturers for testing. We hope to be able to relate the good/better/best lifetime warranty to previously defined warranty thicknesses. This testing is in its early stages and we continue to gather shingles. We have found that the number of grades of lifetime warranty shingles varies by manufacturer; some have two grades while others might have five. This will obviously complicate any calibration analysis.

We currently are checking shingles from GAF purchased in Texas and will publish the data as soon as we finalize our analytical work. But looking at the GAF website, it shows they have three warranty periods for their shingles, Standard, Better, and Best. Their Standard warranty shingles have Material Defect Coverage for 10 years (or 3 or 5 years for 3-Tab shingles). Their Better and Best shingles have Lifetime warranties for Material Defects (or 20 years on 3-Tab shingles). The difference between these shingles is in the Workmanship warranty coverage where the Better grade has 2 years coverage while the Best grade has 25 years coverage. It appears that the Standard Warranty is applied to 3-Tab shingles, the Better Warranty is applied primarily to Timberline Architectural shingles, and the Best warranty is applied primarily to Designer Choice shingles. GAF clearly states that the Lifetime Warranty applies only to all GAF laminated shingles.

Owens Corning has similar language where they state that as of January 24, 2011, all laminated shingles have been upgraded to Limited Lifetime Warranty Coverage. In the case of O-C, their levels of warranty are identified as Standard, Preferred Protection, and Platinum Promise, and standard 3-Tab shingles do not come with lifetime warranty coverage. As with most warranties,



there are an assortment of conditions and limitations, and no shingles are warranted for full replacement on a lifetime basis. CertainTeed Roofing announced similar warranty coverage for their shingles on Feb. 3, 2011.

In their warranty change announcement, CertainTeed Roofing made the following statements (from the document, “**CertainTeed Roofing Enhanced Lifetime Limited Warranty**”, dated 2/3/2011):

“In the last two weeks we have heard skepticism about warranties. To many roofing contractors it appears that warranties are now just another marketing tool, and no longer an indicator of the underlying durability and quality of a shingle.

At CertainTeed, we think the words written on a warranty document alone are not the most important point of assurance. We make it our goal, not only to offer the best warranty, but to ensure that a property owner will not have to use it.”

Read the full announcement here:

http://www.certainteed.com/resources/RPG_ELLW-AnnouncementLetter.pdf

All of the manufacturers’ provide warranty information on their websites and the documents outline the coverage, limitations on coverage, exceptions, details, and what the customer must do to maintain the coverage. The CertainTeed language above is typical of how the manufacturers’ view their individual products and why they have changed the warranty language.

Haag remains dedicated to working with the roofing industry, roofing professionals, and the insurance industry to help determine the grade of shingles that have been applied to any roof being inspected. With the state of flux of warranties being issued by the manufacturers we are evaluating the data on new shingles to keep our Shingle Gauge™ current and relevant. Please contact Haag with any questions you have about our gauge or your needs for additional information or products.