Proper treatment keeps you out of the gutter

Defective guttering discovered during a seasonal inspection may be covered by warranty.

One brand of white enameled aluminum guttering will be replaced the first year if the finish blisters, peels, chips or cracks. And for the following 14 years, this product and its professional installation are in warranty at a pro-rated basis. The warranty may be passed along to the next resident of the house.

Fall check-up includes cleaning out debris, sealing aluminum joints or soldering steel and checking nails for rust. Paint, priming galvanized units in need. Hangers, located every 24 inches, should be adjusted for proper fit and slope.

Do not use aluminum gutter guards with steel gutters; there is a vinyl product available which work better.

Improper roof drainage may be caused by too few downspouts. Formula to determine the proper number is 1 square inch of downspout cross-sectional area per 1 sq ft. of roof surface. In areas with severe weather, note that the design of corrugated-style pipe allows expansion with less chance of splitting when trapped water freezes.

Special wire baskets at the opening of each outlet keeps leaves and tennis balls from going down, and splashblocks or tiles at the other end save trouble at foundation-level.

To see if gutters are properly positioned, place a yardstick down the roof slope to make sure that the out-side edge of the gutter is below the yardstick.

Rain runoff simply falls into the gutter, but shading snow becomes wedged across a too-high gutter. The resulting "ice dam" makes moisture back up under shingles and through the roof.

For houses under construction, one manufacturer now offers a membrane shield for use as an underlayment along a six-foot edge of roof to prevent ice damage.

Serving a similar purpose on established roofs is a heating cable in 25-foot sections. Five units plug together and connect to a 6-foot power supply cord. The cable is mounted by special clips in zigzag fashion allowing three feet of cable per foot of roof edge. Pretest the cable prior to installation.

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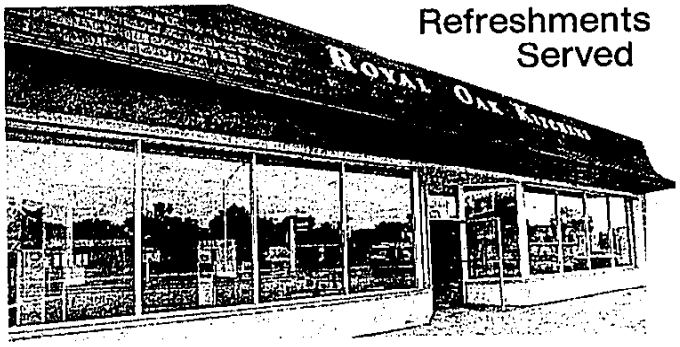

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