



# technical bulletin

**Asphalt Roofing  
Manufacturers Association**

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## *Use of Asphalt Shingle Underlayment*

There are a number of important reasons for installing asphalt-saturated felt underlayments on wood decks before shingle application. Among them are the following:

- Using the appropriate underlayments along with the proper decking materials and shingles will help in meeting Class A and/or Class C fire ratings. A shingle by itself is not fire-rated, although it is a part of the roofing assembly. In many municipalities, a Class A and/or Class C fire rating is required by code or ordinance for all roofing assemblies.
- Generally, asphalt roofing manufacturers recommend the application of asphalt-saturated felts over wood decks. Some will only warrant their shingles under the condition that this type of underlayment has been used in the roofing assembly. See individual manufacturers' warranties.
- The asphalt-saturated felt keeps the deck dry until shingle application is completed, thereby allowing one to avoid the problems that usually result when shingles are placed on wet decks.
- Asphalt-saturated felt is water resistant. It provides secondary protection to help shield the deck from wind-driven rain and other moisture penetrations.
- Installing asphalt-saturated felt helps minimize "picture framing," which is the visible outline of deck panels, caused by irregularities in roof decking thickness.
- Asphalt-saturated felt offers protection from resins that may come from wood board sheathing.

**Note:** The use of laboratory tested asphalt shingle underlayment products complying with ASTM standards D 226 and/or D 4869 is highly suggested. Additionally, proper application techniques should be followed to ensure optimum performance of asphalt-saturated felts.

**Note:** These recommendations were prepared by and have the approval of the Asphalt Roofing Manufacturers Association for informational purposes only. They are not intended to revoke or change the requirements or specifications of the individual roofing material manufacturers or local, state and federal building officials that have jurisdiction in your area. Any question, or inquiry, as to the requirements, or specifications of a manufacturer, should be directed to the roofing manufacturer concerned.