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### INTRODUCTION

Every year, the good intentions of Condominium Boards are put to the test by contractors, consultants and the economy in general. Due to an abundance of work, and the critical shortage of skilled tradesmen, construction projects that should have begun during the spring or summer, are started “late” in the fall.

If your Condominium is in this position, a few tips are provided to help you cope.

### ROOFING PROJECTS

Replacement of asphalt shingles is now conducted year round in Northern Alberta. If your Condominium is scheduled to receive a new asphalt shingle roof during the fall months, we recommend that prior to the work starting, you have a “face-to-face” meeting with your contractor to ensure that the project will be properly handled.

Shingling done in cold weather must be done so with care. As the temperature falls, there is a greater risk that the shingles will be more brittle and the installer need take additional care in the handling and nailing, to avoid problems including; breakage, splitting and de-granulation. In addition, shingles installed late in the year are likely not going to “self-adhere” – adhesive strips provided might not receive adequate daytime heating to become soft and allow the shingles to seal. It is recommended that the installer “hand-tab” each shingle with adhesive mastic at the time of the application to ensure proper attachment takes place. Without hand-tapping, come springtime, there is an increased probability that some shingles will

be loose, and there will be an increased probability of tear-off during wind storms. Shingles installed in the late fall may never get the opportunity to self-adhere if dust and dirt is forced between the shingles.

Other products, such as self-adhesive (“peel & stick”) membranes, used as eave protection, might not adhere as well if the installer is not taking sufficient care and following manufacturers guidelines during application, or the outdoor temperature does not permit the adhesive to work.

Shingle roofing can be successfully done in the fall and winter, but more delays around temperature and inclement weather (snow, wind) should be anticipated. One positive towards roofing in the fall, there is less risk of having an interior leak during construction, as we seldom experience rain between October and December. Contractors are quick to relate that you can sweep a bit of snow, but you really have to be careful if the forecast is calling for rain!

“Flat” roofing done in the fall involves many of the same risks as “steep” roofing does. One fear that can be allayed is that the liquid asphalt often used to bond roofing membranes together is pre-heated to in excess of 400 degrees Fahrenheit, a temperature that easily overcomes the most bitter of Alberta winter days.

### WINDOW REPLACEMENT

Currently there are a number of Condominiums in Northern Alberta that are undergoing window upgrades. Quality window installers are few, and the “average”

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window order is taking between four and six weeks to manufacture, notwithstanding the installers scheduling.

The majority of window replacements in Northern Alberta involve the use of PVC (Polyvinyl Chloride) windows. In cold weather, PVC becomes very brittle. It is essential that window units be carefully handled during delivery and installation. It is not un-common that the flanged corners of PVC windows become broken or damaged in cold weather. Any significant loss or damage to the nailing flange of the window will mean that there will be less material for the glazier to perfect a proper seal between the window and wall sheathing. Broken nailing flanges are sufficient reason to reject a window prior to its installation. Ensuring that the contractor will not install defective windows should be viewed as a shared responsibility, between the Installer and the Owner. Condominiums should retain the services of a qualified third-party to advocate the interests of good construction and the Owners desire for quality workmanship.

The colder the temperature outdoors, the less likely that soft seal products like caulking, will perform to the expectations required to ensure a positive seal.

Common sense also tells us that if a mans' hands are frozen, and he can no longer feel his toes, he probably should have stayed home, and try another day.

### CONTRACTS

Your Condominium's contract for work being performed during the fall season should have provisions in it that specify what

is to be done in the event of significant delays associated with delivery, timely completion of the work, and significant delays associated with inclement weather conditions.

All parties to the contract must know and understand what is included in the contract, and what provisions are in place to deal with unforeseen conditions.

An example of what should be included, the contract should have a guarantee that locks-in, the agreed-upon, contract amount. In some extreme cases, delays of more than six months from contract award to the start of construction have been endured by Condominiums. If there is no provision to hold the price, the contractor might try and force the Condominium to pay more, if a rise in the cost of materials occurs in the interim waiting period.

A good rule to apply: never pay for construction materials that have not been delivered, installed and inspected.

### CONCLUSION

Whether the project is roofing, windows, exterior siding, deck replacement, etc., Condominium Owners must ensure that the Contractor they are working with is sufficiently prepared to deal with changes in the weather, and the special application needs of different manufactured goods. Many successful fall / winter projects are undertaken each year, but only if the those involved are willing to work with the weather, and each other.