

Durable Covering

An economical covering for outdoor structures can be made from a good quality landscape fabric (AKA weed block), when painted with a liberal dose solar roof coating.

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 quite strong to tension stresses, and far more so when impregnated with the solar roof coating paint.



I also tried a plastic sandwich bag with a cut corner for an applicator. The project was a 4'x4' hyperbolic paraboloid of lath, weighing just 2.4 lbs.



Although this weed block/solar paint combination is very strong, the mesh of the fabric often leaves pinholes unless it is used to cover and strengthen 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. This also made it more resistant to flames.



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 small amounts 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.