The Importance of Kick-Out Flashing

You've heard the old saying, "It's the little things that matter." Well this is particularly true with your home. In homes where gutters die into the side wall of a home, there is the potential for moisture issues. Problems arise when rain runs down the roof along the side of the wall and into the gutter. If the water is not purposely directed into the gutter, water may seep between the gutter end cap and the wall. Often the siding is notched in this area leaving a small gap where water can make its way into the interior of the wall. To the rescue is a small piece of "L" shaped metal, called kick-out or diverter flashing. This flashing slips under the wall flashing and then is angled out to direct water into the gutter instead of down the wall where it could possibly penetrate into your home and cause unseen moisture damage. The picture here shows what a typical piece of properly installed diverter flashing looks like. If you have areas like this on your home, you may want to check for properly installed kick-out flashing before you develop a moisture problem.

Document Credit: Associated Master Inspectors of Portland, OR

Here is a picture of inadequate kick-out flashing. Notice the gaps where water runs down the wall.

Here are some other telltale signs that kick-out flashing is either missing or improperly installed. Note the stains on the siding.

Document Credit: Associated Master Inspectors of Portland, OR

In this photo, you can see where water is coming out from behind the siding. Imagine the implications if this is not corrected.

This photo shows an attempt to use proper diverter flashing but it is not extended far enough past the roof edge to allow water to get into the gutter:

So now you can see the importance of a tiny piece of metal – it IS the little things that matter. Don't overlook gutter and downspout maintenance. It's extremely important for keeping your basement or crawlspace dry, and if you have areas that would require kick-out flashing, your siding and interior walls could even be in danger!