New Zealand Metal Roofing Manufacturers Association

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BEF01 Position of Eaves Flashing to Underlay

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Eaves flashings are traditionally laid between the underlay and the eaves purlin. This is not always necessary, or even desirable.

The reasons for the common practice are based on the common misconception that condensation forms on the underside of the roof, drops onto the underlay and runs down to the eaves and into the gutter. In practice, in a typical situation where an absorbent underlay is in contact with the roof, most condensation forms in or under the underlay, where it is held until ambient conditions improve and it escapes in the form of water vapour. The little condensation that forms on the underside of the roof is trapped between the roof and the underlay by surface tension and, in experimental conditions, it is extremely hard to get any portion of such moisture to migrate to the eaves.

In typical situations, it is best practice to lay the underlay over the eaves flashing, as this allows the underlay to terminate short of the eaves line and not be exposed to the weather but it is acceptable to lay the flashing over the underlay.

When the roof terminates on a butyl gutter or valley, it is best to separate the butyl from the steel roof or eaves flashing to prevent premature corrosion. This can be achieved with underlay or a non-conductive non-absorbent compatible material. In such cases the laying of the eaves flashing over the underlay is recommended, unless the design calls for some other form of separation of the two products.

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Editor Metal Roofing and Wall Cladding Code of Practice