

RE-SIDING

Before you re-side your property, consider the facts...



Before



After

As an owner of an older wood frame house or building you want to preserve or enhance your investment and keep up its exterior appearance. But you also hope to limit the time and money spent on maintenance. Looking at your peeling paint and imagining a simpler alternative, you've probably been urged to consider vinyl or other synthetic siding. To help you make sense of the many claims made for these products, this brochure is designed to sort out fact from wishful thinking.

Much of the charm and character of older wood frame houses and buildings comes from their warm clapboards or shingles and simple or elaborate details. Maintaining these features rather than re-siding may actually save you money and trouble down the road; retaining distinctive features will certainly save the historic value of your property.



Re-siding a building with vinyl changes its appearance more than you might think. Original proportions are lost and the distinctive character of the building is destroyed when details are covered or removed.

Using plastic instead of the natural wood gives the surface a hard, artificial look. And poor installation can create serious problems.

When vinyl siding is installed original architectural features are often lost and the siding underneath is damaged. This brochure advises property owners to consider alternatives before choosing vinyl's quick fix. Retaining the beauty of clapboards and shingles can be the better way.

Before: wood



After: vinyl siding



MYTH: Vinyl siding protects your house or building.

FACT: Vinyl siding can damage your existing clapboards or shingles.

Rot

- Vinyl siding can trap moisture migrating from the interior to the exterior on older buildings without interior vapor barriers. Moisture build-up within walls could cause decay and reduce the effectiveness of any insulation.
- Water entering through cracks in improperly installed vinyl siding or flashing can rot original clapboard or shingles and eventually undermine the structural frame of the building.
- Vinyl siding conceals damage caused by rot. Hidden from view, decay is hard to see and can be difficult to repair.

Insect Damage

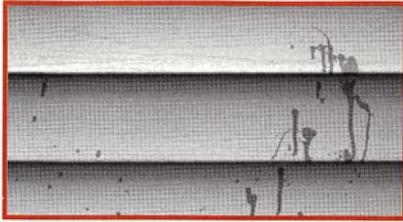
- Damp wood under vinyl siding attracts wood eating insects like termites and carpenter ants.
- Since re-siding makes inspection difficult, insects may do considerable damage before being discovered.

MYTH: Vinyl siding is maintenance free.

FACT: Nothing is maintenance free.

Cleaning

- Vinyl siding should be washed periodically or it will become dirty and unsightly.
- Reaching siding on a 2 1/2 or 3 story building with heavy hoses could be difficult.
- Professional cleaning can be expensive.
- Stains from insect spray are permanent.
- Vinyl siding can develop molds and mildew; if left too long you risk permanent staining.



Fading

- Some brands of siding may fade, making it hard to match if you need to replace a section. If you want to add to or change your building, it is difficult to match the color and texture.

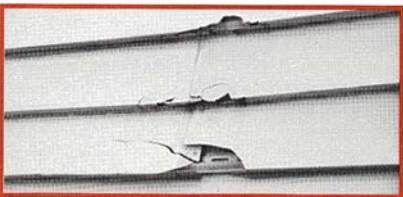
Shattering

- Although vinyl has been improved, it can still shatter in very cold weather when sharply struck by a hard object such as a wind blown branch or thrown ball.
- Shattered vinyl cannot be repaired, it must be replaced.

MYTH: Insulation with vinyl siding will substantially reduce heating bills.

FACT: By itself, vinyl has nearly no insulation value. Insulation must be added at additional cost.

- Unfortunately, insulating products placed under vinyl siding have the lowest insulation value.
- Attic insulation and weather-stripping windows can be more cost efficient.



MYTH: Vinyl siding improves the appearance of your home or building.

FACT: Vinyl siding often spoils its beauty, character and style.

- Older houses and buildings are appreciated for their history and style. Removing architectural features and trim diminishes historic character; covering them conceals valuable assets.
- When siding is placed over clapboard or shingle, windows and doors sink into the background instead of standing out.
- Because vinyl siding has different profiles than clapboard or shingle, it shows up in sun and shadow as harsher than the wood.
- Vinyl siding tries to copy the natural material, but plastic never has the warmth or texture of wood.

MYTH: Vinyl siding improves the value of your home or building.

FACT: Siding can lower the value of your property.

Hidden Deterioration Costs

- If you do have rot, mildew and insect damage it will reduce the resale value of your property.

Color

- Vinyl siding is difficult to paint. Prospective buyers may dislike the color but be reluctant to pay for expensive residing.

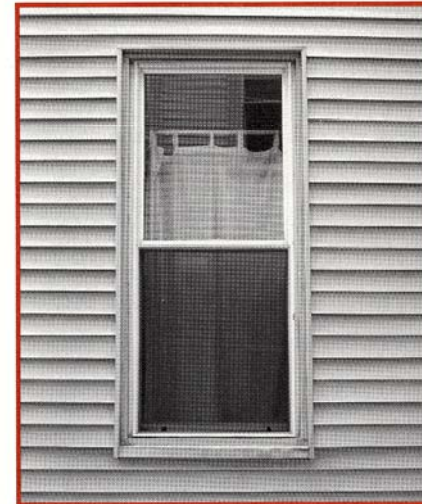
Resale Value

- Many people don't like vinyl, so the resale value of your property could be limited by re-siding it.

Before: clapboard, with trim



After: vinyl siding, no trim



IF YOU ARE STILL DETERMINED TO USE VINYL:

- Consider leaving the entire front of the building in wood and siding the less public areas.
- Keep and paint all the wood trim to help preserve historic character. Install siding only up to, not over the cornerboards, window and door surrounds, fascias and cornices. Retain but do not cover brackets, porch posts and balusters.
- Find a siding that exactly matches the profile, finish and depth or exposure of the original clapboards or shingles. Painted clapboards are smooth, so raised wood-grain vinyls won't replicate their look. Try to conceal the trim pieces at joints and edges, the rolled edges are noticeable.
- Make sure all leaks and moist areas are repaired. Vinyl will only cover the problems, not fix them.
- Vinyl windows last only about 15-20 years. Try to match them to existing sash. Old wood windows were better joined and made of harder wood, so if de-leaded, they can be repaired to outlast replacement sash and refitted for energy efficiency.
- Choose high quality vinyl at least .040"-.045" thick. Selecting soffit panels at least .05" thick should help prevent them from sagging. Since sunlight is harmful to vinyl, look for a high content of protective materials like titanium oxide.

ARE YOU CONSIDERING RE-SIDING BECAUSE OF HEAT LOSS OR PROBLEMS WITH LEAD PAINT?

SAVING ENERGY COSTS WITHOUT EXTERIOR INSULATION

- You may be losing heat through leaky windows, doors and cracks. Ask your energy company for a free energy/weatherization audit-call Mass Save (800) 632-8300 (8:30-4:30)
- Insulate your attic for best savings, then the crawl space and/or basement.
- Install storm windows.
- Plug leaks around electrical outlets with easy to install foam inserts.

DEALING WITH LEAD

- Removing lead paint to the required height and maintaining the new paint on your building's exterior is an approved method of complying with lead abatement regulations.
- If you are planning to de-lead your building and it is listed on the State Register of Historic Places, you should notify:

Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125
(617) 727-8470
www.state.ma.us/sec/mhc

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION



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WORCESTER**

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www.PreservationWorks.org

Get Additional Help From:

- Worcester Community Development: low cost loans and lead abatement programs 799-1400
- Worcester Lead Program: information on lead hazards and abatement programs 799-8548
- Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health: Childhood Lead Prevention Program (800) 532-9571