

Professional Services

- + Roof consulting
- + Construction documentation and administration
- + Condition assessment reports
- + Leak investigations
- + Cost estimating
- + Hands-on surveys and test probes
- + Historic building restoration and rehabilitation
- + Facilities maintenance plans
- + Materials analysis and selection
- + Preservation planning

Steep-Slope Roofing

- + Slate
- + Wood shingles
- + Clay tile
- + Standing seam and batten seam copper
- + Asphalt shingles
- + Flashings
- + Rainwater conduction systems

Low-Slope Roofing

- + Flat seam copper
- + Built-up roofing
- + Modified bitumen systems
- + EPDM
- + Fluid-applied systems
- + Flashings

Building Envelope

- + Exterior masonry
- + Windows and doors
- + Stained and leaded glass
- + Architectural woodwork
- + Ornamental ironwork
- + Steeples, parapets, and cornices

Competence

- + Expertise in roofing technology and building pathology
- + Holistic approach to identifying and treating deterioration
- + Hands-on, up-close surveys from ladders and high reach equipment
- + Principal involvement in all projects
- + Attention to detail
- + Close client collaboration
- + Frequent site visits during construction to monitor quality
- + Continuously refining our understanding of building technologies

**SOLUTIONS FOR THE ENTIRE
BUILDING ENVELOPE**

Slate Update

As a naturally occurring rock, slate now is the same as it has always been. Slate production, however, is not nearly so static. The following topics are just a few newsworthy updates.

Purple Slate

Clear, unfading purple slate is currently among the rarest roofing slate colors in the world. Purple slate currently available from domestic sources is weathering (meaning a certain percentage will turn brown over time) and/or spotted with green markings. While quarries may try to minimize the size and quantity of green markings before palletizing the slate for shipment, it can still have a mottled appearance on a roof (see photo at right, top). Due to the scarcity of the color, domestic purple slate can cost up to 1.5 times the price of other readily available colors.

Unfading purple slate is currently available from the Penrhyn Quarry in northwest Wales. Although some small green markings should be expected, it is largely a clear purple color (see photo at right, bottom). The primary disadvantages are price, which can be about double that of readily available domestic colors, and lead time, which can be 2 to 3 months, depending on the time of year and order quantity. In addition, Welsh purple is typically produced in a limited range of sizes (primarily metric). A premium may be charged for other sizes and the lead time may be even longer to account for fabrication.

New Quarries

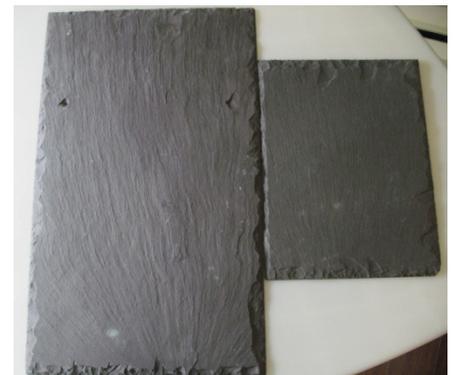
In the past two years, at least two new slate quarries have begun operations. The James River Slate Company in Arvon, Virginia is producing Grayson Slate®, an unfading black slate with a sheen contributed by its

mica content and a service life expected of slate from Buckingham County (about 175 years!).

The New England Slate Company in Poultney, Vermont is quarrying a weathering purple slate called Eagle Purple, characterized by a range of purple shades with some green markings. Given the new-ness of the quarry, only limited quantities are currently available, though production is expected to increase in the near future.



Typical color range of today's domestic unfading purple slate.



Welsh unfading purple samples

Problems with Imports

Slates imported from countries such as Spain, China, India, and Brazil are becoming increasingly readily available in the United States. The quality of slate produced in foreign countries varies widely. Unfortunately, each country has different testing procedures for

SLATE UPDATE CONT'D.

evaluating slate quality, making it difficult to compare slate from one country to another and feel confident about the quality of what you're getting. Some of the common problems with imported slate that we see include knots (rounded projections on the surface of a slate), cramps ("steps" in the cleaved surface of a slate; see photo at right), and warping. These imperfections can prevent slates from laying flat on a roof, creating a visual effect sometimes referred to as "zippering" (see photo at left), which may impact the watertightness of the roof and make the slate more prone to breakage.



INDUSTRY NEWS

The National Slate Association (NSA) recently published a new slate pallet card; a durable, plastic coated card sized to be attached to the slats of slate pallets. The double-sided cards provide illustrated storing, handling, and installation instructions designed to give the end user a basic understanding of what to do (and not to do) with the slate shingles once they arrive on site. The cards were inspired by the illustrated packaging employed by asphalt shingle manufacturers. NSA's pallet cards were customized for individual quarriers and distributors with their logos printed on the front. Jeff Levine is chair of the NSA's Installation Standards Committee and co-wrote the pallet cards. Look for the NSA pallet card on your next slate order!



Ridgewalker News



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