

TECHNICAL ADVISORY BULLETIN

To: GAF Commercial Sales, Master Select Contractors, Distributors

From: Technical Services Department

**Subject: Cleaning Recommendations for RUBEROID® and GAFGLAS®
Coated Cap Sheet Roofs**



Quality You Can Trust...
From North America's
Largest Roofing Manufacturer!™

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Why Clean Your Low-Slope Roof?

There are several reasons that routine cleaning may want to be included in normal roofing system maintenance... these include:

- Keeping the surface white so that it can **provide maximum reflectivity** and its associated energy conservation benefits.
- **Preventing the accumulation of dirt and debris...** which can act as a nutrient source for algae and other plant growth.
- **Preventing the accumulation of food sources** for birds and other pests.
- **Preventing the accumulation of chemical contaminants** on the roof surface that may harm the membrane and reduce its performance life.

Who Should Clean Roof Surfaces?

Because of safety concerns and potential for roof membrane damage, GAF recommends that roof cleaning only be **performed by a professional roofing contractor**. In all cases, appropriate fall protection should be used when working on a roof surface.

How Often Should A Low-Slope Roof Be Cleaned?

The need for roof cleaning is dependent on several factors, including...

- The severity of environmental contaminants
- The frequency of rainfall
- The propensity for dirt and dust accumulation
- The roof slope and drainage characteristics

Note: Some roof surfaces may not require routine cleaning and others may require cleaning on a frequent basis. Roofs should be cleaned to address the issues described above – i.e., returning the surface to maximum reflectivity, eliminating the accumulation of dirt and debris, etc.

What Are GAF's Recommendations For Cleaning RUBEROID® and GAFGLAS® Coated Cap Sheets?

RUBEROID® and GAFGLAS® coated cap sheets can be cleaned as follows:

1. **Protect** any low curbs, base flashings, or other **points where water could enter** from cleaning.
2. **Protect plants, shrubbery, and exterior facades**, from run-off of cleaning solution.
3. **Use water** to clean and rinse off the top layer of dust and dirt.
4. **Use a soft bristled, long handled brush or floor broom with a cleaning solution of a mild non-abrasive household detergent** (such as Spic n' Span) and water to clean the surface of the roof membrane, taking care to not damage the top surface of the membrane.
5. **Rinse the roof completely** with water to rinse the cleaning solution off the roof.
6. **Inspect the membrane** and insure that no damage has occurred; repair any incidental damage.
7. **Assess** the membrane's condition and **re-coat** with an approved TOPCOAT® roof coating if necessary.

Note: Power washers are **NOT** recommended. A low pressure garden hose or similar can be used.

What Precautions Should Be Taken When Cleaning A Roof?

1. First, **only trained professionals** should be allowed on the roof to avoid any consequential damage to the integrity of the roofing system.
2. **Fall safety requirements must be followed** - a wet, single-ply membrane is slippery. Use caution and follow all fall safety requirements.
3. **Avoid** walking on surfaces where the cleaning solution has not been rinsed away.
4. Where the run-off may come in contact with exterior facades, **test a small area** to make sure that there are no deleterious effects to the façade from the cleaning solution.
5. Be sure to make accommodations for the run-off cleaning solution – to avoid damage to plants and contamination of ground water. **Always comply with all local, state, and federal requirements for water run-off.**

Where Can I Get More Information?

GAF Technical Services can assist you... with these and other questions you may have regarding your new roof installation. GAF Technical Services can be contacted at **800-ROOF-411** (800-766-3411). Also, the GAF website is a great resource for just about any question you may have or for additional information you may require. Please visit: www.gaf.com.