

Metal roofs growing in popularity

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It's hard to believe, but the 2013-14 polar vortex wasn't all bad. Sure, it brought North America record cold and snow, in one of the worst winters ever. But the weather phenomenon's silver lining was in persuading many homeowners it was time to forever abandon their conventional roofs for something better. That "something" is the increasingly popular metal roof.



According to the St. Louis-based Metal Roofing Alliance (MRA), the residential metal roofing market has grown by double digits in the last five years. Residential roofing experts report metal roofing is winning converts based on its durability, fire-resistance, energy savings, value and natural good looks.

"People are getting tired of having to replace asphalt shingles every 10 to 12 years," said Brian Cosyns, president of Metal Roof Outlet in Courtland, Ontario, which installs hundreds of metal roofing systems yearly. "People are becoming more and more educated on metal roofing, and are seeing the longevity of it ... after completing (a metal roofing) job, you've made a big difference in appearance, energy savings and the value of the home."

The MRA reports non-metal roofs last 17 years on average, but metal roofs can last a lifetime. Though higher in initial costs, they can boost homes' resale value. They can also cut homeowners' insurance premiums in some states by up to 35 percent.

Among factors underpinning the growth of metal roofs, few are more important than the roofing systems' fire-resistance, the alliance reports.

The product Cosyns' firm installs, Allmet Stone-Coated Metal Roofing and another brand, Gerard Stone-Coated Metal Roofing Systems, both tout the benefits of their Class A Fire Ratings. This fire resistance adds to particularly high demand for these roofing systems in wildfire-prone areas of North America.

The extra durability that stone-coated metal roofing systems provide is identified as another factor in their increasing use. These systems don't rot, warp, crack or break. They are superior to conventional roofing systems in standing up to extreme weather with a 2.5-inch hailstone warranty, Class 4 impact rating, and 120 mile per hour wind warranty.

Metal roofs last two to three times longer than ordinary roofs, meaning they can last 40 to 60 years or longer, according to the MRA.

While conventional roofs in darker colors absorb the sun's rays, metal roofing actually reflects them. That decreases summertime cooling loads and also insulates against winter's cold, saving homeowners utility costs.

Metal roofing's aesthetics are realistic and mimic natural roofing products, experts say. Both Allmet and Gerard stone-coated metal roofing systems offer an array of styles, from natural clay tiles to wood shake, natural slate and asphalt-like shingles. "The shake resembles natural shake perfectly, and the tile resembles clay tile," Cosyns said of the Allmet roofs his firm installs throughout Ontario.

Cosyns reports homeowner customers like the functional benefits of stone-coated metal roofs, and really enjoy their curb appeal. "They love the appearance the roof provides the home," he said.

For more information, visit www.allmet.com or Gerardusa.com.

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