

Inspecting Farm Buildings for Wind Damage

SAFETY CHECKS AFTER A STORM

Wind damage to buildings is not always readily apparent. For this reason, examine all farm buildings for hidden damage after a severe windstorm or tornado. Undetected damage could weaken a structure, creating possible hazards. Prompt repair is usually less expensive in the long run.

ROOF

- ◆ *Damaged or missing shingles.* Check asphalt shingles for cracks at the butt end, where they may have been weakened from flexing. Make sure individual shingles have not blown off. Thoroughly inspect shingles on the ridge, gable ends and eaves.
- ◆ *Loose nails on metal roofing.* Inspect the entire roof, with particular attention to gable ends, eaves and ridge cap. If nails have worked loose, re-nail them as soon as possible. If the nails don't hold when hammered back in, use #12 or #14 metal screws to fill old nail holes. (Use aluminum screws on aluminum and steel screws on steel.) In addition to screws, re-nail 3 to 4 inches away with ring or screw-type nails.
- ◆ *Potential leaks.* On a sunny day, check the roof carefully from inside with the building doors closed. While looking for holes in the roof, inspect the ridge, gable ends and eaves for possible structural separation.

FOUNDATION

Inspect the foundation. The plate should not be separated from the studding where the foundation meets the walls. On block foundations, inspect mortar joints to make sure the block with the plate bolt in it hasn't separated from the wall. On stone or concrete foundations, check to see that the plate bolts have not worked loose.

SILLO

Make sure the silo is still plumb. Look for loose hoops. Inspect the roof to be sure it remains fastened to the silo. Inspect the base of metal silos inside and outside for hairline cracks. If there is rust around the base, remove it with a wire brush. Then check for cracks and apply a rust preventive paint. Look for new cracks in the plaster of empty concrete stave silos.

INTERIOR

Inspect the interior of buildings for structural damage. Using a good light, check the framing. Look for ridge separation, loose knee braces and loose rafters where the rafters join the walls.

Additional resources:

Your county agricultural agent