“Shingles consume little manufacturing energy because much of the work is done by hand” says states. Western Red Cedar and Yellow Cedar are naturally durable roofing and siding products that are decay and bug resistant as well as being superior insulators. Certikote™ shingles and shingles meet Class I and A impact resistance ratings, and Certigrade™ shingles and Certi-Split™ shakes withstand wind speeds from 175 to 245 mph.

Husted notes that results vary depending upon building height, location, roof slope and environment. Pressure treated fire retardant shakes and shingles are also available. Western Red Cedar roofs need to breathe, so it’s crucial to install a permeable underlayment underneath and use the proper fasteners. According to Costhelper Home & Garden, shingle costs range from $400 to $700 per square and shakes from $800 to $1000 per square. See www.costhelper.com/wood-shingle-comparison for details.

CLAY AND CONCRETE
Since ancient Roman times, terra cotta tiles have been used as roofing tile material. Ludowici Roof Tile has manufactured terra cotta tile roofs in North America since 1888.

“The durability and architectural beauty of clay tiles make it a popular choice for high profiles projects and homes” replies Brian Martucci, Regional Manager - Midwest, Ludowici. Roof Tile. “And clay tiles can be made to match any architectural style — from Spanish and Mission, to old world European cottage to modern and steel. They can even be made to look like authentic stone and slate roofs, but without the maintenance.”

Martucci notes that while prices can vary from $350 to $1000 per square, depending upon the type of profile, glaze and other factors like custom textures, clay roof tiles come with the longest lifespan of any roofing material. Many clay tiles installed by Ludowici at the beginning of the last century are still in place and looking beautiful today. Products are 100% recyclable as they are made of local and natural materials (clay and water) and are made through a unique process which creates no waste. “At the end of their lifespan” Ludowici adds, “these tiles can be recycled and used as garden walkways, filler or filter components for stormwater management.”

METAL
Durable, highly weather resistant, color retention, energy efficient, low maintenance and fire retardant — a metal roof offers homeowners many benefits. Labor and material costs range from $700 to $1,200 per square with installation. But with manufacturer warranties up to 50 years, a metal roof should last the life of your home.

“Metal roofs reflect the sun’s UV rays by as much as 75% or more and may save up to 40% in heating and cooling energy costs” states Tracy Husted, owner of Covenant Metal Roofing Company in Anchorage, Wis. “Steel roofing is a green product comprised of 25% to 40% recycled materials, and its 100% recyclable. Weight varies from 100 to 115 pounds per square. They will not burn, and they are resistant to 160 mph winds.”

During heavy rains, a metal roof is quiet and sounds similar to an asphalt roof, however the pitch of the sound may differ. Consider placing snow brakes near entry or available areas to prevent large amounts of snow from coming down. “Metal roofs are permanent,” Husted adds, “In the event of replacing a damaged panel or adding on to your home, they can be difficult to remove.”

FIBER CEMENT
For decades, fiber cement tiles have been used as an alternative to slate. When they were initially developed, they contained asbestos to give the mold for the profile of the tile. The asbestos has been replaced with composites. Today’s tiles are made with fiber wood, cement and clay.

“Fiber cement tiles are lighter than slate and weigh only slightly more than wooden shingles. They are durable, fireproof and are available in many styles, textures, colors and shapes, including straight cover shingles, or chameleon patterns, scalloped edge shingles and wood panel tiles” explains Darren Dews, Roofing Sales Specialist at Western Products in Fargo, North Dakota.

Over time, fiber cement tiles can show wear. They are also susceptible to fungal growth. Cost per square range from $180 to $300 and installation costs per square vary from $250 to $400.

SLATE
Slate is a roofing product that has been utilized for centuries. Long lasting with a beautiful appearance, slate is renowned for its high resistance to the assaults of rain, snow and wind. Environmentally friendly, low maintenance, fireproof and non-staining, a slate roof will live a lifetime. Costs per square vary from $350 to $600, with installation costs ranging from $300 to $500.

“Available in unique colors and textures that will enhance any roof, durable slate is the perfect marriage of beauty and practicality,” claims Dews “as a natural product, which means that no two pieces are exactly alike. Light variations in color, texture, thickness and sheen enhance its natural beauty and the combination of appearance and performance makes slate perfect for any other roof system.”

Whether your roofing preferences dictate a quality product from a reputable source, do want to hire a licensed contractor for installation. Know your options. Evaluate all the pros and cons. Examine your budget. Factor in the long-term benefits. Armed with knowledge, you’re sure to be happy with the right decision about which roofing product will protect your home for years to come.

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