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Heating Ram-Tough 250 Bitumen

Before starting work the contractor must become thoroughly familiar with the unique handling characteristics of SBS polymer-modified bitumen.

SBS polymer-modified bitumens are heat sensitive and must be heated in equipment designed for this purpose. Unlike the traditional roofers kettle, a bitumen melter has a double jacketed design and uses hot oil or hot air to transfer a more even heat to the material. A melter also has an agitator which must be in constant operation to help keep the material at an even temperature.

Although melters are often allowed where roofing kettles are not, local ordinances should be reviewed prior to starting work.

The maximum heating temperature for Barrett Ram-Tough 250 bitumen is 400°F under summer conditions and 425°F in colder winter conditions. Most contractors target 375°F as the ideal temperature during spring, summer and fall temperatures.

The SBS polymer material is heat sensitive and should not be held at elevated temperatures for prolonged periods of time.

If bitumen usage throughout the day is expected to be of limited quantity, the contractor should consider using a small melter to avoid prolonged or extended heating of the bitumen that could occur in a large melter. Overheating or prolonged heating will result in molecular cross-linking and the material will solidify in the melter.

Once the material is heated and in a fluid state, it should be kept under constant agitation in the melter. Leave agitator on for at least 30 minutes after burners are shut down.

Do not smoke or permit any ignition sources around the melter. Concentrated fumes can be combustible.

Due to the great adhesive properties of Ram-Tough 250 bitumen, contractors should consider using Barrett "Roof Release Agent" spray directly on all equipment and shoe soles to minimize sticking to the bitumen.

Follow all procedures for safe bitumen handling and installation as published in the latest addition of the NRCA Waterproofing Manual and best industry practices.

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