

# “Up On Top” News

## SERVICE WORKS YOUR FULL SERVICE ROOFING CONTRACTOR

### Getting The Edge On Roof Perimeters

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In the art of designing low-slope membrane roofing systems, the industry has been bogged down by troublesome details that require frequent repair. The most problematic of these is the metal roof edge.

While manufacturers boast about 20 or 30 year warranties for our roof systems, they carefully exclude the common gravel stop edges from the warranty. One reason for this is that roofing material manufacturers in general don't produce or market the roof edge metal systems. While manufacturers roofing manuals may contain drawings showing such features, there is invariably a disclaimer, such as "This edge metal is not covered under the manufacturers warranty."

The typical roofing sequence involves installing the roof membrane, then the embedded metal, and topping it with stripping plies. In the real world, these stripping plies crack, especially if no metal cap is used to join fascia edging together. Just walking the perimeter of a building and visually examining the fascia metal will let you know if there is such a problem.

When metal is embedded, the edge metal also serves as a gravel stop. When repairing

edge metal it will be necessary to spud (chip) back the gravel, remove the torn stripping plies, and install new stripping, consisting either of ply felts, glass mesh, or more recently modified bitumen. After a couple of years, we can expect to do this again and again.

The *Architectural Sheet Metal Manual* by the Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors National Association (SMACNA) tells us that a 10-foot-long piece of galvanized steel edge metal can be expected to move 5/64ths of an inch with a 100°F temperature change (hot day and cold night). That cyclical movement is enough to fatigue and eventually rupture the stripping plies.

The roof is widely recognized as one of the most vulnerable parts of a building. Of the various components of a roof, the roof edge is the most critical because of the way in which wind acts on a building. Commonly the roof edge receives little attention. It is considered simply an add-on accessory, however, careful selection of an appropriately tested edge is necessary to guard against the effects of potential wind damage. In addition to longevity issues, a tested edge is required by building code in many states and municipalities.