

HOME IMPROVEMENT MONTH, APRIL

GA/24/03/06

HATCHES 1/2

BATTEN DOWN THE HATCHES! STABILISE YOUR HOME WITH HIGHER INSULATION

Are you alarmed that your property may not withstand gales, due to slipping roof tiles or weakening walls resulting from corroding wall ties – quite apart from flooding, and concern over rising fuel prices promised during 2006. Batten down the hatches by treating your home to a layer of polyurethane foam inside your roof to bond nails and pegs to the tiles or slates and save expensive re-roofing. Your roof is far more likely to survive storms and hurricanes, an increasing trait even in the UK.

A thick layer of polyurethane will provide far better insulation than the equivalent thickness of most insulation materials.

As cavity wall insulation, the same foam will stabilise your walls, avoiding the expensive job of replacing wall ties. The foam is also good in flood areas, where other products may not survive.

Structural, rigid polyurethane foam has been used for over 30 years to solve the problems of wall-tie failure coupled with poor levels of insulation. Studies made in conjunction with the Building Research Establishment concluded that there are millions of dwellings at risk.

The liquid polyurethane foam system is injected by specialist members of the British Urethane Foam Contractors Association, into the cavity formed in a traditional masonry cavity wall, through properly spaced holes in the outer wall. The foam expands within the cavity, setting to adhere to the inner and outer leaves of the wall bonding them together. It is a satisfactory replacement for normal metal wall ties and provides a high degree of insulation. Polyurethane as an insulant is approximately twice as effective as other forms of cavity fill.

Due to the expanding properties of the foam, air leakage, draughts and cold spots are eliminated, providing superior energy-saving insulation that greatly reduces the risk of internal condensation.

There are British Standard Codes of Practice, with some BUFCA members approved by the British Board of Agrément. An insurance-backed guarantee is available. Applying injected polyurethane cavity wall insulation to your home will cost around £2000 in a typical semi, and gives you the benefit of a superior insulant.

To avoid re-roofing a house that is suffering from nail fatigue, a 35mm layer of polyurethane can be sprayed onto the underside of the slates or tiles of a pitched roof. This takes on the function of the fixing nails, battens and roofing felt to stabilise and weatherproof the roof and goes a long way to improve the insulation. For the additional purpose of optimum insulation, the foam, applied to a depth of 85mm at rafter level, together with the existing 100mm layer of insulation at joist level, brings the thermal performance right up to today's stringent standards and even avoids the need to ventilate the roof space. It has long been recognised that ventilated roof spaces are a major source of wasted energy, and the new revisions to Building Regulations will make air pressure leakage testing in new buildings mandatory. This provides the perfect balance between optimum thermal performance to new build standards and zero condensation risk, and is ideal for a room in the loft. A typical roof can be insulated using the polyurethane treatment for around £2000, far less expensive than re-roofing.

An added bonus - due to the sealing qualities of the foam - is the reduction of airborne sound penetrating the property. Humidity levels and condensation are also better controlled providing better air quality within the home.

Retrofitting of uninsulated or poorly insulated properties provides the biggest contribution to carbon dioxide savings, with an impact both on the local environment and globally. Some 150,000 properties have been treated to polyurethane foam insulation in the UK. The system has British Board of Agrément approval for use in existing and new build applications and can show compliance to Building Regulations.

Members of the British Urethane Foam Contractors Association agree to abide by the Association's Code of Professional Practice. To find a local BUFCA member contact the Association at P O Box 12, Haslemere, Surrey GU27 3AH; on tel: 01428 654011; fax: 01428 651401; e-mail: info@bufca.co.uk; web: www.bufca.co.uk.

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Press enquiries to Gillian Allder/Leonie Onslow-Dewey on ☎01428 654011.

Note to Editors:

The following illustrations are available in colour by e-mail or on disc: contact corporatepr@aol.com or tel: 01428 654011: please credit the British Urethane Foam Contractors Association.



Picture shows: a BUFGA member spraying polyurethane foam.

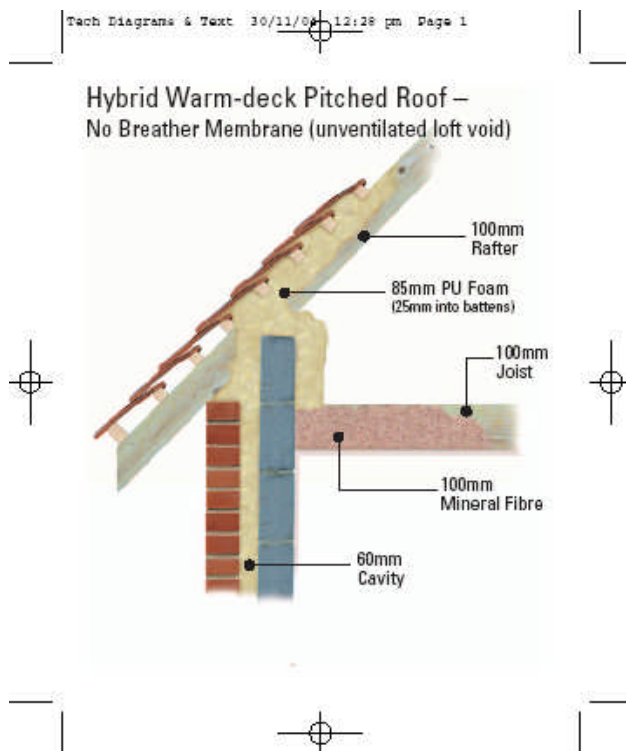


Diagram shows: Spray applied foam in a pitched roof.