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Standard Guide for Selection of Asphalt Used in Built-Up Roofing Systems¹

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1. Scope

1.1 The purpose of this guide is to provide advice for the selection of asphalt used in the construction of built-up roofing (BUR). This guide does not address the use of asphalt in waterproofing, cold-applied, or modified bituminous roofing.

1.2 Reinforcements considered for use with roofing asphalt include ply sheets, (see Specifications [D226](#), [D2178](#), and [D5726](#)), base sheets (see Specifications [D2626](#), [D4601](#), and [D4897](#)), and cap sheets (see Specification [D3909](#)). They consist of glass, organic, or synthetic fibers.

1.3 The use of asphalt in the placement of vapor retarders and rigid roof insulation also is addressed.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:²

- [D92 Test Method for Flash and Fire Points by Cleveland Open Cup Tester](#)
- [D226 Specification for Asphalt-Saturated Organic Felt Used in Roofing and Waterproofing](#)
- [D312 Specification for Asphalt Used in Roofing](#)
- [D1079 Terminology Relating to Roofing and Waterproofing](#)
- [D1863 Specification for Mineral Aggregate Used on Built-Up Roofs](#)
- [D2178 Specification for Asphalt Glass Felt Used in Roofing and Waterproofing](#)
- [D2626 Specification for Asphalt-Saturated and Coated Organic Felt Base Sheet Used in Roofing](#)
- [D3791 Practice for Evaluating the Effects of Heat on Asphalts](#)
- [D3909 Specification for Asphalt Roll Roofing \(Glass Felt\) Surfaced With Mineral Granules](#)
- [D4601 Specification for Asphalt-Coated Glass Fiber Base Sheet Used in Roofing](#)

¹ This guide is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee [D08](#) on Roofing and Waterproofing and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee [D08.20](#) on Roofing Membrane Systems.

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² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

[D4897 Specification for Asphalt-Coated Glass-Fiber Venting Base Sheet Used in Roofing](#)

[D5726 Specification for Thermoplastic Fabrics Used in Hot-Applied Roofing and Waterproofing](#)

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions*— For definitions of terms used in this guide, see Terminology [D1079](#).

3.2 For a discussion of EVT, refer to NRCA Bulletin 2-91 (or the current edition of the NRCA Roofing and Waterproofing Manual).³

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This guide supersedes the slope guidelines of [Appendix X1](#) of Specification [D312](#).

4.2 Hot-applied roofing asphalt serves both as the waterproofing agent and adhesive for construction of built-up roofing membranes. There are many variables that may affect the performance of BUR membranes. This guide provides general specification guidelines for the asphalt only.

5. General Considerations

5.1 *Durability*—Specification [D312](#) describes four types of asphalt. In general, the softest (least oxidized) asphalt is considered most durable. The accepted rule is to select the softest bitumen commensurate with the slope, consistent with the other variables.

5.2 When the EVT guidelines are followed the asphalt application rate can be expected to fall within the ranges of 1.0 to 2.0 kg/m² (20 to 40 lb/100 ft²).

5.3 [Table 1](#) provides general recommendations for the use of the various types of Specification [D312](#) asphalt.

5.3.1 In hotter climates, harder (higher viscosity) bitumens are chosen to minimize slippage potential. [Table 2](#) provides some general guidance for proper asphalt selection whenever solar exposure is considered.

5.4 Recommended slope guidelines for the respective Specification [D312](#) asphalts are as follows:

³ NRCA Roofing and Waterproofing Manual, Current Edition, *Use of EVT* (or NRCA Bulletin 2–91), available from the National Roofing Contractors Association, Rosemont, IL.