



What You Should Know About Roofing in 2021

By the ABC Supply Pro Council

A roof should last 20 or more years, depending on the materials and climate. A roof's longevity makes it a big decision for homeowners, whether they're replacing an existing roof or building a new home. Knowing which roofing materials are popular as we kick off 2021 can help you make successful recommendations to your customers.

We asked our Pro Council, a group of expert ABC Supply associates throughout the country, to tell us what's top of mind when it comes to roofing supplies for construction businesses.

1. Planning and Flexibility Are Key to a Roofing Project's Success

Last year brought a home renovation boom as COVID-19 prompted people to spend more time in their houses. Yet some roofing material production slowed throughout the industry, and many manufacturers changed operations to keep employees safe and healthy. As a result, certain materials were tougher to get in 2020. Whether they were working on a new construction or remodeling project, contractors and builders had to juggle their customers' expectations with the availability of materials.

The Pro Council expects these challenges will continue in 2021. Here are their tips for making projects run smoothly when a material shortage is a concern:

- Before discussing roofing materials with your customer, reach out to your supplier to find out what is in stock. Share only those options with your customer.
- Sell styles and colors to your customers instead of brands. Recommend common colors, like black, browns and grays, that are available from many manufacturers.
- Proactively communicate with your customers about availability and lead times.
- Reach out to your supplier when you're unsure what to offer or need to troubleshoot a tricky customer request.

Planning ahead and being flexible is key to a successful project as the industry continues to feel the effects of COVID-19.

2. Synthetic Materials Are Here to Stay

One of the biggest trends our Pro Council saw last year was an increase in demand for synthetic roofing materials. Synthetic materials are proving to be as popular in 2021. They're a good fit for homeowners who want a more durable product that replicates the wood texture and natural color of traditional asphalt shingles or cedar shakes.

Synthetic roofing material is polymer based and made from plastic and rubber. It's easier to maintain and better resistant to the weather, and it has a longer lifespan (around 50 years).

Many synthetic roofing options also have a Class 4 impact resistance. This is the toughest level of impact resistance that a roofing product can have. That toughness benefits homeowners and insurance companies that want a product more likely to resist impact damage.

Roofing is also classified by its fire resistance. Fire ratings include Class A, Class B, Class C and unrated. Class A is the highest rating and offers the best resistance against fire. Synthetic materials often have a Class A fire rating. Knowing a material's fire resistance classification is especially important in areas prone to wildfires. For example, some California regulations require the use of fire-resistant materials.

3. Even When Solar Power Isn't Required, It Can Appeal to Homeowners

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Solar installations continue to grow partly because of building code changes like those out of California. As of last year, new single-family homes and multifamily units in California that are three stories or less must have solar panels. Even homeowners in cities that don't require solar want product options that help them capitalize on sunshine and save on their energy bills.

Manufacturers have evolved the types of solar roofing systems available. There are now sleek solar roof tiles and shingles that are more aesthetically appealing to homeowners.

4. Metal Roofing Continues to Increase in Popularity

The demand for metal roofing products continues to increase year after year. In the past, metal roofing and accessories could require a significantly larger budget than asphalt shingles. Regardless of price, metal roofs can be a valuable investment on a home.

Metal roofing is reflective and insulative, which can save homeowners money by reducing their heating and cooling costs. It's also low maintenance, comes in a variety of styles and lasts a long time. The benefits of metal roofing often help to increase the value of the home.

5. Your Supplier Can Help With Marketing

You're probably not thinking about how to market your business while you're ordering products. However, this can be the perfect time to ask your supplier about any special options or value-added services they offer.

Some suppliers offer more value-added services to help you market your business. Through our Freedom Programs, you can create a company website, order branded apparel, jobsite signage and stationery, set up a direct mail program and more.

Working with your supplier will not only help you grow your business but it will also ensure a smoother process when selecting materials with your customers. Overall, homeowners are looking for durable, sustainable materials that will provide good investment value on their houses. Knowing which roofing materials will deliver what your customers want will help you be successful in 2021. Learn more about windows, siding and roofing materials for construction businesses on the ABC Supply blog.



The ABC Supply Pro Council consists of experienced associates from across the U.S. Its aim is to provide contractors nationwide with industry advice and insights to help them seize opportunities and overcome challenges they face as they manage successful businesses. Contractors can visit ABC Supply's blog for additional tips and resources from the Pro Council.