



Changing your roof cover?

Things you need to know

Building and Energy is aware of several roofs that have lifted off or collapsed following changing of their roof cover. In these cases, the required building licence/permit was not in place and the roof was not adequately tied down to the house.

If you are having your roof covering changed from one material to another (such as between clay/concrete tiles, metal roof sheeting and asbestos roof sheeting), it is vital to check that the supporting roof structure is strong enough and that it will be tied down adequately.

Importantly, changing to a heavier roof cover may require additional or larger roof structural support elements to hold the increased weight. Changing to a lighter roof covering (cladding) may involve upgraded tie-downs to prevent the roof from blowing away.

Even if you are replacing an aged roof covering with a like-for-like material, it is important to check the roof condition. Roof supports may sag over time and parts of the roof may deteriorate, requiring an upgrade to ensure your roof is suitably strong, watertight and does not appear distorted.

When replacing a roof covering with a material of a different weight or shape, a building permit will likely be required. [Industry Bulletin 53](#) provides information on building permit requirements for replacing roof coverings. A building permit application is made with the permit authority, which is generally the local government in which the building is located. Anyone can apply for the building permit. The builder, who must be named on the building permit, is responsible for ensuring the building work complies with building standards, and the approved plans and specifications. A copy of the building permit is given to the owner, builder and applicant (if different from the owner or builder).

It is an offence under building law to commence such re-roofing work until a building permit has been granted. Building work over \$20,000 that requires a building permit must be carried out by a [registered builder](#) or have an [owner-builder approval](#). The [factsheet for Do I need to be a registered builder?](#) provides information on when a registered builder is required.



If you are unsure whether your plans to re-roof your home requires a building permit and a registered builder, speak to your local government building department.

The following is provided for the information of those considering upgrading or replacing their existing roof covering:

1. Apply for a building permit unless an exemption applies (refer to [Industry Bulletin 53](#)).
2. Ensure any required strengthening to the roof is sufficiently documented (refer to [Industry Bulletin 93](#)).
3. Use competent people, such as a structural engineer and/or a registered builder with relevant qualifications and experience, to check the existing roof structure and any proposed upgrades. These must comply with applicable building standards (refer to [Industry Bulletin 121](#) for further guidance). Building and Energy has investigated roof failures triggered by degraded roof components and by roofs not built to the required standards.

4. Ensure the roof covering is installed to the manufacturer's installation instructions (which must also meet applicable building standards).
5. Use a suitably qualified person, such as a registered building surveyor, builder or civil engineer, to check the roof gutters, downpipes and sub-surface drainage are sufficient to direct rainwater away. Also check that any projections through the roof are adequately sealed (refer to [Industry Bulletin 36](#)).
6. Your builder should ensure additional tie-downs have sufficient capacity and engage all parts of the roof as necessary.*

*Note: 10 mm diameter J-bolts with an open end are commonly used to provide extra tie-down when a re-roof occurs. These bolts tend to have their hook end straighten at much less of an upward lift to what they are intended to resist (see [Industry Bulletin 109](#)). Open hook J-bolts may need to be fitted to every rafter where another tie-down member between rafters is not present or where the existing tie-down has degraded over time.

Further advice on engaging a roof restorer or roofing contractor is provided on the [Building and Energy website](#), including having a written quote that outlines all the works involved (for example, the price includes straightening out the roof members before replacing the roof cover). Homeowners should also check the company has appropriate insurances and positive impartial reviews. A maximum 6.5% deposit applies to works over \$7,500.

A copy of Building and Energy's General Inspection (Investigation) Report Five – *Investigation into reroofing of buildings*, can be viewed at: www.commerce.wa.gov.au/publications/general-inspection-report-five-investigation-re-roofing-buildings

Note: Particular care must be taken with asbestos roof sheeting. The [Department of Health](#) and [WorkSafe](#) websites provide further guidance.

Related links

[Find a registered builder](#)

[Do I need to be registered as a builder?](#)

[Roof coating – do you really need it?](#)

[Video – Checking roof compliance on site](#)

[Asbestos – Frequently asked questions](#)

[Media release – Timely reminder to replace asbestos roofing](#)

[Industry Bulletin 036 – Weatherproofing of projections through metal roof surfaces](#)

[Industry Bulletin 053 – Roof cladding replacements – building permit requirements](#)

[Industry Bulletin 093 – Documentation for timber framed roof construction](#)

[Industry Bulletin 109 – J-bolt \(hook rod\) tie-down systems](#)

[Industry Bulletin 121 – Tie-down of timber framed sheet metal clad roofs to timber frame walls and beams](#)

Disclaimer – The information contained in this fact sheet is provided as general information and a guide only. It should not be relied upon as legal advice or as an accurate statement of the relevant legislation provisions. If you are uncertain as to your legal obligations, you should obtain independent legal advice.

Building and Energy | Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety

1300 489 099

8.30am – 4.30pm

Level 1 Mason Bird Building
303 Sevenoaks Street (entrance Grose Avenue)
Cannington Western Australia 6107

M: **Locked Bag 100, East Perth WA 6892**

W: www.dmirs.wa.gov.au/building-and-energy

E: be.info@dmirs.wa.gov.au

Regional Offices

Goldfields/Esperance	(08) 9021 9494
Great Southern	(08) 9842 8366
Kimberley	(08) 9191 8400
Mid-West	(08) 9920 9800
North-West	(08) 9185 0900
South-West	(08) 9722 2888

National Relay Service: 13 36 77

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS): 13 14 50

This publication is available in other formats on request to assist people with special needs.