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TIPS AND BEEFS

Tip: Here's a great tip — send in your best slate roofing tip to us at *Traditional Roofing* and win a prize! The best tip we receive before the next TR issue goes to print will **win a Gilbert and Becker traditional slater's hammer worth a hundred bucks!** Send your tip to Traditional Roofing, PO Box 607, Grove City, PA 16127 or email it to us at editor@traditionalroofing.com.

Beef: Complain, complain, complain. Sometimes that's what we have to do. Take for example the information posted at roofingpeople.com about slate roofs: "*Disadvantages of slate roof systems: slate can be very heavy; very expensive; the colors are limited; requires frequent maintenance; hard to walk on; relies on underlayment which usually fails before the slate.*" Almost all of this is simple repetition of standard misconceptions about slate roofing. Of course slate *can* be heavy — it's stone. The thicker it is, the heavier it is. But at standard thickness, virtually any roof can be covered with slate. Slate roofs are expensive? That depends on how you look at it. They may be more expensive than cheap roofs to install initially, but they last so long that the cost is spread out over a century or two, making them arguably the least expensive roof money can buy. The colors are limited? What are you buying, shoes or a roof? Requires frequent maintenance? Contractors work on old slate roofs that no one has touched in thirty years. Then, with a little maintenance, the roofs are good for additional decades. In that thirty-year time, most other roofs have been completely replaced — maybe twice. Hard to walk on? They should be. The best slate roofs are too steep to walk on. Slate roofs are not floors, are not meant to be walked on and should not be walked on. Relies on underlayment? Fact is, slate roofs require *no* underlayment. Ceramic tile roofs rely on underlayment — slate roofs do not. You can read more about underlayment and about Bigfoot walking on slate roofs in the article *Top 10 Slate Roof Installation Mistakes* in this TR issue. ■

NATIONAL SLATE ASSOCIATION

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