What to Check on Your Roof After a Hailstorm

When a hailstorm passes through central Texas, the first thing many homeowners want to know is whether their roof survived the beating. Hailstones can vary from pea-sized pellets to golf-ball-sized chunks of ice, and the damage they cause is not always obvious from the ground. A piece of hail that leaves a visible dent in a gutter might have done far worse to the shingles or flashing above. Knowing what to look for can help you decide whether a repair is urgent or can wait until the next dry spell.

Understanding the weak points of a roof is the first step. Older roofs, roofs with fewer layers of protection, and roofs that already show signs of wear are more vulnerable. But even a relatively new roof can suffer granule loss, cracked shingles, or loosened flashing after a hard blow. The key is to inspect carefully, and to do it soon. Moisture that seeps through a hail puncture can rot decking and ruin insulation before the next utility bill arrives.

Start With the Shingles

Shingles are your roof's first line of defense. After a hailstorm, walk the perimeter of your house and look for missing shingles. Hail can knock them loose, especially if the wind was high. Wind uplift can also pull shingles from their fasteners, leaving gaps that invite water. Check for cracked or split shingles as well. A hairline crack may not leak during a light drizzle, but a heavy rain will find it.

Pay attention to the granules that cover asphalt shingles. Granule loss shows up as bare spots on the surface. Those granules protect the asphalt from ultraviolet light and add a bit of weight to keep shingles in place. When they wash off in a storm, the shingle underneath ages much faster. A roof that has scattered bare patches after a hailstorm might still be watertight, but its remaining life is shorter than before.

View the location on Google Maps

Look at the Flashing and Valleys

Roof flashing is the metal or rubber material that seals the edges of chimneys, vents, skylights, and other roof penetrations. Hail can dent or tear flashing, and wind can peel it back. A ripped piece of flashing is an open invitation for water intrusion. The same goes for the valleys where two roof planes meet. Those areas see a lot of runoff, and if the metal or underlayment was damaged by hail, a heavy storm could push water deep into the roof structure.



If you can get onto a ladder or use binoculars from the ground, check the base of each vent and pipe. Look for wrinkles, gaps, or sections that no longer lie flat. Flashing that has been lifted even a quarter of an inch can allow water to run behind the shingles and into the attic.

Inspect the Decking and Attic

Some hail damage shows up from the inside. After a storm, go into your attic with a flashlight. Look for daylight coming through the roof boards. A thin beam of light means there is a hole or crack in the decking. Even if the shingles look intact, a heavy hailstone can fracture the wood or OSB beneath them. Water will follow that path later.

Check for damp insulation, dark stains on the plywood, or any musty smell that was not there before. These signs suggest that water has already entered, even if you cannot see a leak in the living space. The sooner you find it, the less rot and mold you will have to deal with.

Professional roof inspections after severe weather often catch problems that a homeowner might miss. A trained eye knows where to look for subtle damage, such as a lifted shingle that will not leak until a strong wind blows rain sideways. Having a contractor walk the roof after a major hailstorm gives you a clear picture of what needs to be fixed and what can wait.

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Check the Gutters and Downspouts

Gutters take a beating during a hailstorm. Dents and dings are common, but what matters more is whether the gutters still slope properly and whether the joints are tight. A hail strike can knock a gutter section out of alignment, causing water to pool or spill over the side. Downspouts can get clogged with granules and debris washed off the roof. When that happens, water backs up and can seep under the fascia boards or into the eaves.



Run a hose through the gutters after a storm to see if water flows freely. If you notice standing water or slow drainage, there may be a blockage or a sag that needs attention. The gutters themselves are not the roof, but they are part of the system that moves water away from it. A

failed gutter can lead to ice dams in winter and splash-back against siding during summer storms.

Remember the Ridge and Hips

The ridge caps and hip shingles are among the most exposed parts of a roof. They take direct hits from hail and the full force of wind uplift. After a storm, look for ridge caps that are cracked, displaced, or missing altogether. A gap at the ridge is essentially a hole at the top of your roof. Wind can drive rain through that gap, and the water will run down the underside of the decking before you ever see a stain on the ceiling.

If you have a metal roof, check the ridge flashing for dents and loose fasteners. Metal can be dimpled by hail, and those dimples are not just cosmetic. They create low points where water can sit, and over time, that standing water can cause corrosion or leaks around the fastener holes.

Document Everything for the Insurance Claim

If you suspect hail damage, take photos before you do any temporary repair. Photograph the entire roof from multiple angles, then zoom in on each damaged area. Note the size of the hailstones if you were home during the storm. This documentation will help if you file an insurance claim. Most policies cover storm-related damage, but adjusters need to see clear evidence. A well-documented set of photos and notes can speed up the process and ensure you get credit for all the repairs needed.

Do not climb onto a wet or steep roof without proper safety gear. If you are not comfortable on a ladder, hire a professional. Many roofing contractors will do a walk-around inspection from the ground and then go up on the roof if they see signs of damage. That is often the safest option.



When to Call a Contractor

Some hail damage is straightforward: a missing shingle needs to be replaced, a torn piece of flashing needs to be patched. But sometimes the damage is hidden. A shingle that looks fine from the ground may have a hairline fracture that will widen with every freeze-thaw cycle. The only way to know for sure is to have someone up close who knows what to look for.

If you notice any of the issues described above, or if you simply want peace of mind, a professional inspection is a good idea. Regenesis Roofing & Restoration LLC, located at 2302 John Tee Dr, Cedar Park, TX 78613, USA, can be reached at +1 512-674-5979 for roof

inspections after severe weather and related services in Cedar Park, Leander, and nearby North Austin communities.