

Ask the Home Inspector

Peter Weeks is a residential contractor who has successfully completed the Home Inspectors program. He has been doing residential home inspections for about one year. He is an active member of CAHPI and an Associate member of OAHI. For the past sixteen years he has been a self-employed General Contractor, doing everything from landscaping, kitchen, bathroom and basement renovations, to deck / dock construction and general household repairs. He would now like to help those in the community he lives in, Chelsea, by giving advice on the single biggest investment most people make, **your home**.

Peter will answer your questions regarding your home each month in the real estate section of this paper.

Let's get started with the first question !

When I bought my house, the owners told me there would be ice damning up on the flattest section over the roof of the living room. They currently have heating cables on the edge and in the eavestroughs. Is this the best solution?

Is it a solution? No, but it is a way to melt ice dams, which can cause leaking, especially on a low slope roof. Heating cables, if used properly, will create a channel which will allow the water to run off the roof, hopefully away from the home. They do however, reduce the life of most asphalt shingles making them brittle and age prematurely. They can be costly to operate. Make sure that they are only used when needed and do not operate all winter long.

Let's go back to the cause of the ice buildup on your roof.

Most ice build-up is caused by heat loss from the house into the attic space. This can be reduced with proper insulation as well as proper ventilation of the attic space. Make sure that both the roof and soffit vents are free of obstructions to ensure a balanced free flow of air through the attic space. When it comes time for re-shingling, you may want to consider as an option ice and water shield with specific low slope shingles properly installed. Another option being two ply flat membrane type roofing designed for low slope roofs.

Peter Weeks has been a general contractor since 1988, he has been doing **Residential Home Inspections** for about four years. He is an Associate Member of OAHI (Ontario Association of Home Inspectors), CAHPI (Canadian Association of Home & Property Inspectors) and a member of the BBB in Good Standing.

A home inspection can be one of the most important investments you'll ever make. Choose Peter Weeks to provide you and your family PEACE OF MIND during the buying process.