

Frequently asked questions



What is Firestone RubberCover membrane?

Firestone RubberCover EPDM is a 100% cured single-ply roofing membrane made of a synthetic rubber Ethylene-Propylene-Diene Terpolymer. Since 1980, more than 1,000,000,000 square metres of Firestone EPDM membranes have been successfully installed on commercial, industrial and residential roofs worldwide.

Does the membrane have an up and downside?

No, there is no difference between the top and bottom of the membrane, so it can be installed either side up. Some Firestone EPDM membranes (for non-Rubbercover installations) do need to be applied a certain side up, but this will be marked clearly on the membrane.

Does the membrane require a protective top coat?

No, the membrane is resistant to UV rays and ozone.

How long will the membrane last?

The membranes offer unmatched resistance to UV radiation, ozone, alkali rains and high or low temperatures. Recent studies show that the membrane has a life expectancy up to more than 50 years, even when exposed to sunlight.

Is maintenance required?

No specific maintenance is required for a Firestone RubberCover EPDM roofing system. However, a yearly inspection of the roof is recommended.

Can certain materials damage the membrane?

The membrane is less resistant to oil products. This category includes mineral and vegetable oils, petroleum based products, fresh bitumen and grease, and contact with these products should be avoided.

How can the membrane be repaired in case of damage?

For flat areas, the membrane can be easily repaired with a piece of Quickseam SA flashing. For damage at angle changes, a Quickseam Corner Flashing patch must be used instead.

Is the membrane available in different colours?

No, the membrane is only available in slate grey.

Which substrates can I adhere the membrane to?

Either OSB3 sterling board or plywood timber, but smooth concrete and tissue-faced insulation boards are also suitable. Note that new concrete should be fully cured before membrane installation and this takes a minimum of 28 days.

Installing the membrane directly onto an existing asphalt or bitumen surface is not recommended. In this case, either remove the existing bitumen waterproofing and lay a new suitable roof deck, or if this is impractical, installation of a timber overlay or insulation board mechanically fixed through the asphalt into the roof structure is required. Ensure that any existing roofing being overlaid is dry and secure enough to accept a new substrate.

Can the membrane be adhered onto a wet surface?

No. Ponded water, snow, frost and ice must be removed from the roof surface before installation of the membrane.

Must the roof surface be cleaned before adhesion of the membrane?

The surface must be clean, smooth, dry and free of sharp and/or loose particles, fasteners, debris and/or foreign materials such as oil, grease, bitumen residue and other contaminants.

Is the installation of the membrane weather dependent?

Yes, the minimum temperature for application of the adhesives is +5°C and the maximum humidity is 80%. If the temperature is likely to drop below freezing during the following 48 hours after application, Firestone Bonding Adhesive must be used instead of Water-based Adhesive.

Is one-sided application of the membrane sufficient?

Bonding adhesive must always be applied to both surfaces. This adhesive can be applied by roller or spray applied depending on the canister. Water-based adhesive can be applied either to the substrate only (wet mate method), or using the two-sided contact method, i.e., both to the underside of the membrane and the substrate, depending on various factors like weather conditions. Please refer to the "Installation Guidelines for Modular Water-based Adhesive".

Can the adhesive be left too long to flash off?

Yes. After the adhesive is applied and has flashed off, the surfaces are ready to be mated together. If the prepared surfaces are left open longer than necessary, there is a risk of dust and debris falling onto these areas. Also, high temperatures as well as falling cooler temperatures and moisture can affect the performance of the adhesives if the prepared surfaces are left open too long.

Why do bubbles or wrinkles form after the membrane is adhered?

Solvents in the adhesives that are not allowed enough time to flash off before membrane application will cause bubbles or wrinkling. The wet adhesive distorts the membrane causing ripples. Although the bubbles tend to recede, the membrane is unlikely to be adhered at these areas, and in varying weather conditions, the bubbles and air pockets could re-appear.

What are the coverage rates for the adhesives?

Approximate figures are as follows:

Bonding adhesive is 2 sq. metres per litre.

Water-based adhesive (two-sided application method) is 2 sq. metres per litre.

Water-based adhesive (one-sided wet mate method) is 3 sq. metres per litre.

Must the membrane be cleaned before applying Firestone QuickPrime Plus?

No, except when the membrane is excessively dirty, in which case it must be cleaned with water and a clean rag.

Which products require application of Firestone Quickprime Plus?

Firestone QuickPrime Plus primer must be used with ALL Firestone Quickseam products in order to clean and prime the membrane before application of the tapes.

Are specific tools required for installation?

Yes, the Quickscriber tool for application of the QuickPrime Plus, a silicon hand roller and penny roller for application of the Quickseam tapes. Please refer to "Roof Preparation" for a comprehensive list of standard tools you will need for installation.

Are any precautions required during installation?

Both Bonding Adhesive and QuickPrime Plus can only be used in well ventilated areas. Both products must be kept away from ignition sources. Do not smoke when using. Firestone recommends wearing gloves when using QuickPrime Plus. For further information, please consult the Material Safety Data Sheets as well as the information shown on the product labels.

Can the membrane be in contact with a hot pipe penetration (e.g., boiler flue)?

The use of double-skinned penetrations is required.

Can I walk on a Firestone RubberCover EPDM roof?

Yes, the roof can be accessed for periodical maintenance, but take care to ensure no sharp objects (e.g., small stones) are attached to the underside of footwear. In case of regular foot traffic, the membrane must be protected with a walkway, e.g., pavers placed on protective rubber feet, or adhered to the membrane with Firestone Walkway Pads.

Can the membrane be used as a pond liner?

No, the membrane is only suitable for roofs and gutters. The processes used in the manufacture of Firestone RubberCover EPDM are different to those used in the manufacture of EPDM pond liners, and if installed, could be potentially harmful to aquatic life.

Can the membrane be combined with a green roof system?

Yes, a sedum vegetation can be placed over the membrane provided that a root resistant geotextile is used between the vegetation and the membrane. Please see our green roof page for further information.

Can the membrane be ballasted?

Yes, it is possible to cover the membrane with rounded washed bank river gravel and/or pavers placed on protective rubber feet, but the membrane must always be fully adhered to the substrate. Firestone recommends the use of a geotextile polyester underlay between the membrane and the ballast.

Is there a warranty for Firestone RubberCover EPDM membrane?

Permaroof UK provides a 20 material-only warranty for installations carried out by Permaroof-trained contractors. Please refer to the warranty section for further information.