



HAIL AND WIND DAMAGE

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Hailstones are chunks of ice that vary in size, shape, and hardness, and are produced by the turbulent updrafts of thunderstorms. Because of hail's variations, hail impact-caused marks on a roof and surrounding areas have various sizes, shapes, and depths. Hailstone-caused impact marks are generally rounded, but not perfectly circular.



Typically, the larger the hail, the fewer and further apart the hailstones fall. Since the pattern of hail fall is random, their impact marks on the roof are widely distributed. Hail impact marks of varying sizes, shapes and depths can appear in metal vents, flashings, air conditioning unit fins, and other exposed surfaces. These are indicators of hailstone size, frequency, and fall direction. Keep in mind that hail usually is wind driven, thus the windward side of the roof would sustain the most direct impact. This can be important because perpendicular impacts transfer the most impact energy to the shingles.

Hail impact causes “spatter marks” (areas where the oxides and grime had been cleaned away from the cabinet of an A/C unit). These marks can help determine the size, frequency, relative hardness, and fall direction of hailstones.

Collateral indicators

Do you see hail marks on fences, A/C units, vents, metal trim, or other areas?

These marks can tell you about a hailstorm, such as when it occurred, from which direction hail fell, and sizes and relative hardness of hailstones. The fins of an A/C unit, for example, can be dented by hail as small as ½ inch. The width of a dent in A/C unit fins is approximately 80% of the size of the impacting hailstone.



Are hail caused chips in shingle butts and edges damage?

Generally not. Chips are not damage unless joints between shingles or areas not protected by granules are exposed.

Directionality

Hailstones often are driven by wind. Because of this, they strike the roof at an angle from a predominant direction. Those slopes of the roof facing the storm (windward) receive more impacts and impacts of greater severity than slopes not facing the wind (leeward.)

Wind

Wind damage typically begins at the areas of the roof with the greatest uplift forces due to aerodynamic effects, such as ridges, windward roof corners, windward eaves, leeward sides of ridges, and windward rakes. Greater wind speeds, and greater wind-generated forces, are found higher above the ground. However, the exposure of the building plays a large role in the wind forces a roof experiences, such as the surrounding terrain, vegetation, and other buildings.

Wind-generated forces lift unbonded shingles and even debond marginally sealed shingles. Shingles can be bent upslope and creased along upslope edges of exposures, or torn away completely if the wind is strong enough.

Sometimes, wind damages reveals fastening problems. A shingle installed with too few or improperly placed nails or staples can be more easily damaged by wind.

Area of shingles can get torn away at the windward corner. The weathered plywood decking and the bottoms of shingles can get weathered extensively due to their long-term exposure.





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