



An Extended Guide · No. 1533

Solar and Your Roof Warranty

Protecting your roof's
warranty before the first hole

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! Read this first — this is professional, on-the-roof work

Putting solar on a roof is expert, permitted work — not a weekend project. It means drilling into your roof and sealing every hole against water for decades, or setting heavy ballast your roof has to carry, all while working at a height where a fall can be deadly and around wiring that is live whenever the sun is up. This guide is here to help you understand and judge that work — so you can hire the right people and ask good questions — not to walk you up a ladder to do it yourself. For any roof-mounted system, use a licensed, insured, properly credentialed solar installer, make sure the required permit and inspection actually happen, and protect your roof's warranty before the first hole is drilled. And please don't climb up to inspect or adjust anything yourself — the roof is their job, not yours. Before any drilling starts, it is worth knowing exactly how your roof's warranty and your installer's own warranty work together — so protection you already paid for does not quietly slip through the cracks.

Let's talk about your roof's warranty

Solar panels are exciting. Warranties are not. But getting the warranty conversation right, before any work begins, is one of the best ways to protect an investment you already made — your roof.

I'm Bill, and I run Bill's Home Tech here in Portage County, Ohio. Families call me with all kinds of solar questions, and one of the most overlooked is also one of the most important: what happens to your roof's warranty once someone starts drilling into it for solar.

The short answer is that it depends — on your roof, on who does the work, and on whether anyone bothered to ask the right questions first. The good news is that those questions are simple, and asking them early costs you nothing.

This guide walks through the warranties already sitting on your roof, the one your solar installer should add, and how to keep all of them intact. Nothing here requires you to climb anywhere or become an expert — just to ask a few things in writing before the first hole is drilled.

★ You don't have to sort this out alone

Warranty questions are exactly the kind of thing I help families work through before they sign anything. Call or text me anytime at (330) 200-8042.

The whole guide, on one page

If you remember only these things, you will be ahead of most homeowners going into a solar quote.

- ❑ Most roofs carry a material manufacturer warranty, and sometimes a roofer's workmanship warranty too.
- ❑ Solar attachments are penetrations through your roof, and third-party penetrations can affect either warranty.
- ❑ Installers recognized or certified by your roofing manufacturer, or coordination with your original roofer, help keep that protection intact.
- ❑ Your solar installer should also offer their own workmanship warranty on the holes they make — ask its length, in writing.
- ❑ All of this belongs in writing before the first hole is drilled, not after.
- ❑ This is a paperwork and planning question for you to lead — the roof work itself stays with licensed, insured professionals.

✓ Keep a folder for this

One folder with your roofing paperwork and your solar paperwork kept together saves a lot of searching later. Start it today, even if it is empty.

Two warranties are already on your roof

Before solar ever enters the picture, most roofs already carry protection worth knowing about.

The first is a material manufacturer warranty — a promise from the company that made your shingles, metal panels, or tile that the materials themselves will hold up well, within the terms they spell out.

The second, when it exists, is your roofer's workmanship warranty — a separate promise from the contractor who installed the roof that their labor was done correctly. Not every roofing job comes with one, and the terms vary.

Both of these were part of what you paid for when the roof went on, whether you remember signing anything or not. They are worth digging up before you get a solar quote.

✓ Find your paperwork first

A quick look through your home-closing documents, or a call to your roofer, can usually tell you what you have. It is worth doing before you meet with a solar installer.

Why solar work can affect a roof warranty

Warranties are written with assumptions about who touches the roof. Adding a solar installer changes that picture.

A material warranty typically assumes the roof is left alone, or that any future work on it follows the manufacturer's own guidelines. A solar installer drilling attachment points and running flashing is exactly the kind of third-party work that can raise questions.

It does not automatically void anything — but manufacturers and roofers can, and sometimes do, treat unauthorized or poorly done penetrations differently than professional, documented ones. The difference often comes down to who did the work and how well it was recorded.

! Do not assume it is fine

Never assume solar work will leave your roof warranty untouched. Ask, in writing, before you sign a solar contract — not after a leak shows up.

Your solar installer owes you a warranty too

Separate from what your roof already carries, a good solar installer stands behind their own work.

Every attachment point a solar installer adds is a new penetration they created, and a responsible installer backs that work with their own workmanship warranty — a promise that if their flashing or attachments cause a leak, they will make it right.

What matters most is not a number I could hand you here — it is that you get the length of that warranty in writing, from the installer, before work starts. A verbal promise is not a warranty.

★ A simple question, asked plainly

'What is the length of your workmanship warranty on the roof penetrations, and can you put that in writing?' If an installer hesitates, that tells you something too.

Why manufacturer recognition matters

Some roofing manufacturers keep a list of installers they recognize or certify to work on their materials — and it is worth asking if your solar installer is on it.

Manufacturers who offer these programs generally do so because they trust the training and methods of the installers on the list. Using one of them, when your roof qualifies, is one of the more reliable ways to keep a material warranty intact.

This is not the same as your solar installer's own certifications, like NABCEP, which speak to their solar knowledge rather than their standing with your specific roofing manufacturer. Both are worth asking about — they answer different questions.

- Ask your roofer, or check your roofing paperwork, for the manufacturer's name.
- Ask your solar installer if they are recognized or certified by that manufacturer.
- If not, ask how they typically handle warranty protection on roofs like yours.

✓ Our guide on choosing an installer goes deeper

We cover NABCEP, licensing, insurance, and more red flags to watch for in our guide on choosing a roof-mount solar installer.

Loop in the roofer who knows your roof

If your roof is relatively new, or under a workmanship warranty, your original roofer is a valuable person to include early.

Your roofer already knows your roof — its age, its materials, and whatever warranty they stand behind. A short conversation before solar work begins can clarify whether their warranty allows third-party penetrations, and under what conditions.

Some solar installers will happily coordinate with your roofer directly. Others may not think to, unless you ask. Either way, it is a reasonable thing to request, and a good installer will not mind.

★ This is exactly the kind of coordination I help with

If you are not sure how to start that conversation, or whom to call first, that is precisely where I come in. Our guide on coordinating your roofer, installer, and electrician walks through it further.

The detail that decides most warranty claims

When a roof-warranty question turns into an actual leak, it almost always traces back to one thing: the flashing.

Flashing is the waterproofing tucked under your roofing at every attachment point. Done well, it is the reason a warranty claim rarely comes up at all. Done poorly, it is usually the reason one does.

This is one more reason the installer's skill and reputation matter as much as any certificate. Our flashing guide covers what good flashing looks like in more depth, if you want to understand that part further.

! Cheap flashing is expensive later

A leak from poor flashing can take years to show up as a stain or a soft spot, long after the invoice is paid. It is exactly the corner you do not want an installer cutting.

The one deadline that actually matters here

Every piece of advice in this guide comes down to a single piece of timing: settle it before, not after.

Once a hole is drilled and flashed, the warranty conversation becomes about fixing a disagreement instead of preventing one. Before that point, it is just a few phone calls and some paperwork. After, it can mean disputes, delays, and sometimes real repair costs.

! Get it in writing before the first hole is drilled

Confirm your roof's warranty terms, your installer's recognition or certification, and your installer's own workmanship warranty length — all in writing — before any contract is signed or any work begins. It costs you nothing but a little patience.

Two kinds of homes, two sets of needs

Warranty homework looks a little different depending on where you live and how many roofs are involved.

If you live in town or the suburbs

In town and the suburbs, you are usually dealing with one roof, one roofer of record, and often a roof that is still relatively well documented — especially if it was replaced fairly recently.

- One roof means one warranty conversation, which keeps things simpler to track.
- A newer roof is more likely to still have an active material or workmanship warranty worth protecting.
- Your original roofer, if local, is often easy to reach for a quick coordination call.
- An HOA may also want to know before visible roof work begins — worth checking early.

If you are out in the country on a well

Out in the country, warranty questions can multiply — especially if solar is going on a barn or outbuilding roof instead of, or in addition to, the house.

- Barns and pole buildings often were not built with a formal manufacturer or workmanship warranty on file at all — worth confirming rather than assuming.
- Multiple structures can mean multiple original roofers, or none you can easily track down.
- A well-pump property has extra reason to protect whichever roof keeps power flowing, so do not skip this step just because a barn feels less important than the house.
- Our guide on solar for barns and outbuildings goes further into rural-roof specifics.

★ Not sure what warranty, if any, is on your barn roof?

That is a common starting point for rural families I work with. Tell me what you know and we will figure out the rest together. Call (330) 200-8042.

What if you cannot find a warranty at all?

Sometimes there is no paperwork to find — an older roof, a home you bought partway through its life, or a barn nobody kept records on.

That is more common than you might think, and it is not a dead end. It just shifts the question from 'protect an existing warranty' to 'get the best protection available going forward,' which mostly means leaning harder on your solar installer's own workmanship warranty.

It is still worth a few minutes of digging — a call to the manufacturer with your shingle or panel style, or a look at old closing paperwork — before you conclude there is nothing there.

✓ No paperwork is not the same as no protection

Even without a roof warranty to protect, a written workmanship warranty from your solar installer still matters. Ask for it regardless.

Three promises, side by side

It can help to see the different warranties in one place, since they are easy to blur together.

Warranty	Who stands behind it	What to ask
Roofing material	The materials' manufacturer	Does solar affect coverage?
Roofer's workmanship	Your original roofer	Are penetrations allowed?
Solar installer's workmanship	Your solar installer	What's the length, in writing?

✓ **Three questions, three phone calls**

You do not need to become a contract expert. You just need to ask each of these three questions of the right person, and keep the answers.

Warning signs worth taking seriously

Most installers handle this well. A few do not, and it is worth knowing what that looks like.

- An installer who brushes off warranty questions with 'don't worry about it' instead of an answer.
- No written workmanship warranty offered at all, or a refusal to put its length in writing.
- No willingness to coordinate with your original roofer, or dismissiveness about your roof's existing warranty.
- Pressure to sign quickly, before you have had a chance to ask any of this.

! Slow down if you hear any of these

None of these alone proves a problem, but together they are worth pausing over. A trustworthy installer will not mind the questions — they answer them every week.

What a good answer looks like on paper

You are not looking for perfection — you are looking for clarity, in writing, that you can keep.

- A written statement of the solar installer's workmanship warranty length, on paper or in the contract itself.
- Any manufacturer certification or recognition named specifically, not just implied.
- A note of whether your original roofer was contacted, and what they said, if relevant.
- Copies you keep yourself — not just files that live only with the installer.

★ Ask for it in the proposal, not after

The easiest time to get this in writing is while you are still comparing quotes. Ask each installer to include it in their written proposal.

If something does go wrong down the road

Even good installs occasionally have a problem years later. Knowing the path forward now saves stress then.

A ceiling stain, a soft spot, or visible lifted flashing near an attachment point are the kinds of ground-level signs worth acting on. The path from there usually runs through whichever workmanship warranty applies — the installer's for their penetrations, the roofer's for the surrounding roofing.

This is also why keeping your paperwork matters so much. A homeowner with the warranty length and the installer's information in hand can make a phone call. A homeowner without it has to start from scratch.

✓ Never climb up to check it yourself

If you notice a sign of a problem, call the installer or your roofer — do not get on the roof to look closer. Our guide on common roof-mount problems covers the ground-level signs to watch for.

Warranties are a team conversation

None of this works well if your roofer and your solar installer never talk to each other.

Warranty protection tends to fall through the cracks exactly where responsibility is unclear — between a roofer who assumes solar is not their business and an installer who assumes the roof warranty is not their concern. A short conversation between the two closes that gap.

You do not have to run that conversation yourself, but you do have to make sure it happens. Asking your installer directly whether they will coordinate with your roofer is a fair, simple way to start.

★ This is its own guide, worth a look

Our guide on coordinating your roofer, installer, and electrician walks through who else belongs in that conversation, and in what order. It pairs well with this one.

One folder, kept together

The single most useful thing you can do after reading this guide is a small one.

- ❑ Your roofing material warranty, if you can find it.
- ❑ Your roofer's workmanship warranty, if one exists.
- ❑ Your solar installer's written workmanship warranty and its length.
- ❑ Any manufacturer certification your installer holds.
- ❑ Copies of the permits and inspection sign-offs, covered in our permits guide.

✓ A drawer, not a filing cabinet

This does not need a complicated system. One folder or one drawer with your home's paperwork, solar included, is enough.

Questions worth asking before you sign anything

A few plain questions, asked out loud, tell you a lot about how an installer handles this.

Q: Will solar work affect my roof's existing warranty?

A good installer will say honestly that it can, and explain how they work to protect it rather than promising nothing will ever change.

Q: Are you recognized or certified by my roofing manufacturer?

If yes, ask them to show it. If no, ask how they typically protect a material warranty without that recognition.

Q: What is the length of your own workmanship warranty on the penetrations you make?

You want a specific answer, in writing — not a vague reassurance.

Q: Will you coordinate with my original roofer?

A willing 'yes, happy to' is a good sign. Reluctance is worth noting.

★ Bring me the answers

If you get through this list and still are not sure what you heard, call me. I will help you make sense of it with no stake in the sale. (330) 200-8042.

Let this be part of how you choose

Warranty protection is not a separate decision from choosing an installer — it is one of the best tests of one.

How an installer handles your warranty questions — clearly, patiently, in writing — tends to predict how they will handle everything else about the job, from permits to cleanup. It is one of the easiest things to evaluate before you have seen a single panel installed.

Our guide on choosing a roof-mount solar installer covers the fuller picture — licensing, insurance, references, and more — alongside this warranty piece.

✓ Get more than one quote

Comparing how two or three installers answer these same warranty questions is often more revealing than comparing their prices.

Common Questions

The warranty questions I hear most often from families, answered plainly.

Q: Will adding solar definitely void my roof warranty?

Not automatically. It can affect it depending on who does the work and how it is documented — which is exactly why asking ahead of time matters.

Q: Do I need to hire the same company that put my roof on?

No, but looping them in, or choosing an installer recognized by your roofing manufacturer, both help protect what you already have.

Q: What if my roof is old and I am not sure it even has a warranty left?

It is still worth checking, but even without one, your solar installer's own workmanship warranty matters and should be in writing regardless.

Q: How long should a solar installer's workmanship warranty be?

There is no single right number, which is exactly why you ask for it in writing and compare it across the quotes you get.

Q: Who do I call if I think solar work caused a leak?

Start with your solar installer's workmanship warranty, and loop in your roofer if the issue seems to involve the surrounding roofing. Never climb up to check it yourself.

★ Still have a question I did not cover?

Call or text me at (330) 200-8042 — there is no such thing as a silly question about your own roof.

Bringing it all together

Protecting your roof's warranty is not complicated — it just has to happen in the right order.

Find out what you already have, ask how a solar installer will protect it, and get their own workmanship warranty in writing — all before the first hole is drilled. That is the whole idea.

It is paperwork, not physics, and you do not have to do it alone. Whether it is finding your original roofer or understanding what an installer told you, I am glad to help you sort through it calmly.

★ Let's protect what you already have

Call or text me at (330) 200-8042, and we will make sure your roof's warranty and your new solar system are both looked after.

You don't have to do this alone

You just have to remember that a friendly, patient person is one call away.

I hope this guide made protecting your roof's warranty before adding solar feel a little less daunting and a lot more doable. Keep it in a drawer with your other home papers, come back to a page whenever you need it, and don't worry about memorizing anything.

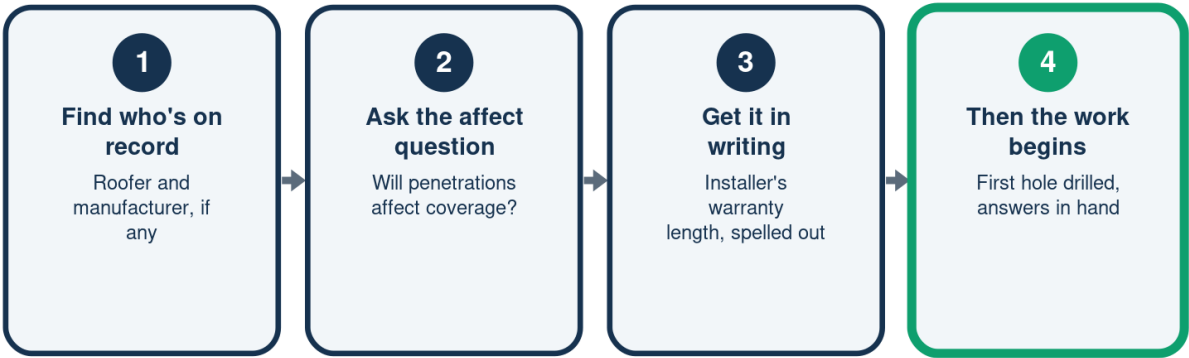
When you'd rather have a hand, that's exactly what I do. I come to your home, work at your pace, and never make you feel rushed or silly for asking. A first visit is a flat \$99, and for the parts that don't need me on-site I can often help right on your screen for \$49. Every visit comes with a 30-day, come-back-free guarantee. I don't climb on roofs or do the licensed solar, roofing, or electrical work myself — for that I'll help you line up a trustworthy, properly credentialed local pro.

★ Bill's Home Tech — real help, close to home

Call or text me at (330) 200-8042, or visit BillsHomeTech.com. Serving Atwater and all of Portage County. 30+ years of patient, plain-English tech help — and if you're ever not 100% happy with a visit, I'll make it right or refund it. That's a promise. — Bill

Protect the Warranty First

Four steps before any drilling begins



Skip a step and you are guessing about protection you already paid for.

Three Warranties on One Roof

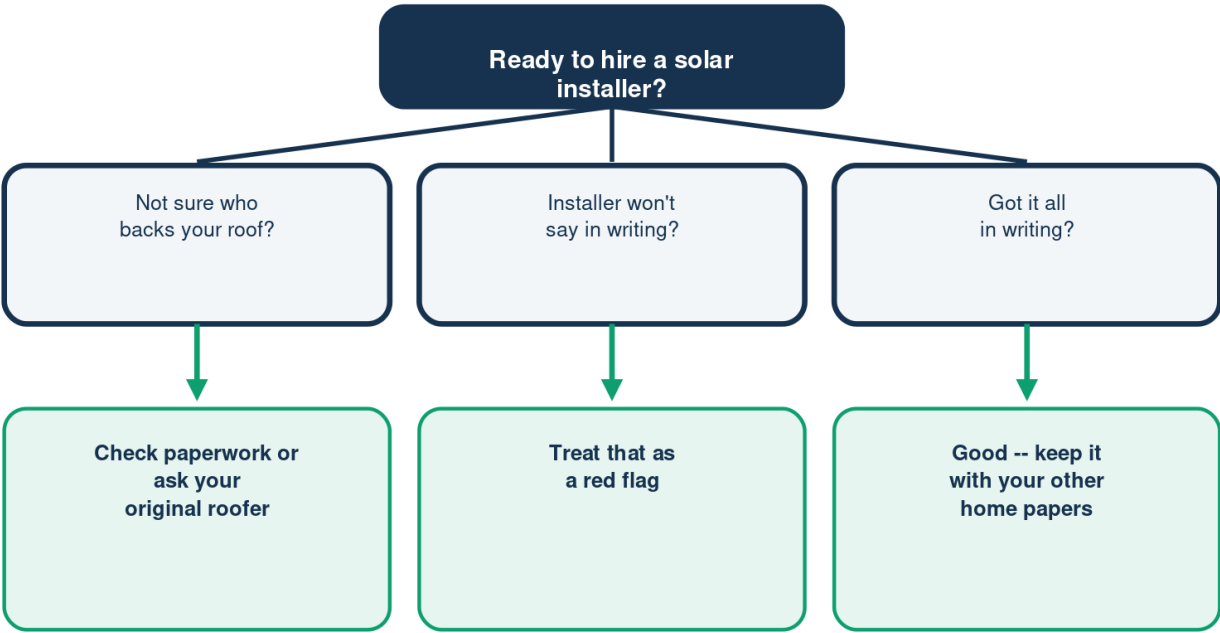
Who backs each one, and what to ask

	Who backs it	What to ask
Material warranty	Roof manufacturer	Effect on coverage
Roofer's workmanship	Your original roofer	Penetrations OK?
Installer's workmanship	Your solar installer	Length in writing

Three different promises -- worth understanding each before you sign.

Do You Know Your Warranty Status?

A quick check before you sign a solar contract



When unsure, ask before the first hole is drilled, not after.

Illustration - a schematic, not to scale. Your setup may differ.

What Can Help Protect Your Warranty

Two forms of coordination worth asking about

What it can mean for you	
Manufacturer-recognized installer	May help protect the material
Original roofer involved	May help protect the workmanship
Neither one involved	Lean harder on installer's own warranty

Recognition and coordination both help -- neither is a guarantee by itself.



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A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill.

I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that comes from using these guides. Thanks for reading, and stay safe out there.

— *Bill*



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