



HOME ADVISOR

Dear Friend,

Each month, BOWA Home Advisor provides you with important tips on how to improve and protect your home's value. We hope the following is helpful.



Is Ice Damming in your Future?

According to the *Farmer's Almanac*, we're in for a "crazy ride" on the East coast this winter. With unusually cold temperatures and plenty of snow predicted, now is the time to begin thinking about preventing ice damming.

Ice dams, which are areas of built up ice that prevent proper drainage, occur at the eaves and valleys of roofs. While the resulting icicles that hang over the edge are quite pretty, they are usually a sign of this serious roofing issue.

Ice damming is most often caused by insufficient attic insulation and/or attic ventilation. An attic that is too warm causes roof snow to melt and slide down to the eaves. At the eaves, where the roof surface is cooler, the melting snow is likely to refreeze and cause a dam. Subsequent melting causes water to pool behind this dam, potentially leading to water damage. Costly damage occurs when water seeps between the shingle layers, wetting the roof deck and possibly the walls and ceilings below.

To prevent ice damming, the goal is to keep the attic very close to the outdoor temperature. This is achieved through proper insulation and ventilation. The insulation will minimize excessive heat from escaping into the attic and through the roof. And, proper ventilation will quickly remove any warm air that might build up to help maintain a more uniform temperature.

Consider the following helpful tips as you prepare for the winter ahead.

Attic Insulation

- Inspect your insulation for gaps, cracks or areas that have settled, been compressed, gotten wet or have

otherwise been compromised.

- Replace uninsulated ceiling (can) lights with those marked IC (the letters indicate the light is safe for direct insulation contact).
- Pull-down attic stairs and other access doors are often quite leaky. Weather-stripping or building a double door (analogous to a storm door on the front of a house) can help seal up these access points.
- If your home has heating ducts that run through the attic, inspect them for leaks or improper insulation.
- Ensure that bathroom and kitchen exhaust ducts are vented to the outside. Otherwise warm and/or moist air can blow into the attic leading to warm spots and possible reducing the effectiveness of the rest of the attic's insulation.

Attic Ventilation

- Clear existing gable or ridge vents of insulation, dust, vines, leaves or other debris.
- Soffit vents, which draw cool into the attic through the eaves, should also be cleared of debris.
- The recommended minimum ventilation is one square foot for every 150 square feet of attic floor area.
- Ensure that there is at least one and one-half inch of space between the insulation and the roof inside the attic at the eaves to create a clear air path for improved circulation.

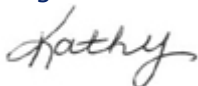
Finally, it is essential that you make sure gutters and downspouts are free of debris so melting water flows down and away from the house. Together, these tips will help to minimize your home's risk of ice damming.

If you have questions regarding your attic's insulation and ventilation, please feel free to contact BOWA's Customer Service Team for assistance.

For your convenience, past issues of the *BOWA Home Advisor*, are available in the 'About Us' section of our [web site](#).

If you would like more information on any of these topics or if there are other ways we can be of service, please contact [BOWA Builders](#).

Regards.



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