OTTAWA SIDING CONTRACTORS

Re-Siding a House

Replacing all the siding on an Ottawa house: tear-off, what is found behind the old siding, trim and corners, and the order of work

4 Expert Answers from Siding IQ

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Table of Contents

1. What happens if rotten sheathing is found during a re-side in Vanier?
2. Is old tar paper behind siding replaced during an Ottawa re-side?
3. What happens around outlets and vents during a re-side in Vanier?
4. Cedar shingles in the gable of a Glebe house, exposure limits?

Q1

What happens if rotten sheathing is found during a re-side in Vanier?

When rotten sheathing turns up behind old siding, the scope of the job changes and so does the cost. Published Ontario contractor price pages from 2025 to 2026 show removal of old siding at about $1 to $3 per square foot of wall, but there are too few published prices for sheathing repairs to quote a range; ask what the contractor charges per sheet or per square foot of sheathing replaced, and get that figure in writing before work continues.

The 2024 Ontario Building Code (Div. B, 9.27.3.2. to 9.27.3.5.) sets the rules for the membrane that goes back over new sheathing: it must conform to CAN/CGSB-51.32-M, with joints lapped not less than 100 mm and upper sheets overlapping lower sheets where the membrane is applied horizontally. New flashing goes back in at every horizontal junction between cladding elements and at horizontal offsets, sloping not less than 6% to the exterior, with end dams not less than 25 mm high and extending not less than 50 mm up behind the membrane (9.27.3.7., 9.27.3.8.). That is new work done to the current Code, regardless of what was there before.

Sheathing replacement can also raise a permit question. The City of Ottawa's permit pages do not list re-siding either way, but structural repairs and alterations are on the City's permit list. Replacing a section of sheathing that is part of the wall structure may cross that line. Ask the City's Building Code Services before the contractor proceeds.

A few things worth confirming with the contractor before work continues:

- What the written quote says about extra work found behind the siding, and whether a change order is needed before sheathing replacement starts.
- Whether the framing members behind the rotten sheathing are also affected; ask the contractor to check before the wall is closed.
- What material the new sheathing will be, its thickness, and whether it meets the attachment rules in 9.27.5.1. for the siding going back on.
- What happens to the disposal of the removed material, and whether the quote covers it.

Under the Consumer Protection Act, 2002, a quote signed at your home is likely a direct agreement, which gives you 10 days to cancel after receiving the written copy. If the original agreement included an estimate, the supplier cannot charge more than 10 per cent over it, so get a written change order for the sheathing work.
Ask the City of Ottawa's Building Code Services whether a permit is needed before the framing is covered back up.

Q2

Is old tar paper behind siding replaced during an Ottawa re-side?

When old siding comes off during a re-side, the tar paper behind it is exposed; ask the contractor about its condition. The 2024 Ontario Building Code (Div. B, 9.27.3.2.) requires that sheathing membrane beneath siding conform to CAN/CGSB-51.32-M, the breather-type sheathing membrane standard, and that joints lap not less than 100 mm, with upper sheets overlapping lower sheets where it is applied horizontally (9.27.3.3.). Ask whether the existing paper meets that standard and is intact.

The Code's explanatory notes say a drained space at least 10 mm deep behind cladding is recommended for walls other than masonry; that is recommended, not required. What is required is a conforming second plane of protection: the membrane intercepts rain and snow that get past the cladding and dissipates it to the exterior (9.27.2.2.(4), 9.27.2.3., 9.27.3.1.). Ask whether the contractor will install new membrane conforming to CAN/CGSB-51.32-M, and what it adds to the price.

There is one exception worth knowing: the Code allows the membrane to be omitted where non-wood-based rigid exterior insulating sheathing with sealed or lapped joints is used, or where face-sealed cladding is installed (9.27.3.4., 9.27.3.6.). The Code's notes add that face-sealed assemblies need more intensive and ongoing maintenance. These exceptions aside, new conforming membrane is what the Code calls for under new siding.

A few things affect what you will see in a quote for this work:

- whether the contractor prices new membrane as a line item or bundles it into the installation rate
- the condition of the structural sheathing behind the tar paper, which only becomes visible once the old siding is off
- whether flashing at windows, doors and horizontal junctions needs to be replaced at the same time (9.27.3.7., 9.27.3.8.)
- removal and disposal of the old siding and membrane

Ask the contractor what they do when they find damaged sheathing or framing behind the old layer, and whether that work is included in the quote or billed separately.
When you have two written quotes in front of you, set them side by side and check that each one spells out the same items: what removal and disposal covers, whether new membrane is included, how flashing at openings and junctions is handled, what trim and corners are included, and what the process and cost are if damage shows up behind the old siding once work begins.

Q3

What happens around outlets and vents during a re-side in Vanier?

Outlets, vents, pipes and light fixtures are wall penetrations, and the 2024 Ontario Building Code (Div. B, 9.27.2.2.(4)) requires that both planes of protection, the cladding itself and the drainage plane behind it, be maintained at every one of them.

Here is what the Code asks for at each penetration. The second plane, the sheathing membrane and flashing, has to be carried around each opening too. Flashing is required at horizontal junctions and offsets in the cladding (9.27.3.8.); ask how the contractor will flash above each vent hood. Sealant goes between the siding and the trim ring or cover plate of each penetration, using a non-hardening exterior sealant that meets ASTM C834, C920, C1184 or C1311 (Div. B, 9.27.4.).

Moving or extending an electrical box is electrical work, a separate trade; ask who does it if a box has to move.

A few things worth asking about before the job starts:

- What does the quote include for re-flashing each vent and outlet, and is that labour already in the price or added per opening?
- If the old membrane behind the penetrations is torn or missing, what is the plan and what does it cost to replace it?
- Will the dryer vent hood and any other covers be replaced or re-used, and who supplies them?
- Does the quote cover the sealant at every penetration, or is that listed separately?

Once the work is finished, file away the written contract, the itemized quote, the manufacturer's warranty for the siding and any accessories, and photos of the wall surface before it was covered, because those are the records you will want if a question comes up later about what was done behind the cladding.

Q4

Cedar shingles in the gable of a Glebe house, exposure limits?

Cedar shingles on a gable are governed by the 2024 Ontario Building Code (Div. B, 9.27.7.), and the exposure limit for a 400 mm shingle is 190 mm on single coursing and 305 mm on double coursing. For other shingle lengths, ask the contractor to show you the relevant row in Table 9.27.7.6.

The shingles must conform to CSA O118.1 for western red cedar or CSA O118.2 for eastern white cedar, and each shingle must be between 65 mm and 350 mm wide. Fasteners go 19 mm into framing (9.27.5.7.) and must be corrosion-resistant and compatible with cedar (9.27.5.5.). Shingles and shakes may be fastened to sheathing alone only if it is at least 14.3 mm lumber, 7.5 mm plywood or 7.5 mm OSB (9.27.5.1.); otherwise they are fastened to framing, furring or blocking.

Behind the shingles, the Code requires at least one layer of sheathing membrane conforming to CAN/CGSB-51.32-M, with joints lapped not less than 100 mm and upper sheets overlapping lower sheets (9.27.3.2., 9.27.3.3.). The Code's explanatory notes to 9.27.3.1. say that a drained space at least 10 mm deep is recommended for walls other than masonry, and that shingle cladding installed with discontinuous drained spaces has shown acceptable performance in most conditions; those notes are explanatory, not a requirement. Flashing is required at every horizontal junction between cladding elements and at every horizontal offset, with the flashing extending not less than 50 mm up behind the membrane and sloping not less than 6% to the exterior (9.27.3.7., 9.27.3.8.). Sealant goes between the shingles and any adjacent window or door frame or trim (9.27.4.).

If the house is designated, or sits in a Heritage Conservation District, the Ontario Heritage Act requires City approval before work that affects its heritage attributes begins. Changing the cladding on a gable could affect heritage attributes; talk to the City's heritage staff before choosing a material or signing anything.

Ask the contractor what their process is if something unexpected is found behind the existing gable cladding.

Comparing quotes for the gable, check that each one spells out the same things: what removal and disposal of the old shingles covers, whether new membrane and flashing are included, how trim and corners at the gable edges are handled, and what the contractor will do, and charge, if damage turns up in the sheathing or framing once the old layer comes off.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Ottawa Siding Contractors. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified contractors and your local building authority (the City of Ottawa or your own municipality) before starting any siding project, and have old siding on a house built before 1990 tested before it is disturbed. Siding work in Ontario must meet the 2024 Ontario Building Code (O. Reg. 163/24). Information is current as of November 15, 2026 and may change. Visit **ottawasidingcontractors.ca** for the latest answers.