

Reroofing not exempt from codes' provisions

by Thomas Smith, AIA

Do building codes apply to reroofing?

A In most jurisdictions, reroofing work will be governed by specific provisions of the area's building code. These local codes are typically based on one of the three model codes, which contain reroofing provisions.

In the **BOCA National Building Code** (1987), written by the Building Officials & Code Administrators International, Inc., reroofing provisions are found in Article 23, section 23.01.2. A revised version of this article will be published soon. The article states that within a 12-month period, if reroofing occurs to 25 percent or less of the roof area, the new work must comply with the fire classification code provisions that apply to new roof construction. If more than 25 percent of the roof area is reroofed, *the entire roof area must comply with new roofing requirements.* If, for example, 40 percent of a roof that does not comply with the code's fire resistance provision is reroofed, the code would require corrective action on the remaining 60 percent of the roof. The codes' provisions for asphalt and wood shingle application are similar to the Uniform Building Code, which is discussed below.

In the **Standard Building Code** (1988), released by the Southern Building Code Congress International, Inc., (SBCCI), roof provisions are found in SSTD 2-88, SBCCI Standard for the Installation of Roof Coverings. Section 113 of this standard spells out what must be removed and what may remain in a reroofing situation. In some cases, the old roofing *must* be removed—it is not possible to re-cover slate or any type of wet roofing material. Existing aggregate must be removed unless an

"approved base material" is installed—in which case, only the loose aggregate must be removed. Re-cover is also not permitted if the existing roof has two or more applications of "any type roofing material." Section 113.1.3 (6) lists two exceptions to this last provision, however.

An error in sections 113.1.3 (7) and (8) makes the code's position on wood shingles and shakes over existing substrates unclear. Until clarification is issued by SBCCI, it would be best to consult with the building official having jurisdiction before proceeding. If the existing materials are allowed to remain, the code says that the roof structure must be capable of supporting all additional loads. New work must comply with code provisions that apply to new roof construction.

Reroofing provisions in the **Uniform Building Code** (1988), written by the International Conference of Building Officials, are found in the appendix to Chapter 32, which was entirely revised for the 1988 edition. The appendix states that all reroofing must comply with code provisions that apply to new roof construction. *Among other things, this requires the new roof to slope a minimum of 1/4 inch per foot.*

The appendix also covers inspection procedures. It says the existing roof must be inspected by the building official. And it requires the new roof to be inspected after installation.

On the question of re-covering old roofs, the code says that existing built-up systems may remain if: the structure can support the added load of the new roofing; there is only one existing roof covering; the existing roof is securely attached; and the existing insulation is dry. If the old BUR is to remain, the existing aggregate must be removed, and a slip sheet and nailed base sheet installed. As an alternative method, an insulation board may be mechanically attached or adhered to the membrane.

If the new roof is to be installed over a cap sheet, the code says a base sheet is to be nailed or spot adhered. The code makes no provision for the use of an insulation

board as an overlay. If this approach is desired, contractors should get approval from the building official first.

The code also requires parapets at area separation walls to have non-combustible faces. Combustible materials may be used on parapets 7 inches above the roof surface, however. This provision only applies to reroofing; it is not included in Chapter 32 for new roofing. This provision also appears to apply only to built-up roofing.

The code's provisions for steep reroofing state that asphalt shingles may be applied over two existing asphalt shingle roofs. Asphalt shingles may also be applied over wood shingles that already have an overlay of asphalt shingles. Asphalt shingles installed directly over wood shingles must have an underlayment of No. 30 felt. Asphalt shingles may also be applied over built-up roofs with a slope of 2/12 or greater—see section 3212 (b) for specifics.

Wood shakes may be applied over one layer of asphalt or wood shingles, with No. 30 felt underlayment. Wood shingles may be applied over one layer of wood shingles. The code is silent about wood shingle application over asphalt shingles—a building official's approval would be necessary for this approach. Roofing over shakes is not permitted.

Under the Uniform Building Code, reroofing with other systems, such as single-ply, spray-applied polyurethane or cold applied, must be approved by the building official. **FR**

