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Heidi Ellsworth:

Hello everyone, and welcome to another Lunch & Learn from Roofer's Coffee Shop. It is snowing outside right now, and it is cold this winter, and we've got a lot of cold weather going on across the country. So this Lunch & Learn is all about how to extend your season.

Today's learning objectives. One, how to extend your season. Two, Arctic Edge as a solution, and you'll find out what Arctic Edge is. And finally, the advantages of both using the right products, and also having more business throughout the winter.

Abby Feinstein:

My name is Abby Feinstein. I'm the senior product manager for Commercial Roofing at CertainTeed. I've been with the company about seven years. Prior to that, I was in a variety of construction/sustainability type businesses, but yeah, happily been with CertainTeed in the same role for the seven.

Heidi Ellsworth:

So Abby, let's talk about the importance more than ever of roofing contractors being able to extend their season. What are you seeing?

Abby Feinstein:

I mean, if you look through just the last couple years especially, I feel like life is pre COVID and post COVID.

Heidi Ellsworth:

Yeah.

Abby Feinstein:

Roofing is hectic and crazy and nonstop. So contractors are, from what I can see, constantly looking for ways to be able to fit that one more job in. So we are just trying to help them find an economical and safe way to extend the roofing season so that they can get a more jobs. Of course, there's the contractors that love the slow down time, take time with the family, which we totally support. So if you want to take off while it's cold, good on you for going into roofing. We do work during cold weather. It's a different technique, right? Because the materials react differently no matter what you're using in cold weather.

Heidi Ellsworth:

Well, and to go to that point of talking about labor shortage, one of the most important things for every roofing company out there is to keep their labor, to retain. And so by keeping your crews busy throughout the winter, much higher retention level. They don't look around so much.

Abby Feinstein:

For sure. Yep, that's a great point.

Heidi Ellsworth:

What's kind of the history of some of the products that have been used in low temperatures used to extend that season?

Abby Feinstein:

A lot of times you'll see winter grades, summer grades. That's been most manufacturers approach, whether you're talking about the material itself or the adhesives being used to help put those materials in. What we see a lot within the CertainTeed product line is we have a lot of contractors that might do self adhered for the labor savings, for the training advantages, health and safety, all the things that support roofing. But then they stop at this shoulder months, call it September, October, certainly by November, December, and then they'll pivot to torching because the flame fundamentally is caught. That's the most common thing that we see. If you're talking about roofing in general, you see a lot of winter grade products which pose its own problems both for distribution and contractors, because you're talking about managing two different sets of SKUs.

Heidi Ellsworth:

Right. So talk a little bit more about the SA membranes. Like you said, that is a solid solution that so many contractors are using. So what is changing now with being able to bring in, use that product more in low temps?

Abby Feinstein:

Sure. So Flintastic essay, which is the CertainTeed SA brand, was introduced in 2003. So next year we're actually going to be celebrating 20 years in service, but has always been published to go down 50 degrees in rising. So with no ancillary support, you can install Flintastic essay 50 degrees and above. And that's a pretty common temperature, whether you're 40, 50. That's typically the cutoff for roofing if you're going to use traditional or summer grade or year round materials. And things that fall below that are either winter grade or need some additional support.

So a couple years ago we really started addressing this with a focus because we were hearing pretty vehemently from the market that was both a complaint from our SA adopters, the contractors that loved SA anyway, that they really didn't have a solution for shoulder months and the winter. And it was also something holding people back that had not yet adopted SA, whether that was contractors or the spec market. Specifiers and consultants were not comfortable specifying a product that really wasn't a year round solution.

So a couple years ago we approved after actually testing for almost a decade the use of a hot air welder in side laps and end laps. And while it works really well, it really slows things down. And so arguably that's the number one driver for SA is the speed of which that roof goes down. We've talked about that in our labor studies. So for the last couple years we've been working on a solution that preserves that benefit but also allows the cold weather application.

Heidi Ellsworth:

Now how does that influence warranties? I mean, you just mentioned specifiers and what they're specifying and then you have the warranties below it. How is that all working within the cold weather applications?

Abby Feinstein:

Sure. So I don't want to speak to other companies warranties and what they stand behind, but we've just adopted it into our standard integrity roof system warranties. So whether you're doing a product only warranty or a no dollar limit material and workmanship warranty, Arctic Edge is now written into the warranty as an acceptable material that's just covered. So regardless of warranty duration, we warrant

SA systems up to 25 years. If you used Arctic Edge as part of that installation, it would just be part of the warranty. There's not a separate warranty for the project.

Heidi Ellsworth:

Really, this is going to be a game changer. So maybe just tell us overall what is Arctic Edge? How does it work?

Abby Feinstein:

Yes, yes, let's get into the details. So Arctic Edge is a use only as needed auxiliary tape and it's designed to boost adhesion in critical interfaces while the weather is cold. Accounting for the fact that the entirety of the roof and your like full roof long term bond is going to occur as the sun beats down on that roof and forms things up. So the critical interfaces I'm talking about are overlap areas essentially and the perimeter of the roof. So you want to make sure as a contractor of course, that when you walk off that roof at the end of the night you have peace of mind and you're not worried about a blow off or leaks working in cold weather. So it's about a four inch wide tape, actually if you could picture holding a roll of toilet paper, Arctic Edge is a little bit heavier, but from a form factor that's pretty much what you got.

Heidi Ellsworth:

Okay,

Abby Feinstein:

So you want to use, I say that actually on the four inches because you actually can't walk into your standard big box store and buy a four inch wide tape applicator. So we've purchased handheld applicators through Uline. There's also handheld and standup applicators through Grainger. But you want to make sure if you're going to use Arctic Edge, just kind of think ahead in terms of application. Let's say you're using a mechanically attached base in your system, Arctic Edge is not going to have anything to do with that. You're going to mechanically attach as you normally would. But at the first point in your system at which you're going to self adhere, you're going to want to put the Arctic Edge around frame of the roof or the perimeter of the roof. It's a double-sided tape, so it goes down and then you're going to want to pull the release off the tape to expose the top side sticky and then you just adhere as you would.

We have instructional support obviously, which is better than me just kind of talking this through, but if you can picture, okay, you get your first course down with your perimeter edging, then as you install subsequent courses, whether they're base sheets or cap sheets, you're going to be putting Arctic Edge down in that overlap or the salvage area, again, pulling the release before you stick down.

Couple tips and tricks or things I would want to point out. It is not used for granule surface overlaps. So if you were doing a granule overlap, let's say as part of an end lap or a cut roll or face flashing detail, we would still recommend if you don't want to keep mastic warm or something like that that you would use during warm weather. If the mastic gets cold, that would be a very traditional go-to solution in those areas. It gets kind of difficult to spread, like trying to spread butter after it's been in the refrigerator. So your options would be to keep it warm and we can talk about techniques for that. Or you can use a hot air welder for granular overlaps as well. Some folks choose just to avoid the potential mess of mastic.

Heidi Ellsworth:

So why, when we're talking about Arctic Edge, just maybe explain to everybody, why? What's so special about it that it has this adhesion when you're on the laps compared to just doing your normal?

Abby Feinstein:

The straight laps. Yeah. So the bottom side of Flintastic SA self-adhere membranes is an SPS modified adhesive. So the role itself is SPS modified and we have a proprietary adhesive that gets built into that bottom surface. Fundamentally that adhesive starts to, the molecules if you will, both start to want to hold onto each other to keep warm as it gets pulled out so they're not like Lucy goosey and wanting to give each other a hug when they get slapped together.

So one option we could have done is go on the winter summer grade roll where we had our summer solution, which is basically the standard solution we've had for 20 years and we could have adjusted the adhesive on the back surface so that it did stay warmer and wanted to be happy and grab onto it's partner when it gets stuck together. And we do have a competitor that has a solution like that out there.

We just felt we have a very deep relationship with distribution and have talked voice of customer from our contractors and there's just a lot of issues with trying to maintain two roles. There's a bit of Murphy's law, which is especially when you're in the October, November or the April, March time period where it could be cold but it might not be cold, which set of inventory do you keep. If you have inventory on hand and you don't sell it out, now you're stuck sitting on that until the next season comes around.

And planning, right? So if you have a job booked for a shoulder month, what are you trying to buy? Are you buying a winter grade or the summer grade and you don't want to, if you buy the winter grade and then you have an unseasonably warm day, you're dealing with a pretty soft roll.

So we really wanted to come out with a solution that didn't touch the rolls, let the roles be preserved and be what they are. And so it is a proprietary, basically acrylic based accolade tape that's reinforced. So it's clear, it almost looks like packing tape, but it is deathly sticky. So I will warn you from example or from experience, if you do lay it out and pull that release film off, you better be ready to install your membrane. If you put your knee down in it, you're going to stick to it. You step in it, you're going to stick to it. If you drop your essay membrane and it still has its release film on it, one of the things we did when we were playing around in the field with it was we had the tape all ready to go and then we went to position the membrane and that was a mistake because it got stuck to the tape and then we kind of looked like fools. So you have to have your essay membrane ready to go in position with the release film off before you essentially unveil your sticky surface with Arctic Edge.

Heidi Ellsworth:

Those are the kind of things too. And I know you have videos and you have brochures and you have training out in the field, but be sure that you know how to do it so that your crews enjoy it and get it right.

Abby Feinstein:

Yeah. Only other kind of major tip and trick I would say is the way a lot of the standup applicators work, they're great for everything that's not the perimeter. In terms of production and keeping your essay speed up, throw a roll in a standup applicator, it's like a floor tape applicator if you can picture for industrial kind of warehouses or whatnot. And you can go really quick because it has its own little like weighted roll. It gets the tape down very quickly, nice long side laps. But the way that it works, typically you can't use it on the perimeter because half of it would kind of fall off into the sky. It needs that be braced on both sides. So you want to have a handheld applicator regardless. But certainly for larger projects I recommend making the $300 investment and getting a standup applicator.

Heidi Ellsworth:

Yeah, because I mean the whole idea is speed and doing it right. Correct?

Abby Feinstein:

Right.

Heidi Ellsworth:

It goes down to 35 degrees, but what if it's 34? What if it's 30? Can people still be installing it and using it at that time?

Abby Feinstein:

They can. We actually have tested the tape from an adhesion perspective in a cold room and it adheres perfectly fine down to 20 degrees. The reason we said 35, and really if we were okay to be less technical, the answer is really to stay above freezing. And we do that not because the tape is going to give out on you, but really because then you start to be dealing with dew point and the tape is very, very sticky in cold weather, but it is not sticky to moisture. If you start, let's say early in the morning cross that dew point threshold where now you have condensate on the roof essentially, you would still need to wait for the roof to dry.

Heidi Ellsworth:

A lot of times on the roof when it's cold, you have to warm up products, you have to checkup. How does that work? Does the tape need to be warmed up or is it ready to go?

Abby Feinstein:

Yeah, it's a really good point. Cold weather means that products can be installed in ambient cold weather. The whole roll, whether you're talking about modified roles or single ply rolls, they contract. I mean, this is basic physics. So once those rolls are then installed, if you installed them in a contracted state, they really have a difficult time then spreading out and getting happy at baseline. And so what ends up happening is you'll see tenting or mole runs. So it's critical to keep roles warm regardless of the roles you're using when you're working in cold weather.

The best thing that I've seen, which I would recommend, is investing in a 10 x 10 or 10 x 20 even pop-up tent that has the sides to it. Those tents are relatively light and that way if you stage your roof, especially on a big project, you can actually kind of put the tent where you need it, throw some sandbags down of course so you don't have lift off, but then keep a heater in that tent and keep a couple pallets and adhesives warm wherever you need them warm and then move the tent as you progress around the roof. That's the best thing I've seen.

Heidi Ellsworth:

What are some of the biggest advantages you see to using this product to extend your season?

Abby Feinstein:

I think the detail associated with using it as needed is the biggest advantage for a contractor. So you're not going to spend money that you don't need when you're talking about Arctic Edge because you're just drawing your standard roles and you're investing a nominal amount to buy some tape to go along with

that. The tape does not go bad. You're going to have a cold season and if you're installing SA, you're going to use it. So if you buy it and you're prepared for your job and you end up not using, it's not like being stuck with pallets upon pallets of roles that you didn't need or forcing your crews to work through a basically warm application with a cold weather solution.

The other example that I would use is a classic fall day in Philly, I would say, which is that you wake up and it's 26 degrees, but by midday it's 54. What do you do then? So what I really like about this is that you're using Flintastic essay all day long and at the point in the day, which you don't need to use Arctic Edge to get that bond where you need it, just stop using it.

Heidi Ellsworth:

Yeah, it makes so much sense.

Abby Feinstein:

Yeah.

Heidi Ellsworth:

I think about September, October, that's how those days are.

Abby Feinstein:

Yeah. So for me, if I'm a roofer talking to my client, I'm excited about the fact that my crew knows these products, we put it down fast and now we have a solution to continue to use that product that delivers the same benefits that modified asphalt has for years. Without the fumes, without the hot cattle, all the things that would use to use to sell self adhered. You're not training your crews on something different and if they don't need it, they won't use it. Right.

Heidi Ellsworth:

Along with that, let's just talk a little bit about the advantages of using Arctic Edge with the SA membranes. What are some of the things it eliminates? So what are some of the things like you talked about earlier, hot air welding or slow curing metal primers? Talk a little bit about that.

Abby Feinstein:

Yeah. For the folks that adopted the hot air welding for the last couple years, this is definitely going to be a game changer for them. I appreciate the loyalty, but it was definitely a slowdown. So we love that we're eliminating that on side laps. Thank you for bringing up the metal primer. I almost forgot to mention that. So with any metal details, so a very obvious one would be edge metal. If your roof terminates at an edge, perhaps with a gutter or just fascia along the edge of the wall, but not a parapet wall up against some other vertical surface, you're going to have edge metal in that system. And so traditionally in normal weather when you're, normal weather, warmer weather I should say, when you're installing SA, you're going to want to prime any metal surfaces that are going to be self adhered to so you get a good bond.

That's fine. And we have prime aerosol, which is a quick dry and keeps things moving in warm conditions. In cold conditions you can still use the primer, but the flash off time for that to tack up can be like 30 minutes. And then you've got guys just standing around waiting for primer to flash off. So we were excited to test the bond of the tape to a metal surface. It bonds very well. You do need to prep the metal accordingly. Just as you would for using primer, you don't want any of the late oils from

manufacturing to be on that top surface. So you do need to clean that off. But then, yeah, you're not waiting for primer to dry, you can just apply the tape like you would any surface and go right down to it.

Heidi Ellsworth:

That's excellent. And then a time saver. Wow. Okay. So let's just kind of go back again and talk a little bit about the crews, the advantages to the crews. So what I liked is what you were saying earlier too, that they don't have to be switching roles on the roof, but they can also judge their own day and they can go to work. I mean, I think on some of those days when it starts out at 35 in the morning and gets to 50, crews just wait to start installing and they don't have to anymore.

Abby Feinstein:

Right. Losing half a day is not good for your business, it's also not good for your crew. To your point, about retention, that is relying on those earnings. It's Christmas time for Pete's sake. Everybody wants presents under that tree. Mama needs new shoes. So you want to get on as many jobs as you can when you can.

Heidi Ellsworth:

Yeah. And keep your crews happy, keep them busy. Okay. What about advantages too around the fumes, flames? I mean, you were talking about torching earlier. I mean, this really kind of takes all of that away.

Abby Feinstein:

Yeah. One of the reasons we didn't look into primer as a solution long term, you start to get into solvents when you're dealing with old weather solutions in a lot of cases with primers. And we really wanted to uphold health and safety benefits of self adhering. So a lot of what we hear from contractors, whether it's driven by wanting to reduce insurance premiums or attracting labor from the new labor pool is these guys, if they can avoid it, or gals, don't want to be dealing with 350 degree kettles. They want a pleasant day at work just as much as you and I did. So we were really excited to find a solution that was not noxious, no odor whatsoever, just totally upheld the benefits of no fumes, no flames.

Heidi Ellsworth:

I love it. I love it. So for the contractors out here, the roofing companies, the office who are watching this right now and they're like, this is it. This is what we need. This is how we're going to extend our season. How do they start? How do they kind of get the training that you're talking about and just making sure that they're doing everything the right way?

Abby Feinstein:

Sure. Every single contractor that I've talked to about this is cautiously optimistic. So they're like, this is the solution I would use, but I need to see that it works. So no problem. We are providing free samples and our territory managers can help you get the applicator or use one of their applicators just to try things out on a job, even if you want to try it on a small section. So I would say that. Don't feel like you need to jump into the pool and all your clothes.

So first thing, I would pick up a free sample. We do have a lot of support for instruction, but your commercial territory manager is your best go to in terms of liaison to all of that information. And we are ever increasing our technical support out into the field. So if they're at a point where you would like to have some support on the job for the first job, our CTMs, are commercial territory managers, are trained

up, but we also have field techs and we can come out and support the first job. It really is pretty straightforward.

Heidi Ellsworth:

Yeah, that's excellent. That's excellent. Abby, thank you. Another great development, great product. Thank you for everything you do for the industry and all the great technology that you're bringing to the forefront. This is excellent. Thank you.

Abby Feinstein:

Thanks, Heidi. Thank you for having me and talk about it. I appreciate it.

Heidi Ellsworth:

We love it, we love it. So for everyone out there, if you have your learning objectives, your download sheet, please remember, this is talking about how to extend your season, make more money, make your customers happier, the solution of Arctic Edge from CertainTeed, and the advantages of not only using the right products like Arctic Edge, but extending that season not only for your customers, but for your employees, for your company overall, and your profitability.

So I hope you all enjoyed this Lunch & Learn. Thank you so much. Be sure to take a picture and send it to us and we'll give you a lunch on us. Thanks a lot and have a great day.