

Durable Covering

A very tough covering for outdoor structures can be made from a good quality landscape fabric (AKA weed block), when painted with a solar roof coating. As of 2020, this material can be made for about \$0.25 per square ft.

In the application shown here, I was applying it to a wire dome structure. By scooping some of it into a plastic condiment squeeze bottle I could use it as a glue to hold the weed block in place before painting the rest of it.

The weed block material cuts easily with a sharp blade, but is extremely strong to tension stresses, and far more so when impregnated with the solar roof coating paint.



In this next case I used a plastic sandwich bag with a cut corner for an applicator. The project was a 4' x4' hyperbolic paraboloid, that weighed just 2.4 lbs.



Although this weed block/solar paint combination serves very well by itself (be sure to give it at least a couple of coats), it is also a great strengthener for structures covered with existing tarps or plastic. It does in fact make a huge difference in strength and durability when applied to a such a backing.

In these cases, I have often found it helpful to use a broad putty knife to help spread the material.

For this type of application, I have sometimes added a layer of fiberglass



screen to further reinforce the topmost triangles – in hopes that they would never tear or have to be painted again.

Consider:

In chatting with homeless friends I find that many of them **can collect about \$25 worth of cans during a night's work** – sometimes quite a bit more. At a cost of \$0.25 per square ft, this would cover 100 sq.ft. This equivalent to the minimum sized bedroom that would pass most local building codes.

This means that for a single night's work, a homeless person could own a covering that could keep him and others out of the weather for the next ten years or more. **But he can't do this**, because he has no place to put it.

The potential for unleashing the proven productivity of countless homeless people who are willing to work all night for \$25 will never be realized until a city makes it possible. No significant change in the homeless situation will occur until it becomes legal for scraps of public, non-profit, or private land to house homeless people.