



Flexible Flashings

In the recent years, builders have started to pay more attention to the importance of keeping water out of the building. Construction defect lawsuits have driven home the point that leaking buildings can cause serious problems. One of the results of the additional attention has been the increased use of flexible flashings or peel-and-stick membranes around windows and doors.

Flexible flashings describe a combination of materials. Typically these are nonmetallic including both peel-and-stick and nonstick material. The material is a rubberized compound or modified bitumen sometimes referred to as bituthene. It comes in a variety of widths from 4 inches to 12 inches or more and it is white or black in color with the manufacturer's name imprinted on the surface. This is the flashing material we should see applied around windows and doors.

The peel-and-stick has a very sticky backing after you peel the paper off. The stickiness of the material is a double edged sword. It adheres well to the surface, but also to anything else it comes in contact with prior to application. Providing the surface it is applied to is clean and of the proper temperature, the adherence is usually very good. Some manufacturers require a primer to be applied to the surface, so be sure to consult the manufacturer's installation instructions before use. The nonstick flashing is made of similar material (bitumen) but requires some type of mechanical fastener to keep it in place.

The key to using these new products is installing them properly. Most flexible flashing manufacturers provide printed installation instructions. In addition, window and door manufacturers have printed installation instructions available or attached to the window or door. Many of the instructions will refer to the AAMA 2400-02, Installation Guide. This guide is available from the [American Architectural Manufacturers Association](#).

Points to Remember

- Bituminous membranes are manufactured by various companies, under various trade names. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's installation recommendations for the product.
- A waterproof membrane should be installed at all horizontal and sloped surfaces, three inches or greater in width.
- Flexible flashing membranes must be compatible with any sealant or other chemicals that they might come in contact with.
- Flexible flashing membranes may need a primer applied to the underlying surface prior to application.
 - The surface to be applied to must be clean and dry. The temperature at time of application is also critical.
- Membranes need to be lapped properly into the surrounding paper or housewrap and flashing.
- Follow the design documents or submittals.

ABCOC Construction Services Corporation has developed this information for its clients and friends. The information may contain citations of applicable codes, manufacturer's recommendations and best practices from noted sources.

It is ABCOC's desire to present the topic in an unbiased manner, using generally accepted references, to allow those confronted with the topic to make an informed decision. If you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact ABCOC.

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