

# Don't get ripped off by a roofing company

By Al de Koning

Have you had a regretful experience with a roofing company—perhaps a rude encounter with an unprofessional representative? Many homeowners thought they had their roof re-shingled at a bargain price only to find the job unsatisfactory. Here are some tips on obtaining a good roofing job.

If a sales representative offers you an estimate for re-shingling your roof, ask him or her to explain exactly what they propose to do and get it in writing. You are the consumer and you have a right to know what you are purchasing. For your protection, get a signed contract, including the price, and don't pay anything until the job is done to your satisfaction. Many homeowners have given roofing companies a deposit, never to see them again. You may have read in the local papers this past summer about one prominent company's owner being arrested for this all-too-common scam.

Get estimates from reputable, established companies. Don't overdo it—three estimates should suffice. The sales reps or estimators do not get paid to do estimates but do receive a commission for a sale.

Is the company legally registered and insured? Are their workers covered by W.S.I.B.? Ask for proof that they are up to date and in good standing with W.S.I.B.

One company recently had a claim for a fallen



worker. W.S.I.B. asked if the worker was suing the homeowner. Don't let that homeowner be you!

Has the company's employees undergone fall-arrest training? Your roof project can be stopped in mid-completion if workers are unable to provide proof of fall-arrest training, whether your roof has been completed or not. Ask them to supply a reference list. Also, talk to neighbours who have had roofs re-shingled and see if they were satisfied with the roofing companies they used.

Above all, don't settle for the lowest price if the product is uncertain. A wise man once said, "The bitterness of poor quality remains long after the sweetness of low price is forgotten." You want quality work and product that you will benefit from for years to come.