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SHINGLE COLOR VARIATION

Have you ever noticed how some roofs have large areas that look like the shingles are a slightly different color or tone from the rest of the roof? Although uncommon, this condition is known as “color variation”, and has been around since the first asphalt shingles were made.

Shingles are covered in colored mineral granules. The colors are “fired” onto the rock particles to ensure long-lasting and uniform coloration. Despite the best process controls, there can be minor color variations, just as there can be minor color variations in different production runs of paints, wall coverings, fabrics, etc.

Most shingle manufacturers use mixtures of these pure granule colors to make finished shingles using a variety of granules in different ratios to render different tones in the product. For example, IKO’s Dual Brown blend uses mixtures of black, brown, and tan colored granules. Further, different parts of the shingles get these granules in different proportions so as to make light, dark, and medium-colored areas. The dark area could be 60% black and 40% brown, whereas the light area could have none of the black granules at all! By using these different blended areas on the shingle, any slight color variations in the individual granule colors can be masked.

There are many ways that the potential for color variation can be further reduced using some simple shingle installation tips as well.

1. Watch for the blend code on the ends of the shingle bundles. Occasionally IKO develops newer, better-looking shingle blends. When we change the granule ratios in a blend, the blend gets a new “code”, which is an alpha-numeric designation after the color name; e.g. Dual Brown B02. Product with different blend codes cannot be mixed on the same roof, as they will look different. E.g. Dual Brown B01 should not be mixed with Dual Brown B02. Although they will be similar multi-toned brown blends, one will be darker, lighter, sharper, etc. relative to the other one.
2. Shingle bundles are also identified with a production date code showing the date and time of manufacture; this is usually an 11 character alphanumeric code on the side of the bundle. Although IKO’s production processes are computer-controlled and extremely uniform, it is possible for shingles made one day to have a slightly different coloration than shingles made another day, due to circumstances beyond our control. Therefore, before you begin applying the shingles to your roof, take a quick look at the production date codes. To minimize an appearance of color shading, use shingles of the same production date (the fifth, sixth and seventh characters of the production code will match in shingles from the same production run), use shingles of the same blend code (letter and two digits appearing immediately after the color on the side of the bundle), intermix shingles from different bundles, follow recommended application patterns, and avoid blocking. In case you do have two or three different dates of manufacture, try to allocate the bundles so that each roof area or side of the house uses a separate manufacturing date.
3. IKO has written instructions for the application of our shingles on each and every bundle wrapper. These instructions have been developed to render what we feel is the most functional and best looking finished roof system. To ensure the best roof appearance, always follow the application instructions printed on the wrapper. If you use a different application technique, you may end up with a roof that shows streaks, splotches, or patches, which will not be our responsibility.

Thankfully, true variation in the color of properly applied shingle roofs is a rarity. Often, the appearance of color variation is just a temporary phenomenon due to the presence of small amounts of oils and powders remaining on the shingles from the manufacturing process. These oils and powders weather off after a few months, and the roof color becomes uniform and balanced.

For additional information on any of IKO’s products or application requirements, visit us on the web at www.iko.com, or contact us in Canada at 1-888-766-2468, or the United States at 1-888-456-7663.