



Concrete Decor

The Journal of Decorative Concrete

VOL. 4 NO. 1 • FEBRUARY/MARCH 2004 • \$6.95

Escape Routes for Water

**Tips for Stamping
Going Vertical with
Overlays**

The Magic of Concrete “Disney Style”

Pick-Up Your Image



*Help your customers pick **YOU** out of the crowd.*

If your business has trouble differentiating itself, you need to take control of your brand right away. Get the power and resources of ConcreteScience® behind your business.

When you're ready to **truck in a new image**, look to ConcreteScience®.
Call (800) 721-8074 today!



*Business Development
Services for Concrete
Professionals*

CIRCLE #16 ON READER SERVICE CARD

SOME CONCRETE WORKERS DON'T USE THE JOBCLOCK

EMPLOYEE TIME SHEET

NAME: Frank

DATES: Feb. 15

Mr COLLINS,
The Walby gate doesn't even open
until 7:15. What do you want me
to do?? Wendy

DAY	START	LUNCH	END	JOBSITE	WORK DONE	HOURS
Mon	7:00	1/2	3:45	Walby	Ext.	8 1/4
Tues						8 1/4
Wed						8 1/4
Thurs						8 1/4
Fri						8 1/4
Sat						
Sun						

Employee Signature: Frank Gomez

Total Hours: 41 1/4



THANKFULLY 40,000 OTHERS DO.



Created 2/13/2004 5:26 PM

Employee Report

Frank Gomez

Jobsite Name: **Walby Residence Pool**

Date Range: 2/9/2004 through 2/13/2004

Day	Start	End	Activity	
Mon 2/9	7:19 AM	12:02 PM	Prep	4:43 hours
	12:40 PM	3:39 PM	Prep	2:59 hours 7:42 hours
Tue 2/10	7:21 AM	12:06 PM	Formwork	4:45 hours
	12:37 PM	3:42 PM	Formwork	3:05 hours 7:40 hours
Wed 2/11	7:16 AM	12:04 PM	Formwork	4:48 hours
	12:33 PM	3:44 PM	Formwork	3:11 hours 7:59 hours
Thu 2/12	7:18 AM	12:25 PM	Texture/Seal	5:07 hours
	1:05 PM	3:42 PM	Texture/Seal	2:37 hours 7:44 hours
Fri 2/13	7:17 AM	11:50 AM	Texture/Seal	4:33 hours
	12:36 PM	3:41 PM	Texture/Seal	3:05 hours 7:38 hours

Signature

Frank Gomez

Frank Gomez

Employee total **38:53 hours**

Rugged + Powerful + Reliable
Operates 24/7 + Attaches Anywhere

Call today

888.788.8463

The Jobclock. The Contractor's Timeclock. TM www.jobclock.com

CIRCLE #32 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Dear Concrete Decor readers,

I have the distinct feeling this is shaping up to be an exciting year of growth for all of us. While various economic challenges lurk ahead, we should appreciate that being established businesses provides a vantage point from which to observe, confront and tackle these challenges as they occur. The question for you today is, what are you going to do about 'em?

There are those in life that see challenges approaching and quickly respond with appropriate solutions from a well-trained staff. There are those who see the challenges and ignore them, only to realize diminished earnings or failure when it's too late. And there are those who see challenges coming, ignore them, suffer in their presence, and fail to learn from the experience. Let me share a story that serves as an example.

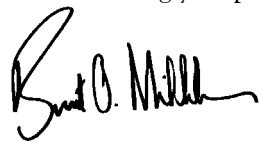
In my freshman year of college at Sacramento State, I wandered about on campus those first few weeks looking for things to do outside of my overwhelming load of class work. Besides becoming a member of the Delta Chi fraternity that first year, I joined the newly formed rowing club, which later become an intercollegiate sport. Rowing was not only a great physical challenge, but also offered our school the chance to compete with schools in the east such as Harvard and Yale. For me, that's all it took. I was committed to this sport before my oars even hit the water nearly six grueling months later.

Two years later, I was sitting in a varsity boat, preparing to head off to San Diego for the Crew Classic. That first year we beat Harvard in the semi-finals and a year later we beat Yale. I still have a newspaper clipping that shows us crossing the finish line in first place. The headline reads "Sac State finishes first with only seven seats." That's right, in our eight-man vessel the number five seat had broken less than halfway into the race. That number five seat was mine.

When a seat breaks, it has immediate, adverse effects on everyone in the boat. It frustrates the rhythm and focus of the team, and it can physically hurt people in the boat or eject the oarsman because the speed of the boat forces the long oar handle directly into the rower's body. While everything short of being ejected had its effect on me and the team, my diminished rowing capacity was compensated for simply because our team was so well-trained and so committed to the goal of winning. Addressing this challenge head-on was the only option.

The team got a lot of valuable publicity for handling this problem during the race and it helped us receive an incredible amount of financial support for better equipment and better facilities. Today, Nimbus Dam, in Folsom, Calif., is recognized throughout the country as a premiere rowing facility. The facility also gives high schoolers in the area the opportunity to compete in this magnificent sport.

To come out on top when impending challenges are facing you, it's crucial that your business be prepared. Managing your resources effectively and placing consistent focus on training and education for your staff are probably the best investment you can make to prepare for challenges. A healthy attitude and focus on maximizing your potential helps too.



Bent Mikkelsen, *Publisher*



February/March 2004 • Vol. 4 No. 1
Issue No. 15 • \$6.95

Publisher: Bent O. Mikkelsen

Co-publisher: Ernst H. Mikkelsen

Editor: Rosemary Camozzi

Assistant Editor: Harlan Baldrige

Circulation: Sheri Mikkelsen

Design and Production: Stephen Stanley

Web Design: Mark Dixon

National Sales Manager: Kathleen Goodman

Western Regional Sales: Debbie Duhn
(314) 367-1121

Writers:

Susan Brimo-Cox

Christina Camara

Brad Jeske

Stacey Klemenc

John Strieder

David Thompson

Contributing Writers:

Doug Carlton

Editorial:

Professional Trade Publications, Inc.

3410 West 11th Avenue

Eugene, OR 97402

Tel: 541-341-3390

Fax: 541-341-6443

Email: rosemary@protradepub.com

Circulation and Administration:

Professional Trade Publications, Inc.

P.O. Box 25210

Eugene, OR 97402

Tel: 541-341-3390

Fax: 541-341-6443

Email: circulation@protradepub.com

Concrete Decor The Journal of Decorative Concrete is published six times a year by Professional Trade Publications, Inc. Bulk rate postage paid at Lebanon Junction, KY and additional mailing offices.
ISSN 1542-1597

Subscriptions:

One year: USA \$21.95; Canada \$29.95;
Other countries \$49.95. All funds in U.S. dollars.

For Subscriber Services:

Call 866-341-3703 Toll Free

For Advertiser Services:

Call 877-935-8906 Toll Free

© 2004 Professional Trade Publications, Inc.

www.concretedecor.net

ON THE COVER: The Wilcox project, by Tom Ralston Concrete, features Antique Amber acid-stained concrete walls. The concrete patio was colored with Terracotta acid stain and features grouted joints. (See story on page 10.)

FEATURES

- 14 Drainage for Decorative Concrete**
From trench drains to catch basins and grates, here's what you need to keep standing water off your outside projects.
by Susan Brimo-Cox
- 20 Going Vertical**
Overlays aren't just for floors anymore. Take your stamping, stenciling and other artistic techniques and put 'em on the wall.
by David Thompson
- 26 Magical World of Concrete**
Photo highlights from our tour of Disney World, plus the inside story of how concrete makes the park what it is today.
by Stacey Klemenc
- 38 The Basics of Stamping**
Want to get in on the action? Here's what you need to know to get started.
by Susan Brimo-Cox
- 44 Maintaining Decorative Concrete**
Keep your customers happy and earn some extra cash with cleaning and maintenance.
by Christina Camara

DEPARTMENTS

- 10 CONTRACTOR PROFILE:** Tom Ralston Concrete
With a natural bent for innovation, this third-generation Santa Cruz contractor brings a unique touch to his decorative work.
by Brad Jeske
- 34 MANUFACTURER PROFILE:** Versatile Building Products
Versatility is the name of the game with this company's floor and decking products.
by John Strieder
- 48 INDUSTRY FOCUS:** Keep it Simple!
by Doug Carlton
- 51 Advertisers Index**
50 Classifieds
42 Concrete Marketplace
4 Decorative Concrete Tips
72 Final Pour
6 Industry News
8 Industry Spotlight — Association News
52 Product News
32 Product Profiles
2 Publisher's Letter

DECORATIVE CONCRETE TIPS

Decorative Concrete Tips is a forum for readers to exchange information about methods, tools, and tricks they've devised.

Send details to CD Tips,
Concrete Decor, P.O. Box 25210, Eugene, OR 97402.
We look forward to hearing from you!

Using Sealers to Create Color Effects

Although the main purpose of sealers is to beautify and protect, some sealers can also be used for darkening concrete. Water-based sealers do not change the color of the decorative concrete, but solvent-based sealers darken the color by several shades. This darkening effect is called color saturation. The color saturation remains as long as the seal coat is maintained. If the decorative project seems to have "lost" its color, a new coat of solvent-based sealer will likely restore the beautiful rich color.

On a project where different colors are desired, a simple solution is to use a solvent sealer in the darker field and a water-based sealer or a stand-alone wax (for interior projects) in the lighter field. It is much easier to control and to correct the sealers than to use stains or other products to produce color. The color change produced by a sealer will always perfectly coordinate with the original color. If the sealer wicks or bleeds, a bit of xylene or thinner can be used to correct the problem. Likewise, if you decide that you do not want the different color, strip away the sealer and you are back to the original color.

Another way to change the color of decorative concrete is to use a pigmented sealer. Pigmented sealers come in a variety of types such as water-based, solvent-based, and

penetrating sealers. Pigmented sealers are usually translucent and will act to glaze over the original color. If you apply a pigmented sealer that is the same color as the stain or color type, the sealer will cause the original color to become more uniform. This color layering will minimize any highlights or variations in the color. If you change the color of the sealer, then you will change the color of the finished product. Always work with samples first to approve the effect.

There are new penetrating and pigmented sealers available that cause the color of the sealer to settle into the crevices of the concrete. If you use a black or deep brown penetrating sealer over decorative concrete with any pits, crevices, or texture, you will achieve a fabulous antiquing effect. The pits, scratches, texture and surface imperfections allow the dark colored sealer to settle and accumulate. If, for example, the decorative concrete is stamped brick or stained and cut to look like stone, the dark sealer will settle in the pits and create the appearance of a brick or stone floor that has been there for decades or longer.



—Shellie Rigsby is the owner of Concrete Stain Designs, in Plano, Texas.





***Only nature
offers more
colors and
textures***

*For specs and
beautiful details contact:*



A Dayton Superior Line

***Beautification of concrete
is our specialty. Broad
selection of colors, textures,
proven performance
characteristics, ease
of application and long-
term customer satisfaction
can all be yours.***

PRO IMPRESSIONS™

A complete stamping system for coloring and imprinting patterns into concrete.

PRO POLY TOP™ A stampable overlay system for resurfacing existing interior and exterior concrete surfaces.

PRO INTEGRAL COLORS™

A line of liquid and powder color products for the integral coloring of ready mix concrete.

PRO PATINA STAINS™ Penetrating reactive stains for producing unique color effects on concrete surfaces.

PRO SURFACE™ A texturing system for resurfacing existing interior and exterior concrete surfaces.

PRO SEALERS™ A line of water-based and solvent-based sealers designed to seal and protect decorative concrete.



4226 Kansas Ave. • Kansas City, KS 66106 • 877.416.3439 • FAX 913.279.4806 • superiorcolors.com

Kover Krete celebrates 15 years, expands distribution

Kover Krete Systems, headquartered in Orlando, Fla., has reached two major milestones. Founded in 1989, the company is celebrating its 15th anniversary. This year also brings Kover Krete's rollout of a revamped and greatly expanded network of distribution channels that includes many new wholesale distribution and retail outlets. For the first time in its history, Kover Krete Systems' products are readily accessible across America and in many foreign countries.

The new distribution network includes outlets ranging from Richard's Paints retail stores in Florida to Sherwin-Williams stores from coast-to-coast. Additionally, swimming pool contractors now have access to the complete Kover Krete line through such outstanding distributors as the Gorman Company, Superior Pool Products and South Central Pools. And for the first time ever, Kover Krete Systems products are now available for on-site delivery through Cemex USA, one of the largest ready mix producers in the world.

For more information, call (407) 246-7797 or visit www.koverkrete.com.

White to lead Durand Forms

Durand Forms Inc., a global leader in the manufacturing and marketing of aluminum wall-forming systems and accessories, has announced the appointment of Michael White to CEO and president of the company.

Most recently, White held the position of general manager at Traco Architectural Systems, a building products manufacturing company. White's senior management positions have included positions at: Swanson Inc., a \$100 million food service and distribution company; Wirtz Manufacturing, a \$50 million manufacturer of engineered equipment; Amarlite Inc., a \$30 million manufacturer of architectural building products; and others.

Durand is owned by Watermill Ventures, a private strategic investment firm, which focuses on acquiring middle-market companies. For more information, please visit www.durandforms.com.

Kimble Mixer expands facilities

Kimble Mixer Company, a leading manufacturer of rear-discharge concrete mixers and supplier of replacement drums and rebuild services, recently completed a major expansion at both its mixer assembly and fabricating plants.

Within the last year, Kimble has more than doubled its manufacturing and assembly space, added a Service Annex that includes two five-ton overhead cranes, and added 1,800 square feet to its Engineering Center.

"As a company that prides itself on innovation and responding to customer needs," says Jim Cahill, president and CEO, "the considerable investment in our Engineering Center continues to put Kimble's design capabilities at the forefront of every product we develop. We now utilize many of the most up-to-date computer programming methods to interface with our customers' ideas and technologies, and will continue to make the investment necessary to lead rather than follow." For more information on Kimble Mixer, call (330) 339-2357 or visit www.kimblemixer.com.

Mapei adds sales support in Texas

Mapei is pleased to announce that Rick Walters has become the company's newest floor covering specialist for the state of Texas. Rick has 20 years experience in the floor covering industry, and will be working alongside the Mapei technical sales representatives in the major Texas cities.

Brian Haugh has also come on board as technical sales representative for the Central Texas territory. Brian has over 10 years experience in the ceramic industry. He was previously a manager for Daltile SSC in Austin, as well as more recently, territory manager for American Tile Supply.



Rhodes and Ralston partner on countertops

Concrete artist Buddy Rhodes and decorative concrete contractor Tom Ralston have begun a new hands-on Concrete Countertop Workshop series to teach interested contractors,

craftsmen and artists how to make unique cast-in-place and pre-cast countertops. Also featured will be Buddy Rhodes' signature "hand-pressed" technique, which he uses to create an extraordinary marble-like effect.

Originally a ceramicist, Buddy Rhodes abandoned his potter's wheel when he saw the strength, versatility and architectural applicability of concrete. His company, Buddy Rhodes Studio, manufactures the Buddy Rhodes Concrete Countertop Mix.

Tom Ralston follows in the footsteps of his father and grandfather, both concrete contractors in Santa Cruz, Calif. As president of Tom Ralston Concrete, he manages 48 employees and about 275 jobs per year.

For more information, call the Buddy Rhodes Studio at (877) 706-5303 or Tom Ralston Concrete at (831) 426-0342. Or, you can visit www.buddyrhodes.com or www.tomralstonconcrete.com.



Lucky contractor wins brand new Hummer

At the 2004 World of Concrete, George Kanistras of General Caulking & Coatings Inc. of Oviedo, Fla., was handed a set of keys to a brand new Hummer

H2. Kanistras' name was drawn as the grand prize winner in Degussa Building Systems' Sonneborn 100-Year Anniversary Celebration.

"I was just shocked when I heard the news. This isn't something you ever expect to happen and it's an overwhelming experience when it does," Kanistras said. "The whole experience really shook me up."

"Degussa wanted to share the excitement of our Sonneborn 100-Year Anniversary with our customers," said Steve Ostermann, vice president of marketing for Degussa Building Systems. "Giving away this special vehicle, and the gifts from the Sonneborn 100 Year Rewards program, gave us an opportunity to thank our customers for 100 years of support."

Helping celebrate in the excitement was a crowd of customers that overflowed into the isles surrounding the Degussa booth. On hand to show their support and to congratulate Kanistras were John Salvatore, president and CEO of Degussa Construction Chemicals America, and Mike Galasso, president and CEO of Degussa Building Systems.



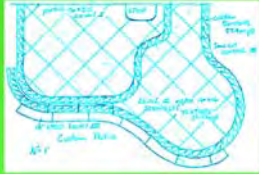
DANIEL'S STAMPING SYSTEM

DECORATIVE CUSTOM BORDERS

EXPERIENCE THE NEWEST INNOVATION

Five Decorative Borders to Choose From

Custom Orders Available




**For more information:
1-800-247-8059**

CIRCLE #24 ON READER SERVICE CARD

CONCRETESOLUTIONS

SINCE 1986 • www.concretesolutions.com

TRAINING CLASSES EVERY MONTH
Free intro packet: **(800) 232-8311**



Unique and Revolutionary, But it is Not New!
ULTRA SURFACE® CONCRETE POLYMER

When added to cement, sand and water, it allows tenacious bonding of thin coat cementitious applications to restore and beautify existing concrete surfaces.

USES: REPAIR • RESURFACE • STAMP

Provide decorative patterns and textures 1/4" to 1/2" thick over existing concrete in good repair. NOTE: Can also resurface 1/16" thick and feather-edge to zero.

Try our 5 gallon pail offer for \$150. (Shipping included in mainland USA). Follow our instructions and apply; then, evaluate your test sample for as long as you wish. Your satisfaction is guaranteed or your money back.

PRODUCTS • TRAINING • SUPPORT

WE SELL PRODUCTS, STAMPS AND TOOLS TO REPAIR, RESTORE, BEAUTIFY AND PROTECT EXISTING SURFACES. ULTRA SURFACE® PRODUCTS ARE USED FOR RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL RESURFACING APPLICATIONS

1/4" STAMPING

DECORATIVE CONCRETE SOLUTIONS



SPRAY-TOP®

ULTRA SURFACE®
HIGH PERFORMANCE
PRODUCTS

PROVEN PRODUCT SYSTEMS

• REPAIR	• COLORFLAKE
• RESURFACE	• TUFF-GRIT®
• 1/4" STAMPING	• ACID STAIN
• SPRAY-TEXTURE	• SPRAY-TOP®

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

TRAINING CLASSES
EVERY MONTH IN LAS VEGAS

1-800-232-8311

www.concretesolutions.com

SE HABLA ESPAÑOL

CIRCLE #18 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Industry Spotlight

Association News

PORTLAND CEMENT ASSOCIATION

Team Concrete Honored for Excellence

Portland Cement Association and Team Concrete have been honored with an Award of Excellence by the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE). "Team Concrete: Building Community" was among 12 association programs recognized in the first round of judging in the 2004 Associations Advance America (AAA) Awards program.

Team Concrete is a community relations program that focuses on bringing the many advantages of high-quality concrete homes to affordable housing initiatives such as Habitat for Humanity. More information can be found at www.teamconcrete.org.

AMERICAN CONCRETE INSTITUTE

ACI offers new info on concrete repair

The American Concrete Institute is offering valuable "how-to" documents for five commonly used concrete repairs. These documents will be available, free of charge, for a limited time on the American Concrete Institute's website — www.concrete.org.

The bulletins cover the following topics:

- Structural Crack Repair by Epoxy Injection
- Crack Repair by Gravity Feed with Resin
- Spall Repair by Low-Pressure Spraying
- Surface Repair Using Form-and-Pour Techniques
- Surface Repair Using Form-and-Pump Techniques

Each bulletin gives a concise description of the repair method,

including the purpose of the repair, when it should be used, needed surface preparation, material and equipment selection, and safety considerations. Step-by-step procedures will help repair technicians do their jobs correctly. For additional information, contact the American Concrete Institute at (248) 848-3800.

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CONCRETE CONTRACTORS

Position papers offer insight on concrete

ASCC has published three new position papers: "Birdbaths on Concrete Slabs" (#7) explains why birdbaths are an unavoidable result of a flatness tolerance. "Bugholes in Formed Concrete" (#8) deals with acceptance of formed concrete surfaces. "Slab Thickness Tolerances" (#9) cites statistical data from as-built slabs and concludes that tolerances for slab thickness, as defined in ACI 117-90, are not realistic.

"The position papers deal with issues that constantly cause concern for concrete contractors," says D. Thomas Ruttura, ASCC president. "We're often held responsible for circumstances beyond our control. The better we can explain to designers and specifiers what can and cannot be expected from concrete, the more likely we are to have a successful project."

Copies of the position statements may be ordered by calling (866) 788-2722 or by e-mail at ascc@ascconline.org.

NATIONAL READY MIXED CONCRETE ASSOCIATION

NRMCA certifies 1,000th driver

The Concrete Delivery Professional (CDP) certification program offered by the NRMCA recently passed a

milestone when the 1,000th ready mixed concrete mixer-truck driver became certified under the program. More than 1,000 additional drivers are currently preparing for the certification exam.

The program supplements a company's existing driving training program and reinforces knowledge of products, environmental compliance, customer relations, safety, and vehicle maintenance and operations.

After completing CDP programs, producers have reported improved driver morale and higher retention as well as fewer accidents and returned loads. Deliveries per hour have been documented to increase by as much as 14 percent. One company documented \$1 million in savings from reduced workers' compensation payments.

Glenn Ochsenreiter, NRMCA's vice president of marketing, notes that one growing benefit of driver certification is to maintain access to key markets. "Government agencies are increasingly requiring certification of suppliers so they can provide less direct oversight," he said. "These agencies are strongly supporting NRMCA's driver certification program because it is an objective and impartial confirmation that established national industry standards are maintained — something that companies cannot communicate convincingly based only on their own assessment."

RMC elects Martineau

The RMC Research Foundation, dedicated to research and enhancing the educational opportunities of the ready mixed concrete industry, has elected longtime industry executive Eugene Martineau as chairman of its board of trustees for 2004. A founder of U.S. Concrete, Martineau has served as its president, CEO and a director



since its inception in 1998. He previously served as executive vice president of Southdown Inc., and has more than 35 years experience in the ready mixed concrete and related industries.

He has been very active in the industry, serving as past director and member of the Executive Committee of the NRMCA, among other positions. He has also been a member of the National Steering Committee of the Concrete Industry Management School at Middle Tennessee State University since its inception in 1996.

Site sheds light on political issues affecting industry

The NRMCA and Grace Construction Products have teamed up to provide a new Grassroots section on the association's recently redesigned Web site. The Grassroots section is designed to inform NRMCA members and other people in the concrete industry about important political issues affecting the construction and business communities. It provides information about candidates running for office and their positions on issues of importance to the industry. Visit www.nrmca.org for more information.

INTERNATIONAL CONCRETE REPAIR INSTITUTE Publication offers info on polymer flooring

The ICRI has released a new guide for designing, installing and maintaining protective polymer flooring systems for concrete. It contains detailed information on the aspects of flooring technology, performance properties, surface preparation requirements,

installation procedures and testing to help the user attain long-term service from a variety of polymer flooring systems for a wide range of applications.

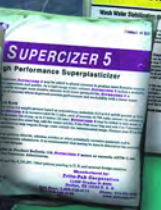
The guideline is intended to be a resource for manufactures, specifiers, applicators, and facility owners who

specify protective polymer flooring systems for concrete.

The cost of the guide, #03741, is \$25 for ICRI members and \$42 for nonmembers. It can be purchased by calling (248) 848-3809 or visiting the Publications section of www.icri.org.



Use Fritz-Pak Admixtures to Create Your Concrete Canvas




SUPERCIZER 5 - Superplasticizer for a strong, smooth slab.


MINI-DELAYED SET - Use to retard different portions of the pour, perfect for "Step Retardation".


CONTROL FINISH - Flatwork finishing aid for a perfect surface for stamping or staining. Reduces cracks.

NEW! COUNTER-FLO - Admixture for durable, smooth, high-strength concrete designed for concrete countertops & other small pours.

Proud Sponsors of "Artistry in Concrete" Demo at WOC 2004





Call Today • 888-746-4116 • www.fritzpak.com

CIRCLE #38 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Contractor Profile

Concrete
The Journal of Decorative Concrete
Decor

Tom Ralston Concrete, Santa Cruz, Calif.

A passion for innovation keeps this third-generation contractor excited about the trade.

by Brad Jeske

Tom Ralston addresses an enthusiastic audience at World of Concrete 2004.



Northern California's scenic coastline has drawn many local teenagers to a life of surfing and adventure, and Tom Ralston was no exception. His father, however, had different ideas for his future.

"When I started surfing," Ralston says, "my father said he wasn't going to have a beach bum living at his house." That was the summer of 1964 ... almost 40 years ago.

Consequently, Ralston learned the concrete trade, working beside his dad on driveways, curbs and gutters, sidewalks, and small foundations. "Every once in a while I would get to jackhammer concrete with a big 90-pound jackhammer. As a boy I was really short, so that thing was about as high as I was."

But as a third generation concrete contractor (his grandfather, Wilbur Thomas Ralston, started the business in 1928), Ralston harbored the idea of quitting the business altogether. "I was sick and tired of the same mundane concrete," he says. "If it wasn't for decorative concrete I wouldn't be in the industry today."

Ralston took over the company when his father retired in 1989. "My father had actually retired in 1987 and the business was almost dormant — until I was asked to do a decorative project for a Victorian restoration project that had some cool concrete work," he says. He put a small three-man team together and finished the project — and found a particular thrill from building a team and doing creative concrete on his own.



Fifteen years later, Tom Ralston Concrete, based in Santa Cruz, Calif., incorporates four divisions. The structural division handles hillsides, complicated foundations, structural slabs, and retaining walls. The decorative division does stamped concrete, patios, pool decks and hardscapes. The masonry division takes care of brick, blocks, flagstones, pizza ovens, firepits and fireplaces. Finally, the specialty division offers acid staining, thin-topping overlays, decorative interior floors over radiant heat, polished concrete and concrete countertops.

"We are involved in many divisions of concrete and masonry, and it allows us to create a unique blending of hardscape surfaces," Ralston says.

Many creative innovations have helped set his company apart from the rest. For example, he was asked to repair a wall that was a favorite spot for skateboarders who used it to practice their jumping and "railing" techniques. Ralston created a mold of a seashell, cast a series of replicas with Ardex polymer concrete, coated them with a copper-laden epoxy and then attached them to the wall with rebar. The wall's straight edge was now gone, and the disgruntled skateboarders moved on.

Another project that pushed the creative envelope was the re-creation of an ocean-like setting within an entire home interior. Interior concrete walls were constructed to look like cliffs with natural fissures, and multiple blendings of acid-stained concrete that incorporated beach glass, sea shells and aquarium sand were used on the floors, along with sandblasting and stenciling. Many of the surfaces were juxtaposed with stainless steel, exotic hardwood and stucco, creating dramatic results. The project caused a stir among locals who visited the home and has also been featured in more than a half dozen magazines and newspapers.

On another project, Ralston got into a swimming pool with a group of plasterers and had his helper hand him buckets of various color hardeners so that he could throw and mix them into



the white plaster mix. "After about an hour of that those plaster guys wanted to kill me," Ralston says, but he finally convinced them, in his best Spanish, that the owner wouldn't pay anyone unless he was able to make the swimming pool look like an ocean tide pool. They allowed him to continue and the results were applauded.

Ralston uses a myriad of different coloring systems, including dust-on colors, acid and acrylic stains, and universal tints, as well as colors from a multitude of different manufacturers. "On certain projects we have gone to art stores and bought tubes of acrylic paint,

mixed them, and used them with sea sponges to go onto floors," he says. "Then we sealed them with a good polyurethane." On one project, Ralston ran out of black color and used shoe polish. "That was six years ago and it is still black."

He has been creative behind the scenes as well, where he and his office staff have developed a software package called Job Manager. "This software allows the entry of literally thousands of detail items," he explains. "We may have a house that has a driveway with bands that are Oyster White with Antique Amber acid stain, and the

panels are Victorian Swirl finish with a Sandstone color hardener."

All this data can be entered into the program, and with one click of the button a bid is created. "Although the program was expensive and took some time to develop in-house, it has brought a huge benefit to TRC," he says. "For example, we can track pours, and mix designs, record client conversations, check payment schedules, and more. It even has a place to record the temperature of the concrete and note what the weather was like on the day of the pour. We constantly feed it with information to help us grow our business intelligently." The software was a \$60,000 investment.

Ralston believes that most people working in the decorative concrete industry are pioneers. "You can become very creative out of necessity when you have \$15,000 or \$20,000 on the line," he says.

Recently, while working on a thin-top overlay, the wind started blowing bits of bark onto the site. "The pieces didn't really reveal themselves until we poured the Ardex. Because the bark was much lighter than the Ardex, they began to float to the surface. With Ardex we only have about twenty minutes and after that you are done."

The crew had to get on their hands and knees to fish out all the bits of bark. "The longer you wait, the harder it gets. Trowel marks will remain and the product refuses to self level," Ralston says. "We had one area that had all of these trowel lines. The next day we went in and cut score lines every two feet on center. After, we sanded the trowel lines that were most noticeable, and made it look like a pattern that was designed in the entry." In the decorative industry, one needs to be inventive out of necessity, he says, adding that "many a project gone awry has prompted us to restore it with a creative effort."

In early 1992, after listening to a weatherman say that there were possible light showers in the late afternoon north and 75 miles away, Ralston poured four driveways in a subdivision only to get



hammered by driving rains shortly after 10:30 A.M. "We shortly thereafter became 'experts in polymer overlays'" Ralston says with a grin, "and even pulled in a bit of profit on the job."

When you're working with as fickle a medium as concrete, you always have to prepare for the unexpected, he says, especially when you consider the variables of inaccurate concrete batches, admixtures, acid stains that don't promote a good color, or concrete color batches from a ready mix plant that vary from one batch to the next. So how does a contractor minimize these issues?

Take notes while on the job, he says, so that when problems arise there's a database of information that can be referenced. He is a strong advocate of keeping an eye on details, holding weekly meetings with his lead employees.

He also sends his lead workers to outside seminars as often as possible. Ralston himself has been teaching at decorative concrete training seminars for nearly 10 years. He speaks at industry conferences for the Decorative Concrete Council (and serves on the board) and spoke this year at the World of Concrete on concrete countertops and acid staining. He has recently teamed up with countertop manufacturer Buddy Rhodes of San Francisco to do training seminars for concrete countertops.

Managing 52 employees in various divisions provides a unique challenge, he says. To have a successful team, you must have people who can bring both talent and work ethic to the job. "Without work ethic, they aren't going to bring the project to the level we expect," he says. "Without talent or experience, they can't pull it off because they aren't at that level yet."

Over the last fifteen years, he has seen lots of turnover because employees just didn't fit into the company culture. "They either didn't have the work ethic, talent, or the temperament, so they didn't last here. We try to promote our culture as being cooperative and respectful, but we drive hard too. It's the nature of the beast, and concrete doesn't wait for anyone."

Positive values, friendly service and quality work are the cornerstones of the company.

"It is so easy to make an ordinary job extraordinary," Ralston says. "Just add some decorative deep joints or round a step ... there are hundreds of things you can do for little or no extra cost and clients will love you for it."

But operating a decorative concrete company and trying to be on the cutting

edge is tricky, he says. "Our ultimate goal is to put a smile on our clients' face, but we have had to learn the hard way that the flip side of this goal is to be profitable at the same time. So many decorative projects can easily run over budget. There are a lot of starving artists out there — and we really don't want to be one of them."



CIRCLE #58 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Drain Systems to the Rescue:

Keep your decorative work dry

by Susan Brimo-Cox



Photographs courtesy of AGO Polymer Products

If rain, swimming pool water, landscape runoff or other liquids pose hazards to your decorative concrete work, consider adding a drainage system to your project. Water and liquids naturally want to run to low spots. Drains, when properly selected and installed, quickly capture and transfer liquids away from the site, reducing standing water on the decorative surface. Not only can this enhance the longevity of your work, it makes the surface safer for pedestrians and traffic by reducing slip hazard.

There are many kinds of drain systems. However, the systems typically used by concrete contractors fall into two categories: trench or channel drains and catch basin or point drains.

Trench and channel drains

"The most efficient way to catch sheet water is trench drains," reports Tom Simon, national sales manager for Advanced Building Technologies Inc. in Troutman, N.C.

While the terms channel and trench drains are often used interchangeably, there is a difference.

Jeff Tyler, drainage and landscape marketing manager for National Diversified Sales Inc. in Woodland Hills, Calif., explains that channel drains are generally intended for residential or commercial use. They are extruded or molded out of plastic in 10- or 20-foot lengths. Though U-shaped with a grate, channel drains usually have a flat bottom, with no built-in slope or pitch. Design-build contractors, landscape contractors and deck contractors often use channel drains, which can frequently be found at the "big box" stores or at wholesale distributors.

Trench drains are generally used in commercial and industrial applications, Tyler explains. "They have a pre-designed slope or pitch built in to each piece. ... They can be pre-made or cast in concrete on site." The slope is usually a 0.7 percent to 2 percent grade. Trench drains, Tyler

Tips from the pros

Bud Stegmeier, co-owner of Stegmeier Corp. in Henderson, Nev., shares these tips for using channel drains and point drains in swimming pool applications:

- If you can't easily drain water away into planter areas or the landscape, channel drains are the preferred way to take water away from a pool area. Channel drains take away the surge of water faster than point drains.
- Don't use channel drains as expansion joints. The concrete slabs could pinch, slip or sheer them.
- If you install one-piece channel drains, leave the protective tape on the grate during installation. Remove it later.
- If you install two-piece channel drain with removable top grates, stagger the grates with the channel to help ensure good alignment.
- If you are setting long runs of channel drain, it may be advisable to use periodic down adapters to underground plumbing to speed removal of water.
- Point drains often solve drainage problems in difficult areas. For example, if you have a peninsula inset into a pool and it is not accessible for a channel drain, you may have to use a point drain. Another example is if you have a free-form or radius wall and you need to move water away from that spot; you might not be able to use a channel drain, but a point drain could work.

Dave Pettigrew, owner of Diamond D Concrete in Capitola, Calif., says there is nothing worse than having a "duck pond" — water puddle up — on a finished decorative concrete project. You have to be creative in mitigating water problems, he says. He shares some of his tips:

- Locate drain grates in inconspicuous spots or let them work into your design. Decorative grates can be selected that coordinate or accent the decorative concrete work.
- A cross slope between 1 percent and 2 percent drains water, but is not too steep for pedestrian traffic. It's best to keep within the parameters of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- If you have to run drain pipe under a slab, situate it as low as you can — you don't want the slab right on top of it. If necessary, use a heavy-walled drain pipe. If the pipe is too flexible, the concrete slab will crack over it.
- At turns, don't use 90-degree elbows, use sweeps. Dirt usually settles where it slows down at hard turns.
- Make sure water in the drain pipes is draining, not sitting or running backwards.

observes, typically have a rounded bottom to prevent debris from accumulating. Pre-manufactured trench drains are usually made of heavy-gauge plastic or polymer-modified concrete.

Lesley Pickering, marketing coordinator for ACO Polymer Products Inc. in Chardon, Ohio, cautions contractors that not all systems are compatible with all paving materials, though most are compatible with concrete. "The only problem they may have is where the trench material does not have a similar coefficient of

expansion as the surrounding concrete or paving material," she says. If the trench system material expands and contracts at a different rate than the surrounding paving material, there may be buckling or distortion.

Trench and channel drains work well in many situations. In residential settings you frequently find them between a sloping driveway and a garage entrance or along a straight retaining wall. In commercial and industrial settings they can be used to control storm runoff and chemical



spills. The size of the drain system and the material the drain is made of — plastic, polymer concrete or some other material — depends entirely on the liquid and quantity you will be draining away from the site.

Pre-cast or cast in place?

Should you use a pre-formed trench drain or cast it yourself?

Pickering points out that casting trench drains in place is very labor intensive and the resulting drain is of inconsistent quality. While product costs are low, labor and materials to create the forms can be high. On the other hand, she says, pre-cast trench drains are fairly simple and quick to install. And while the product costs are higher, the savings on pipe and labor often compensate.

Simon, also, points to the labor side of the equation. When laying a straight run with minimal turns, he says, “Four good carpenters will do well to build 50 to 100 feet in a day of trench drain. Contractors using modular trench drains could do 300 to 500 feet.”

He also observes that building by hand also results in a larger drain — by necessity — and slower flow. “If you build by hand, you’ll typically have at least 12 inches to facilitate form construction and removal,” Simon says. By comparison, he explains, a 4-inch pre-made polymer-concrete trench will give you the same hydraulics as a 12-inch poured concrete drain because it has a smoother interior. Poured concrete has a rougher surface, creating turbulence,

which impedes and limits the hydraulics.

“When a contractor forgets to include drainage in the estimate is when one might end up doing it by hand; figuring they can handle the labor loss more than paying for the pre-formed products,” Simon says. “Or they think they can do it for less.”

Catch basins and point drains

If you have sufficient contour to the site or you can’t use a channel or trench drain, a catch basin or point drain may be the drainage system you need to use. Both of these systems require the concrete to slope to a central point for water collection, and plumbing is necessary under the



Photographs courtesy of National Diversified Sales, Inc.

concrete to drain water away from the site.

A point or area drain is set up much like a shower drain, with a small grate in the center. A single drain pipe leads water away, though the pipe may have several point drains located along its run.

A catch basin is a catchment receptacle with outlet ports set into the ground at the base of a basin. Pipes are attached to the outlet ports to channel water away from the site.

These are not the easiest drains to install. Pickering points out they require “complex four-way grades to work effectively.” Also, while product costs are usually low, “The additional cost of extensive pipes and excavation costs are often ‘forgotten,’” she adds.

Choosing a grate

Many factors are involved in choosing a grate — not just cost.

Load rating is a critical factor, says Tyler. “The grating needs to support the application.”

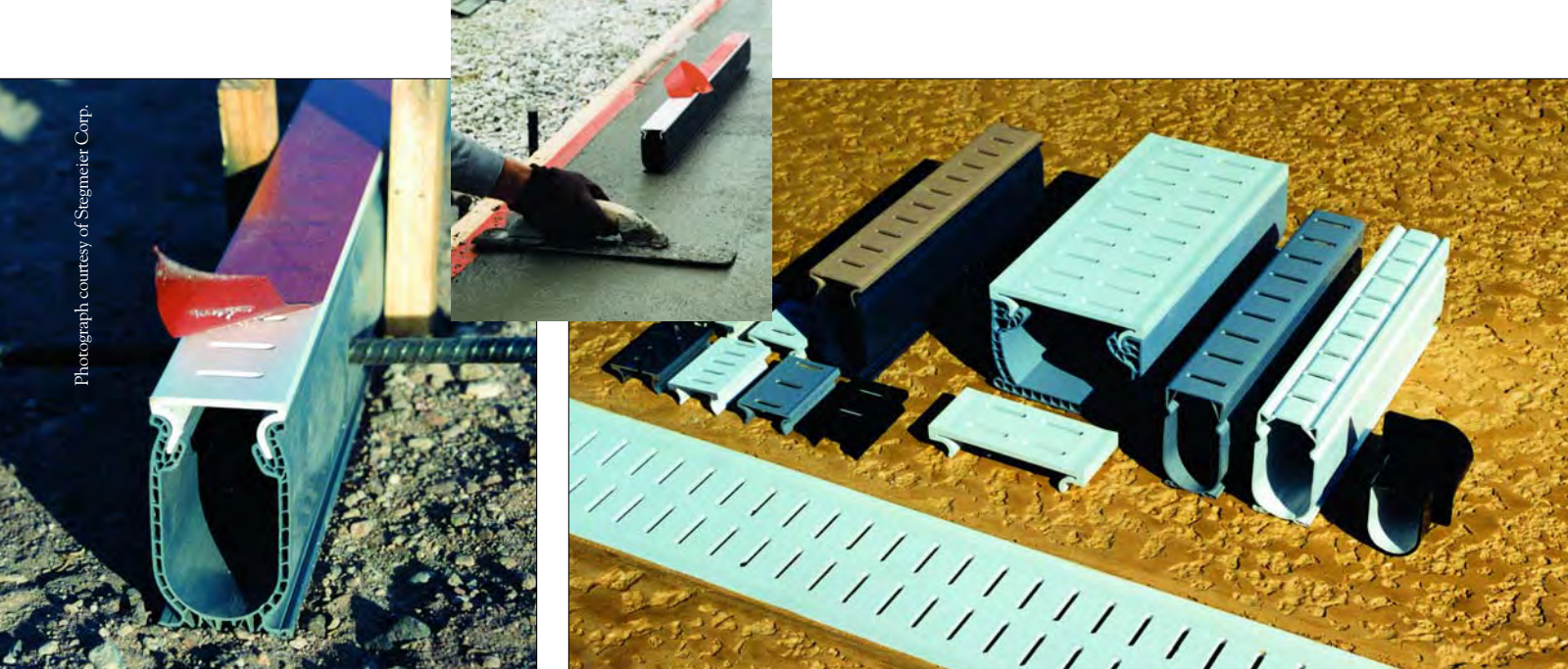
When evaluating load rating, Tyler advises that you consider the weight and size of vehicles, the speed of approach of the vehicles, and if the vehicles have pneumatic or hard tires. A grate you integrate with a walkway or driveway may require only a “light traffic rating.” On the other hand, the hard tires of forklifts are tough abuse for a grate, requiring a heavier “H-20 load rating.”

If you’re not sure about a grate’s load rating, talk to the manufacturer about your project’s specifics. Tyler explains, “I would rather have the call before the

job, rather than after an improperly installed grate breaks.”

Durability is also important. Pickering asks, “Are the trench and grate materials resistant to the liquids/chemicals being drained?” Grates are made from a wide range of materials, including plastic, brass, cast iron, ductile iron and stainless steel. The load rating also may be dependent on the durability of the grate material.

Aesthetics usually come in to play after load and durability factors are considered. If cost is an issue initially, remember that grates can often be changed out later and upgraded to a more desired material, finish or design. Other user issues may involve safety — including Americans with Disabilities Act requirements — and security



issues, such as how easy is it to remove the grate.

Remember the key elements

Engineers and architects usually do the homework up front and specify the

necessary drainage recommendations for commercial and industrial projects. Design-build and residential contractors may not have that benefit. But making smart decisions about drainage systems is not hard if you keep in mind a few key factors.

In choosing a drain system for a particular application, first determine the hydraulic performance required — this will tell you the size drain you need. Then look at the site itself. Space limitations and sloping issues will drive the selection of a drain type.

See how H&C® Infusion™ transforms concrete.



Introducing H&C® Infusion™ Reactive Stain System.

The H&C® Infusion™ Reactive Stain System is the newest way to give concrete surfaces a whole new look. Available in many ready-to-use colors, this acid stain solution is easy-to-use and delivers excellent results, which helps your bottom line.

- Eight ready-to-use colors
- Mix and match colors to create a unique look
- Commercial, industrial and residential use
- Resists oil, gasoline, water and UV rays
- Available as a concrete stain, solvent-based sealer, water-based sealer and industrial floor finish

Call 1-800-867-8246, or visit your local Sherwin-Williams store.
www.hc-concrete.com



CIRCLE #66 ON READER SERVICE CARD



White concrete mix • Liquid colors • Edge forms
Sealers • Beeswax • Form release • Sink knock-outs

Ideal for: Kitchen Counters, Bathroom Vanities, Tiles...

Training Classes and Distributor Opportunities Available



Bobby Rhodes Studio, Inc. | 2130 Oakdale Avenue | San Francisco, CA 94124
1.877.706.5303 | www.buddyrhodes.com

CIRCLE #08 ON READER SERVICE CARD

For more information on drainage systems, visit these Web sites:

ACO Polymer Products Inc.

www.acousa.com

Advanced Building Technologies Inc.

www.abtdrains.com

MultiDrain Systems

www.multidrainsystems.com

National Diversified Sales Inc.

www.ndspro.com

Stegmeier Corp.

www.stegmeier.com

As Bud Stegmeier, co-owner of Stegmeier Corp. in Henderson, Nev., points out, if you use multiple point drains, you'll have to deal with the ups and downs of multiple bowls, whereas "with a trench drain you'll still have the slope [and] it won't be level, but it will be flat."

In selecting a grate, be sure to consider loading factors, durability issues and user requirements.

Finally, don't forget that drainage systems need maintenance and cleaning. With trench drains, you can access the entire system through the grate and debris can be easily flushed to the catch basin for removal or shoveled clean, reports Pickering. Maintenance on catch basin or point drain systems is trickier because pipes are buried; blockages can be difficult to locate and remove.

When choosing among the many products available in the marketplace, Steve Born, operations manager of MultiDrain Systems Inc. of Erlanger, Ky., recommends that contractors look at ease of installation, labor costs, the system cost and the time it takes to install. Also helpful is making sure the manufacturer has the technical staff available to answer any questions you may have — before you get started and as your project progresses.



ARE YOU VERSATILE?

versatile



Liquid Granite Epoxy Floor Installed by Perfect Surfaces



Industrial CRU Floor Materials Supplied by Pervo Paint



Kwik-Top Knockdown Installed by Coating Systems



Versa-Crete 1/4-inch Stamped Concrete Installed by Richard Smith Concrete

WE ARE. Come join us.

Training Classes Held Monthly

Stocking Distributors:

WA: NW Smart	206-730-9459
IA: Mark's Epoxy	712-368-4422
AZ & NM: Anderson Resurfacing	602-550-4409
CA:	

Sacramento: Pervo Paint	916-869-5555
N. Los Angeles: Coating Supply	818-376-4040
Placentia: CSI Distribution	714-777-4407
San Bernardino: J & S Supply	909-496-2723
Palm Desert: Perfect Garage	760-360-7699
Moreno Valley: Perfect Surface	909-369-3409
Victor Valley: Spray Doctor	760-949-8458

Sales Rep and Distributor
Applications are Now Being Accepted

1-800-535-3325
www.deckcoatings.com

SURFACE PREPARATION from VIC



Equipment, Tooling, Training
and Technical Support for
Concrete Coatings Removal,
Surface Prep
and Concrete Polishing



Coatings removal specialists



Call to receive your Surface Prep catalog from the
floor prep experts at VIC!

P: 1-800-423-1634 x 7737 F: 1-877-781-7737
www.concretemedic.com surfaceprep@vicintl.com



Going Vertical

Experts share some straight-up advice on overlays

by David Thompson



When it comes to cementitious overlays, gravity doesn't have to keep you down.

Just as overlays can radically restyle floors and countertops, so too can they transform interior and exterior walls, as well as chimneys, planters, pillars and other upright surfaces. From stamps to stencils, stucco to faux Venetian plaster, vertical overlays allow for a broad variation in styles.

Today's vertical overlays can adhere directly to a wide variety of substrates, including concrete, masonry, ceramic tile, wood, steel and drywall. They range in thickness from paper-thin skim coats to stampable coatings up to four inches deep.

Some products are formulated specifically to go on vertically without sagging, while others can be modified to do so, either by mixing them more thickly or with additives. Still others are designed to be used either horizontally or vertically with no modification in between.

Vertical overlays can be applied through conventional methods such as troweling, rolling or spraying. In general the process for overlaying a wall is the same as for overlaying a floor. But there are new wrinkles to think through, points out Ron Borum, executive vice president of the Miracote division of Crossfield Products Corp. "You have to come up with a delivery system from the bucket to the vertical surface without spilling it on the horizontal surface," he says. "And you've got to figure out a mechanism to get to the vertical surface, usually scaffolding or a traveling stage. Or if you're really smart, you do it on a tilt-up wall when the wall's still down."

Netting, lath used for reinforcement

As with any overlay, proper preparation of the substrate is critical when going vertical. For applications directly onto a substrate, a primer with a bonding agent is typically used. When seams or joints are present, as in drywall and wood, taping and/or mudding is done to prevent the junctures from showing through the coating.

Mesh netting is often applied to the substrate (using adhesive) to bridge cracks and serve as a reinforcing mechanism. "In the old days they used to use the jute bags that your corn came in," says Borum. "Now it's usually polypropylene mesh nets, or fiberglass mesh nets."

Expanded diamond metal lath is another commonly-used reinforcing mechanism, especially for wood substrates, which are highly subject to movement. Lath is also used when a holding mechanism is called for with some thicker overlays.

Photographs courtesy of Miracote



Some contractors use Glass Fiber Reinforced Concrete (GFRC) to boost a vertical overlay's durability. It's used regularly by David Long, president of the Lakeland Company, an Idaho-based firm that specializes in theme construction for clients such as casinos, zoos and museums. "We'll combine chopped glass in our mix to bond everything together and allow it to flex without cracking and chipping and so forth," he says.

Long is a big proponent of lath, too, especially in freeze-thaw climates. He's so sold on lath's superiority as a mechanical attachment that he even uses it for overlays on drywall. "It's unorthodox, to say the least, but it works and it lasts," he says. "Yeah, it costs more. But how much does it cost to come back continuously to fix chunks that are falling off the wall?"

Plenty of room for individuality

The looks achievable with vertical overlays are limited largely by the imagination. "You can let your mind run wild," says Gary Jones, president of Colormaker Floors in Vancouver, Canada. One creative texturing technique Jones used to age a wall involved gently bruising it with a sock full of nails.

Applying multiple layers of skim coat is a popular approach for interior walls. Borrowing an old Italian plastering technique, Jones has gotten nice results by covering a coarse base coat with a fine finish coat. "The material underneath shows through, yet the finer material fills the gaps," he says.

Rick Smith, of Richard Smith Custom Concrete in Los Angeles, typically uses three coats of varied coarseness. The first coat, which fills depressions on the substrate, contains sand ranging from 30 to 60 grit. The second coat, which tightens edges and fills low spots, has sand ranging from 60 to 120 grit. For the final coat, Smith might go with anything from 120-grit sand to a powdery-fine silica flour. "In most cases out here in California, people want a tight-troweled finish or a really clean, almost mirrored finish," he says.

When multiple skim coats are used, depth and texture is best attained when layers are applied as thinly as possible, says Rick Reinking, a technical representative for the Seattle-based Rudd Company. "You can build it up thicker, but then it starts to look like paint," Reinking says. "It's not going to have any depth or translucency."

The overlay Reinking applied to the walls of his own office, by the way, consists of varying shades of purple. The outside of his office is done in a cementitious stucco. "I just put on a pair of latex



Photographs courtesy of Miracote



gloves and a pair of cotton gloves over that and wiped it on by hand," he says.

Stamping, stenciling go vertical too

Stucco may have once been en vogue for exteriors, but stenciling, done in a variety of brick and stone patterns, has become a popular application these days. A natural grout look can be achieved by leaving the first coat uncolored and applying a tinted layer over it. Adhesive-backed stencils work particularly well on vertical surfaces.

Stamping has grown in popularity in recent years with the advent of new products designed specifically for verticals and ranging in depth from ¼ inch up to four inches. A variety of stone, block and brick effects can be achieved with off-the-

shelf stamping tools, but sometimes stamps can be improvised.

When David Long needs wood textures in his theme construction, for instance, he turns to lumber. "We'll cut it to the dimensions we need, sandblast the face to raise the grain, and use the actual lumber for a stamp," he says.

Hand tooling, or carving, is another option with some vertical overlay materials. Sharp-edged tools can be used to create scores, designs and even relief sculpture while the coating is still in its plastic stage. "I've seen everything done from a coat of arms to a family's actual features," says Bill Tott, technical director of ArcusStone, a California-based overlay manufacturer. "One of our artists carved a whole family — four faces — right on the pillars of a fireplace."

Cementitious overlays can also be applied to extruded polystyrene forms cut to replicate architectural stone details, such as arches, columns, windows and door surrounds. Not only do cementitiously-coated forms represent a cost-effective means of achieving elegant effects, they also weigh a heck of a lot less than the actual articles. "You can literally stick some of these things on with adhesive instead of mechanical anchors and ties," Tott says.





Applied Concrete Technology, Inc.

MIX WATER CONDITIONER: For new concrete

- Delivers consistency with every batch, every yard, everyday.
- Stops segregation.
- Control the mix with durability and workability.
- Virtually eliminate plastic shrinkage cracking, crazing and curl.
- Offers better color control. Stops efflorescence in shotcrete and colored concrete.

DENSIFIER: For new and existing concrete

- Penetrates concrete 4-6 inches.
- Stops water hydration.
- Promotes curing.
- Provides color control with stains.
- Permanent application.

Applied Concrete Technology, Inc.
Grayslake, IL 60030
800-228-6694
Please check out our website for other exciting Protecrete Products.
www.protecrete.com

PROTECRETE®
CONCRETE'S BEST SOLUTION

CIRCLE #02 ON READER SERVICE CARD



Color tips

The same coloring materials used on horizontal overlays can also be used vertically, such as integral colors, acid stains or even broadcast hardeners. However, some adjustment in application technique may be required, especially with liquids. When Rick Smith sprays acid stain onto vertical overlays, for instance, he slightly increases his compressor's psi, stands a little farther from the surface and applies the solution in a finer mist. He follows up by blotting the surface with a crumpled lambs-wool chamois to take out any runs, then hits wet spots hiding in cracks and crevices with a dry terrycloth. Or sometimes he just throws dry sawdust up on freshly-stained walls to soak up excess moisture, then washes it off later.

Sealing is essential

To protect new overlays from abuse of the elements, sealing is crucial. All the principles of sealing floors apply to sealing walls, though fewer coats ordinarily suffice where foot traffic's not a concern. Solvent-based acrylic sealers with matte finishes are a popular choice, especially for interior walls. Glossy finishes are sometimes used for exteriors, where they matte down with time.

In commercial areas such as restaurants, where contact between vertical surfaces and greasy-

Specializing in Decorative Concrete Products



ACID STAINING

Offering the largest variety of coloring and surface finishes for concrete products.

Integral Color, Colored Sealer, Antique Release, Color Hardener, Epoxy, Urethane, Acid Staining, Stamp and Spray Texture Overlayment Systems



SPRAY TEXTURE



STAMPED OVERLAYMENT



ACID STAINED STAMPED OVERLAYMENT



ACID STAIN OVERLAYMENT



Southern Color Company, Inc.
7 Swisher Drive
Cartersville, Georgia 30120
(770) 386-4766 • FAX (770) 382-8770
www.southerncolor.com

New Product Introductions

- RS-Resurfacer
- Citra Peel
- Kleen Krete



handed employees can be expected, urethane- or epoxy-based sealers may be warranted. "If there's ever a concern for a lot of wear and tear, upgrade," says Wes Vollmer of Alternative Finishes in San Antonio, Texas. Vollmer adds that when he bids on such jobs, he points out to the architects that he's included the higher-cost sealers, which can substantially raise material costs.

For a different look, Rick Smith occasionally uses beeswax or even automobile wax as a sealer, which gives a satiny finish that you can't get with conventional sealers, he says. "It gives you this really bitchin' Old-World look."

Interior vertical overlays should be resealed every three to five years, while exteriors should be resealed every two or three years.

Despite the similarities between vertical and horizontal overlays, contractors well-versed in floors shouldn't jump straight into walls without doing some mock-ups first. "Go out in the garage and get an old piece of sheetrock or plywood and mimic a wall," says Vollmer, who has mastered a variety of vertical applications, including a faux Venetian plaster. "I always tell guys, practice makes perfect."



For concrete repair on
building façades, balconies
and parking structures,
**you should
know more
about Sto.**

Sto Corp. manufactures quality-engineered waterproofing, repair and aesthetic concrete treatments that set industry standards of excellence. Improve the life and the look of your concrete repair. Sto pros are ready to help you diagnose problems, formulate repair strategies, and select appropriate repair materials to ensure the success of your project.

Call us toll-free at 1-800-542-3057
or visit www.stocorp.com for more details.

The more you know
about Sto, the less you
think of our competition.

sto 

CIRCLE #76 ON READER SERVICE CARD



Before Sto



*Building Façade and
Balconies after Sto*



*Parking Deck
after Sto*



It's All in the Details

by Stacey Enesey Klemenc

If you think you've got fastidious clients who want a particular shade of this and just the right texture of that, hold on to your mouse ears. As sure as supercalifragilisticexpialidocious is the longest word in the English language, few people are as meticulous as the folks at Disney.

For example, let's take the courtyard between the large likenesses of Lady and the Tramp at the new Disney's Pop Century Resort in Orlando, Florida. "We were given a tape of the movie and were told to watch it," says Steve Martin, regional manager of key accounts for L.M. Scofield Company, which supplied much of the stains, color hardeners, stamping tools, skins and other incidentals that were used to create the hardscapes at the resort. "All the colors and textures used for that streetscape were taken from that film. They had to match exactly."

To create Animal Kingdom, which features a safari ride, Martin says he was given five samples of dirt from the Serengeti, a plain in northwest Tanzania where there is a large wildlife reserve. Scofield developed custom-matched color hardeners and also matched the textures with concrete to make the park's hardscapes look like rugged terrain.

And, unless someone pointed it out, you probably had no idea it wasn't. The rudimentary-looking roadways have ruts, dips and deep tire tracks. "On the safari ride, the trucks are riding on cast-in-place concrete, not mud," Martin says. Joe Rhody, the lead designer for Disney, dubbed the rustic concrete "designer dirt."

Martin says he and others involved with Disney projects work closely with the Imagineering team — the master planning, creative development, design, engineering, production, project management and research and development arm of The Walt Disney Co. In short, Martin explains, "They're Disney's think tank."

From concept through installation, they're the ones behind the creation of all Disney resorts, theme parks and attractions, real estate developments,



Picture This: Disney Tour of Concrete 2004

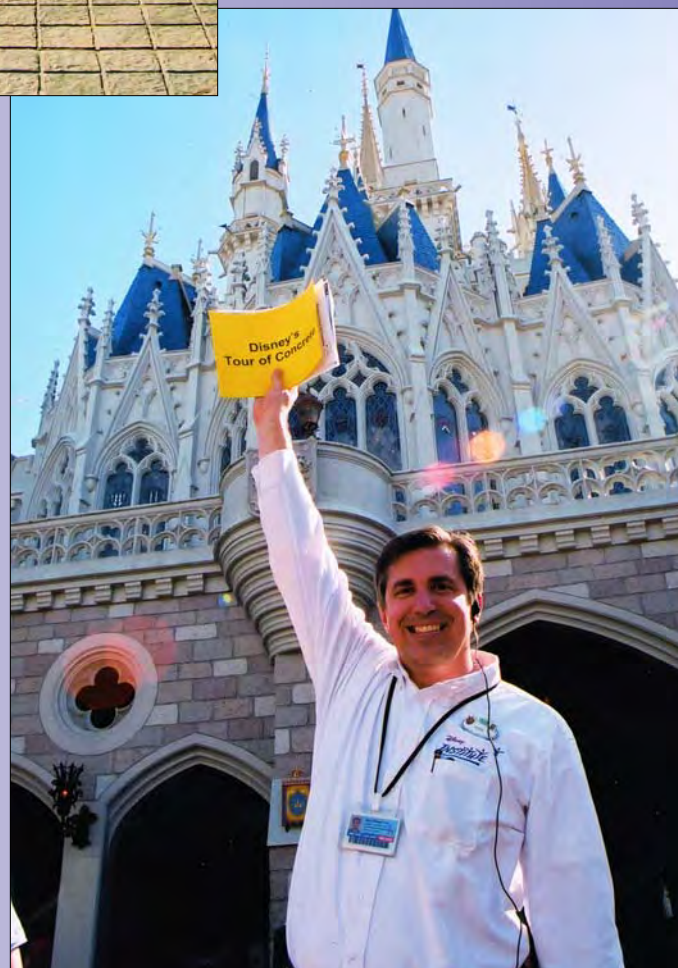
One of the highlights of the Tour of Concrete at Disney World —

which was hosted by *Concrete Decor* as a prelude to the 2004 World of Concrete in Orlando — included a guided tour of the attraction's newest resort area, Pop Century.



A walkover bridge at Pop Century features stenciled concrete.

The tour wouldn't have been complete without a trip to view the concrete decor around Cinderella Castle in the Magic Kingdom.



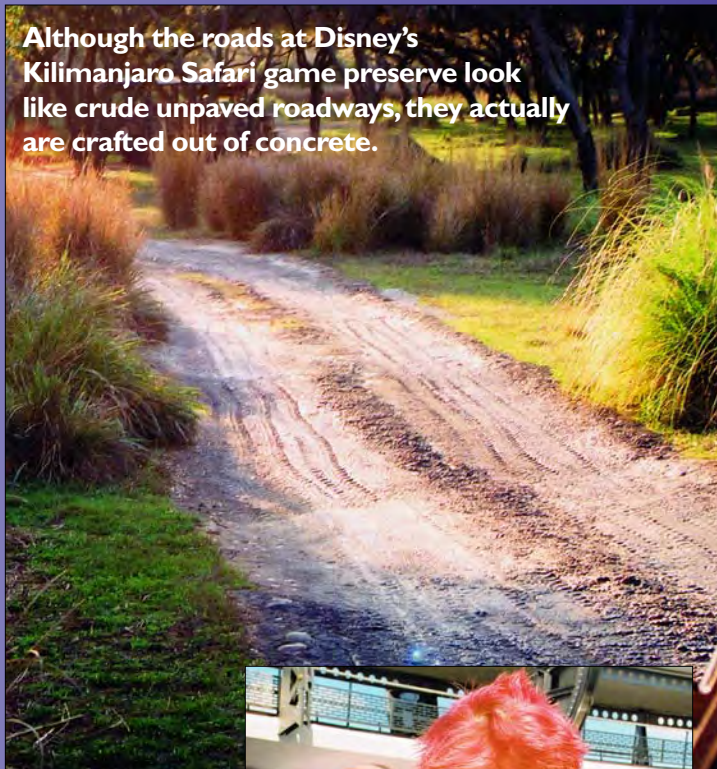


Five lucky tour participants took home digital cameras, courtesy of the L.M. Scofield Company: (from left) Bud Buffing of Hilltop Basic Resources Inc. in Cincinnati; Norman Kemp of Baker Concrete in Orlando; and Rick Henning of Blue Diamond Services near Philadelphia.

The concrete near the '60s-themed Hippy Dippy Pool at Pop Century Resort features bright custom colors created with Scofield's Lithochrome color hardener.



Concrete Decor's publisher, Bent Mikkelsen, and Sherry White of L.M. Scofield Company address those gathered for cocktails and dinner at Epcot.



Although the roads at Disney's Kilimanjaro Safari game preserve look like crude unpaved roadways, they actually are crafted out of concrete.



All tour participants went home with a T-shirt, compliments of Concrete Decor magazine.



Disney's Pop Century Resort, which celebrates pop culture of the 20th century in a big way, is a colorful addition to the attraction's hotel lineup.

Photographs by Stacy Klemenc and Mark Dixon

regional entertainment venues and new media projects. And, above all, "Those guys are all about detail. Everything has to be just so," he says.

The scoop on Pop Century

According to Jeff Kelly, a project manager with Centex Rooney who served as assistant project manager on the Pop Century Resort project, 124 colors and 45 custom-matched caulk colors were used to complete the hardscape for Phase I of the resort, which focuses on the pop culture of each decade of the last 50 years of the 20th century. (No timetable has been set to begin Phase II, which will highlight the 1900s through the 1940s.)

Of the wide array of colors used, "I'd say 15 to 20 colors were off-the-shelf Scofield colors," Kelly estimates. "The rest were custom matched to color chips" or to specific shades on the Pantone color key.

Ground was broken on Phase I of the Pop Century project in June 1999 and completed in April 2002. Between April 2001 and April 2002, Kelly says, they poured just over 9,000 cubic yards and hand finished 450,000 square feet of concrete. Of the overall \$128 million contract, \$3.4 million was devoted to the hardscape package.

Phase I of Pop Century included 10 lodge buildings and 2,880 rooms, six pool buildings and four pools — one shaped like a bowling pin in the '50s section, another like a flower from the '60s complemented by a sunflower-shaped kiddie pool, and the fourth in the shape of an '80s computer monitor. "We raised the pool deck and used a resilient-rubber material to make a giant keyboard," Kelly says.

Whereas a giant '70s foosball table highlights Kelly's favorite courtyard, the bowling lanes near the pin pool had to be the most intense part of the project and are the creation of which he is most proud.

"Disney wanted the pool deck to look like a waxed floor and the relief had to be very shallow," he remembers. "The stamping was so finite. It's within a ¼ inch and the shallowest stamp Scofield has ever made." Since the crew only had a small window of time, "like 20 minutes," to do the job right, "we broke up the pool deck into 100 different pours. If you look real close, you can see the construction joints."

Kelly says they had 11 different sets of stamps set up in sequence to control the finite stamping process, and the whole crew had to pitch in and stamp to get the appropriate relief on the pool deck. As if this wasn't problematic enough, it turned out to be one of the wettest years they've ever had in



(Above and right) The Bowling Pin Pool area at Pop Century Resort features concrete "wood planks" created with products from L.M. Scofield Company.



Concrete Decor's Sheri Mikkelsen and Michelle Hilden register Dave Johnson with Protecrete, a sponsor of the tour from Grays Lake, Ill.

Tove and Ernst Mikkelsen, co-publisher of Concrete Decor, enjoy the evening's festivities.





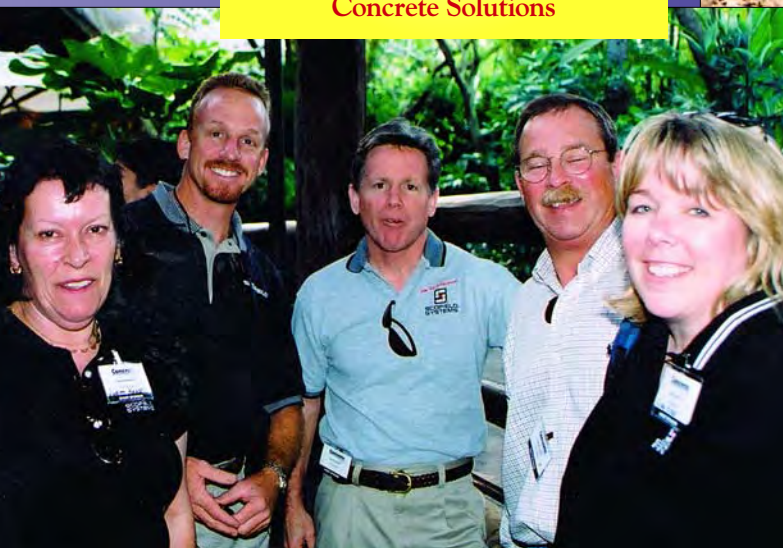
Tour participants learn that the compass rose outside of Cinderella Castle in the Magic Kingdom was made possible with a lot of rebar and color hardener.

The concrete in the Magic Kingdom's Fairytale Garden is fashioned from skins and random imprints.

Photograph © L.M. Scofield Company

Tour of Concrete Sponsors

L.M. Scofield
Lafarge
Cemex
Protecrete
Miracote
Soff-Cut International, Inc.
Mapei
Stegmeier Corporation
ArcusStone
Fritz-Pak
Super-Krete
Degussa
Vexcon
Glaze 'N Seal
Concrete Solutions



A group from L.M. Scofield ready themselves for the safari ride through Disney's Kilimanjaro Safari game preserve.



Kim Flaviani and Peggy Disney of Lafarge North America, one of the tour's sponsors, pause for a picture in Disney's Animal Kingdom.

Photographs by Stacey Klemenc and Mark Dixon

Orlando, Kelly says, adding that it's typical for it to rain around noon every day during the summer anyway. In order to have the concrete set up before it rained, crews had to start work in the middle of the night — a normal workday ran from 2 A.M. to 11 A.M. — with artificial lighting from light towers glaring down on them much of the time.

Kelly says because a lot of the concrete was integrally colored, they used a conveyor with a telescopic boom to place the concrete. The water necessary to use with a pump would have jeopardized the consistency of the color, he adds.

"The whole job took a massive amount of preplanning," Kelly says. "Without the great supers we had, we wouldn't have been able to pull it off."

The wild happenings at Animal Kingdom

Earl "Honk" Visger, currently hardscape division manager for D&D Tree in Lake Buena Vista, Fla., has worked on numerous Disney projects since 1990. For three years, as the hardscape super for a company called Valley Crest, he helped build Animal Kingdom — literally from the ground up.

For starters, the area where the park now stands was leveled, and everything — every shrub and tree, every hill and dale — was strategically placed according to a master plan. "It was the most challenging job I've ever been involved with, completely different from anything I was ever taught," Visger says. "We threw away everything we knew and started experimenting."

All the walks were shovel cut; they didn't use any forms. For the first time in his experience, Visger recounts, he fashioned concrete to look like wood. They made many of their own stamps to resemble dirt, forest litter or a combination of both. They made giant root skins and root molds from actual tree parts. Near big trees, they placed concrete roots to make them look like they were jutting out of the walkway. "Some people actually try to pick them up. That's how real they look," he says.

The crews ran barefoot through the cement mud to mimic fleeing "aborigines." Some guys were wrapped in plastic and rolled around to create imprints that looked like the result of large wallowing beasts. Others strapped three-gallon buckets on their feet and ran to create elephant footprints. Still others were dragged away from the mud into the brush, similar to what a lion would do with its kill. "We did a lot of strange stuff," Visger recalls. "It was a wild job."

Wild, indeed. When the safari animals were first brought to Animal Kingdom, he explains, they had

to be trained to go into their houses to sleep at night and most of them weren't fast learners. There were many hairy nights when Visger and his crew were pouring the ride paths and had to scramble to safety.

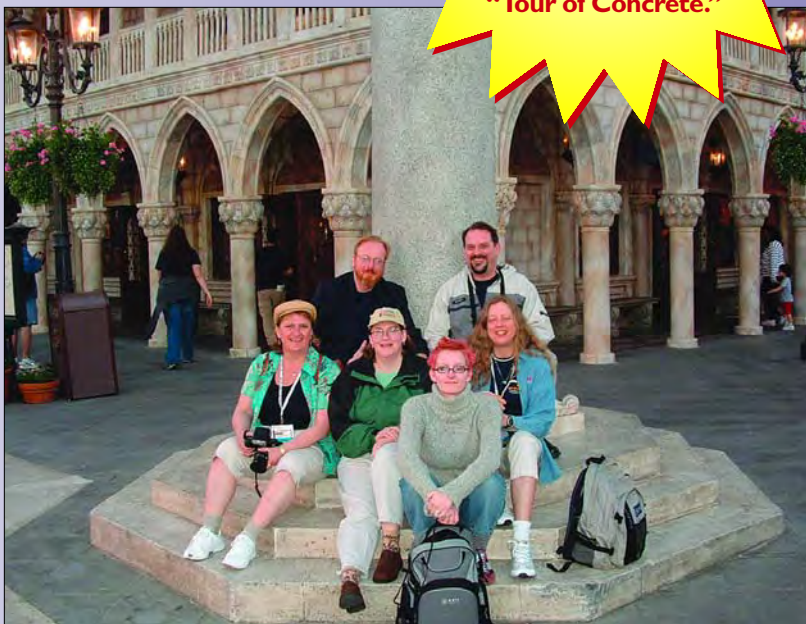
"We'd be pouring concrete and if an animal keeper blew his whistle, we went and jumped in our trucks, no questions asked. Then we'd see a herd of wildebeest or ostriches or zebras run by. It'd happen a couple of times each night."

Visger, who was known as Honky before his first Disney employers emphatically recommended he shorten his nickname to Honk so many years ago, credits Disney with high standards and a penchant for quality work. "If you do things right you can be a household name," he says. "If you don't, you're out of there."



**Winner of
Concrete Decor magazine's
Walt Disney World® Resort
vacation for two is:
Darlene Ward
Caddo Mills, TX**

**Thank you for participating
in Concrete Decor's 2004
"Tour of Concrete."**



The hardworking crew from Concrete Decor magazine poses for posterity at a plaza in Epcot before dinner.



After the Disney Tour of Concrete, participants enjoyed cocktails and dinner at the American Adventure dining hall in Epcot, followed by dessert and fireworks outside.

See how H&C[®] Infusion[™] transforms concrete.



Introducing H&C[®] Infusion[™] Reactive Stain System.

The H&C[®] Infusion[™] Reactive Stain System is the newest way to give concrete surfaces a whole new look. Available in many ready-to-use colors, this acid stain solution is easy-to-use and delivers excellent results, which helps your bottom line.

- Eight ready-to-use colors
- Mix and match colors to create a unique look
- Commercial, industrial and residential use
- Resists oil, gasoline, water and UV rays
- Available as a concrete stain, solvent-based sealer, water-based sealer and industrial floor finish

Call 1-800-867-8246, or visit your local Sherwin-Williams store.

www.hc-concrete.com



CIRCLE #66 ON READER SERVICE CARD

PRODUCT PROFILES



Bayferrox C pigment granules cut down on dust, sticking

In its standard form, Bayferrox iron oxide pigment is a very fine, particle-sized powder. With Bayferrox C, the standard powder is compacted into an irregularly shaped granule. This is a cost-effective, low-dusting and free-flowing pigment that can be metered easily and accurately. Bayferrox C can be used in all applications for coloring concrete products where pigment powders have traditionally been used, including dry mixes like mortars and grouts.

The pigments are made from ISO certified powder pigments and offer color consistency and high tinting strength. They are weather and alkali resistant. Concrete technology tests have shown that this binder does not influence the properties of either wet or dry concrete, including setting time and compressive strength.

The color palette for Bayferrox C is four primary shades. From these shades, a nearly infinite range of final colors is possible. The product's flow characteristics allow for very accurate metering, and modern metering equipment can consistently weigh and transfer the four primary pigments directly into the concrete mixer. They show less sticking and bridging than their powder counterparts. They can also be used in dry-to-wet metering systems, which take the dry pigment, mix it with water, then pump the pigment slurry to the concrete mixer.

For more information, call (800) 662-2927 or visit www.BayerUS.com/pigments.



Providing quality education and training to the construction industry.

For a calendar of events and other information:

Call toll free 877-935-8906
www.tradeskills.org
info@tradeskills.org

A nonprofit organization

Institute for American Craftsmanship



The IAC brings professional instructors and leading manufacturers from around the country to provide quality training in decorative concrete and decorative painting.

Please join us at our unique indoor facility, where classes offer everything from basic skills to the latest applications and techniques.



Upcoming Events:

April - Surface Gel Tek - "Flattoos™"
 May - Mike MacNeil - Faux Woodgraining
 June - Bill Gauthier - Gilding, Venetian Plaster/Kolcaustico
 August - Colormaker Floors - troweled toppings

For more details see www.tradeskills.org
 Stay current by subscribing to our free e-mail newsletter.

C-GRID

A reinforcement system for concrete countertops

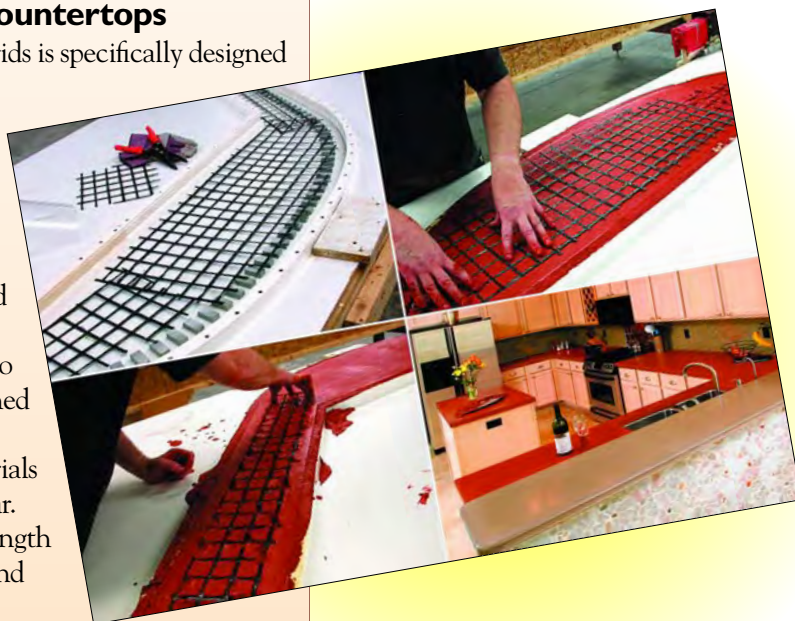
TechFab's C-GRID product line of carbon-fiber grids is specifically designed for the lightweight reinforcement of concrete in countertops as well as in a multitude of precast and prestressed concrete products.

C-GRID uses a carbon-fiber-reinforced, epoxy-resin-based grid design. It can be used in place of, or along with, steel wire mesh and light rebar. Unlike steel, carbon grid can be placed just below the finished surface. By contrast, several inches of concrete would be required to protect steel mesh from corrosion and to prevent rust stains from bleeding through to the finished surface.

The C-GRID reinforcements replace typical materials such as galvanized wire, wire mesh and light steel rebar. They provide excellent corrosion resistance, high strength to weight ratio, flexibility, and outstanding ductility and crack control. C-GRID can be used with as little as 1/4" concrete cover due to a lack of corrosion concerns. The grid design and epoxy chemistry provides excellent concrete-to-grid bonding.

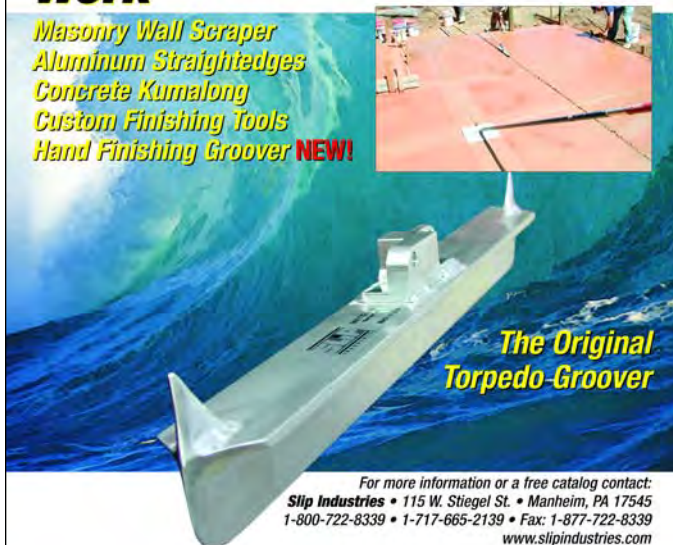
Grids feature openings of 0.75 inches to 3.0 inches, depending on strength requirements and the application. The lightweight grid is available in rolls that simplify storage and that can be shipped via overnight carrier.

For more information, call (864) 260-3355 or visit www.techfabllc.com. TechFab is located in Anderson, S.C.



Custom Tools for Custom Work

Masonry Wall Scraper
Aluminum Straightedges
Concrete Kumalong
Custom Finishing Tools
Hand Finishing Groover **NEW!**



For more information or a free catalog contact:
Slip Industries • 115 W. Stiegel St. • Manheim, PA 17545
1-800-722-8339 • 1-717-665-2139 • Fax: 1-877-722-8339
www.slipindustries.com



Decorative Finish for Concrete

Increase Your Sales & Profits
Easy to Use Alternative to Concrete Stains
Natural Organic Textured Appearance
Unlimited Colors that You Control
Special Effects Without Special Tools
Tough & Durable - Interior or Exterior

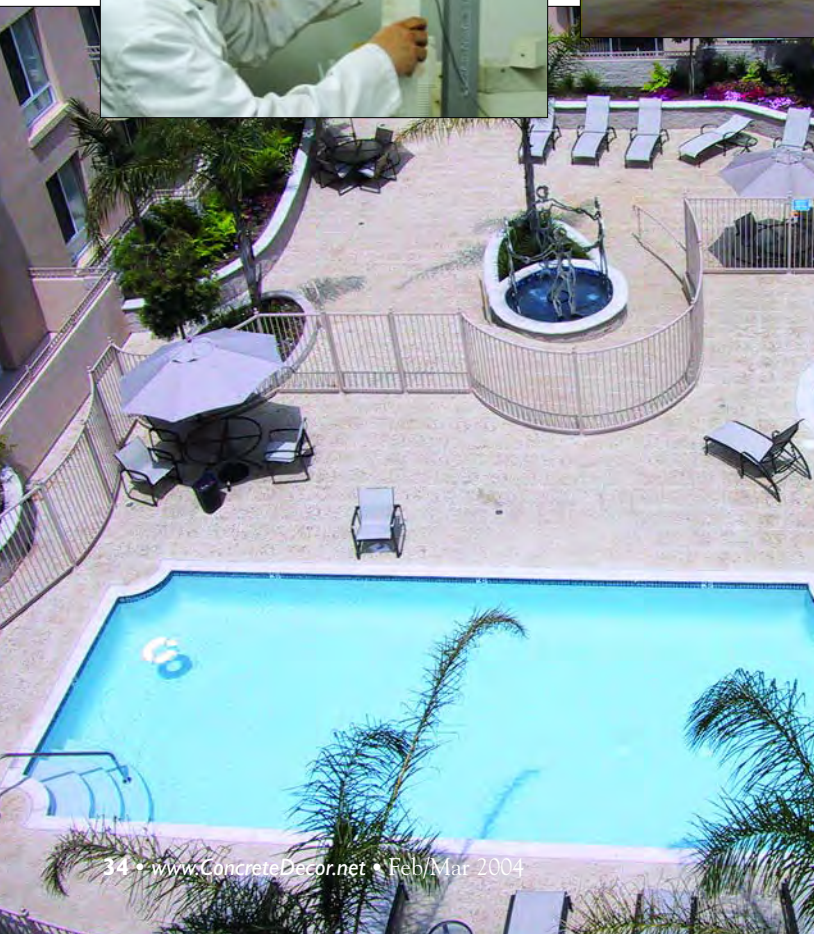
Rudd Company, Inc.
800.444.7833

Seattle WA 98107
<http://www.skimstone.com>

Manufacturer Profile: Versatile Building Products Carson, Calif.

Once a specialist in deck coatings, Versatile Building Products has enjoyed exponential growth with the addition of concrete and epoxy coatings.

by John Strieder



By the time he was 22, Mike Meursing was already married and owned his own floor-coating installation business. He was reaching for the stars — but at the same time, he couldn't help but see the cracks forming under his feet.

It was the heat. Meursing lived in southern California, or as he called it, “the land of the sun.” And when the temperature shot up, he noticed, floor coatings tended to go south. “Coatings had a lot of issues with cracking and leaking,” he says.

Luckily, Meursing was heir to a wealth of expertise in the coating industry. His father was a texture coating manufacturer who successfully launched and sold companies in Canada, Australia and South America. His uncle founded Old Quaker Paint during the Depression, and the brand became a familiar name on the West Coast — so much so that The Sherwin-Williams Co. eventually bought it from the Meursing family.

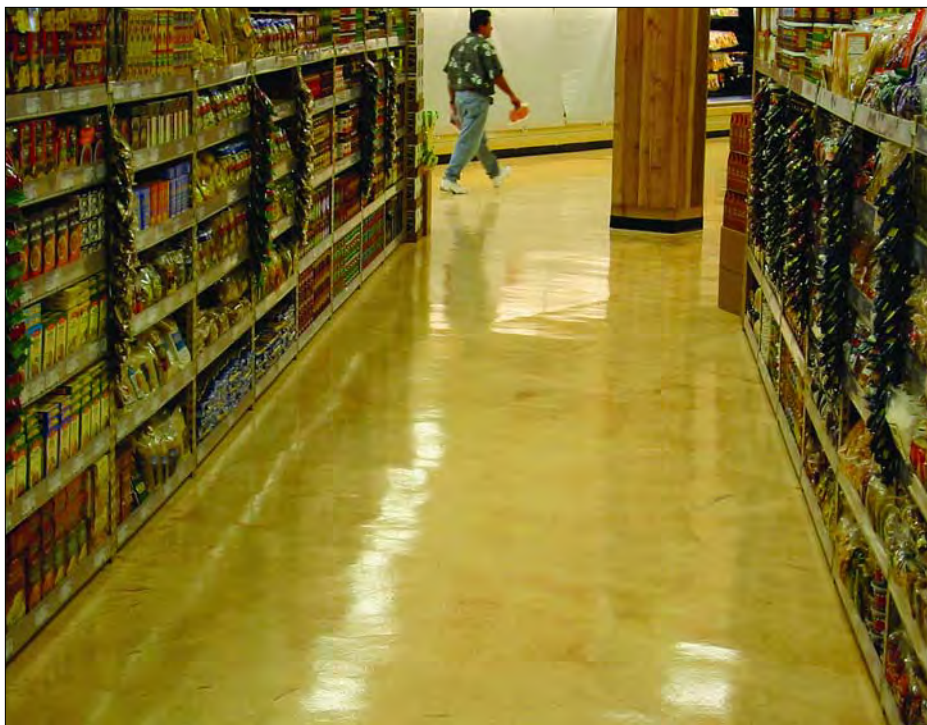
Mike and his wife, Vicki, took a formula developed by Old Quaker for a fiberglass deck coating and began making and selling it as Versa-Deck.

Fifteen years later, their company, Versatile Building Products Inc., aims to offer almost anything a contractor could brush onto a deck or floor. They want it to be a one-stop shop for floor coatings, whether for waterproofing decks, decorative finishes in homes, or commercial sealers.

The more their business diversified, the more lucrative niches they found. “We did not want to be a one-product company,” Meursing says. “Versa-Deck is just a little blip on the map compared to what we do now.”

In fact, the company's fastest growing product lines are concrete coatings, which debuted in 1995, and epoxy coatings, introduced in 1998. “There's a lot of money floating around out there because interest rates are low,” he says. “A customer can go spruce up a garage for \$2,000. That's a small amount of money to pay for it.”

Up to 40 percent of the company's products are geared to decorative





concrete contractors, from decorative overlays and garage floor coatings to concrete stains and sealers. “You can take some commercial technology, you can modify and tweak it and have something for the decorative concrete industry,” he says.

Meursing says the company’s commercial work is dependent on the aerospace industry in southern California, which suffered a bust in the mid-1990s. High-tech jobs went away, which curbed the demand for concrete coatings in factories and research facilities. But those jobs may be starting to come back, he says.

The company hired a full-time chemist in 2000 to further expand research and development capabilities. “We try to design a product with the end user in mind,” Meursing says. “It’s good to start off with, and then we make it as simple as possible so he doesn’t make mistakes.”

For example, they’ve engineered some of their products so all a contractor has to do is add water. More complicated procedures can invite trouble, Meursing says. “If a worker runs out of admix — I’m just an hourly worker, I don’t care.”

Another signature Versatile product is Vapor-Stop, an epoxy that requires only two application steps instead of the six-step process that was standard five years ago. It eliminates the need for primer. And it stands up to water vapor, making it ideal for laying tile on top of a floor with moisture issues. “This Vapor-Stop will bond like you won’t believe,” Meursing says.

Versatile is also known for the breadth of its catalog. Almost none of Versatile’s competitors manufacture everything Versatile does.

Mike and Vicki Meursing are still sole owners of their company, which is headquartered in Carson, Calif. They serve as, respectively, president and controller. The company recently moved into new manufacturing digs that are more than twice the size of their old facility. “We filled up the





entire place in the first week like we'd been there five years," Mike says.

Versatile, which employs 16 (not including outside sales representatives) manufactures and packages all its own products. It has obtained certification from the International Conference of Building Officials (now known as ICC Evaluation Service Inc.), which among other things vouches that the company has a system in place that allows for batch

that was it," he says. "It's a good little vehicle."

Versatile has, on average, doubled its sales every year over the past 10 years, and January's sales were up 96 percent from the same month in 2003. The company also brought in 10 new distributors last year. Grassroots marketing is crucial to the company's success, Meursing says. "Getting demand from the contractor, from the end user, has always been our policy.

tracing. Their books and procedures are audited every three months by an outside lab.

Meursing's installation business helped him get Versatile off the ground in the early years. "I needed a vehicle to support sales and growth —

Build something well, things that are easy to use, and they will come."

But Meursing isn't planning to grow this quickly forever. In the near future, Versatile will focus on existing product lines rather than launching new ones, he says, adding that the company also plans to expand its offerings in the concrete repair category. "We want to continue doing what we're doing. We have no plans to do otherwise. I'm still young; my wife is still young. We have about 30 years left in us."

Early on, he admits, his age was a disadvantage. After all, what could a 22-year-old know about running a company? But he had the energy of youth to compensate, he says. He didn't mind working 70 to 80 hours a week.

When the time came to bring in employees, he would tend to hire other young people, he noted. "You hire like yourself." But as he got older, he learned to hire to complement himself. "I think we're a balanced company," he says.



Concrete Texturing Tool and Supply

Owner: Bart Sacco

Good People • Fair Prices • Excellent Service

For all your concrete needs please visit us at

www.concrete-texturing.com

PHONE: 1-888-824-2383

FAX: 1-888-824-2353

WE SHIP ANYWHERE!

CIRCLE #20 ON READER SERVICE CARD

**KELLY-MOORE
PAINTS™**

KEL-SEAL 77

Clear Masonry Water Repellent

Available in 1s and 5s.

Kelly-Moore's Kel-Seal 77, Clear Masonry Water Repellent is a waterborne, vapor permeable, clear water repellent that penetrates deeply producing a hydrophobic layer of substrate protection.

Kel-Seal 77 is ideal for application on concrete masonry units (concrete block), concrete (pre-cast, cast), brick, stucco and sandstone.

- Vapor Permeable System
- Waterborne Formula
- Excellent Resistance to Wind Driven Rain
- Reduces Efflorescence
- Resistant to Alkali Attack
- Compatible with Paint, Caulk & Sealant
- VOC Compliant

**KELLY-MOORE
PAINTS™**

For additional information, call 1-888-MR-PAINT or visit our web site at www.kellymoore.com

CIRCLE #46 ON READER SERVICE CARD



Stamping Concrete 101: THE BASICS

by Susan Brimo-Cox

Demand for decorative concrete is booming. Potential customers are learning about it in consumer magazines, on HGTV and at home and garden shows, inspiring them to think of adding features such as stamped driveways, faux rock walls or polished concrete floors to their homes or businesses. If you haven't received a request for decorative concrete yet, chances are you soon will.

And if you are thinking about expanding into this lucrative niche, stamped concrete is a good place to start. There is a learning curve, but the techniques of imprinting can be mastered if you have a good grasp of the placing and finishing skills needed for basic concrete.

Start off on the right foot

Site preparation and placement of concrete is the same for stamped concrete as it is for any slab. "The base preparation should be the same as for any concrete application," observes Clark Branum, area manager for Rafco Products. But remember, your sub-base is an important foundation to your decorative work. You want a "compacted crushed rock base with no standing water," Branum says.

The type of mix and aggregate will vary with the regional requirements for freeze and thaw, as well as structural requirements. Don't feel shy about asking the experts. "Most people do not realize how many experts they have available to them," says Steve Johnson, director of marketing for new product development at Solomon Colors. "The first person you should talk to is your ready mix producer."

The thickness of the slab depends on the intended use, but typically it is at least 4 inches. Reinforcements should be placed according to standard concrete practices.

Placing the concrete

The framework for stamped concrete should be installed the same way as for traditional concrete, with a couple extra considerations, says Richard Cofoid, national sales manager for Increte Systems Inc. If you are stamping a square pattern, make sure your framework is square. Be sure to drive the tops

of stakes even with or below the top of the framework so your stamping tools don't get hung up. And, very importantly, protect all adjoining areas by masking them off with duct tape and plastic. Then place, screed and float the concrete as you would a standard slab.

If you're new to stamping concrete, be careful not to bite off more than you can chew. While an experienced crew can stamp 800 to 1,000 square feet in a day, novice stamping



crews should limit their pours to no more than 400 square feet on average. "Skill, job access, weather conditions, manpower, stamp pattern and color hardener choice are all considerations," says Doug Carlton, owner of Carlton Concrete L.L.C.

Also, keep in mind that walls and protruding obstacles will slow the process down.

Start with simple patterns

The easiest stamps to start out with are borders along a broom finished job, Johnson says.

If the whole surface will be textured, choose random patterns. "Beginners should start out with textured stone or larger patterns with no detail," says Russell Rodoni, owner of Sierra Design Concrete.

Texture mats that leapfrog over each other are easier than ridged tools that fit together like a puzzle. Most experienced contractors say to avoid interlocking patterns until you get a feel for the imprinting process.

Renting imprinting tools is a good option if you're just starting out, because some patterns and tools can be costly. "Rent twice the amount you think you will need," Carlton recommends.

Coloring the concrete

Does integral color add value to the stamped concrete job? It depends who you talk to. On one hand, integral color offers limited color choices, and it is hard to match from pour to pour and day to day. But, on the other hand, it is faster and less messy than other coloring techniques. In addition, contractors just starting out in stamping may find imprinting colored concrete is easier. "Not because it is better, but there are fewer steps to be concerned with," observes Scott Thome, director of product services with L. M. Scofield Co.

What it seems to boil down to is personal preference. "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder," Johnson says. "Realistic to one may look eclectic to another."

Most contractors use dry shake color hardener to add color to their stamped concrete. Available in a wide variety of colors, it is easy to match if repairs are needed, and it increases the surface strength of the concrete. But be aware that use of color hardener adds time to a job, requires more labor and can be messy.

Color hardeners are typically applied in several passes after the bleed water has evaporated. Many contractors broadcast by hand, though Rodoni recommends broadcasting with a splash brush to avoid streaking. Broadcast the powder evenly, allowing it to wet up, and work it in with a bull float. After the final pass has been applied, finish-trowel the surface.

According to Cofoid, a 60-pound bucket of color hardener will generally cover 80 to 100 square feet; for lighter colors you'll need to use more. Make sure you follow the manufacturer's recommendations, as each manufacturer has a prescribed rate of application for certain colors.

Another method of coloring the surface is to use chemical stains, but this is "definitely not for beginners," Rodoni says.

The importance of release agents

The primary purpose of release agents, which come in powder and liquid formulations, is to ensure your imprinting tools do not stick to the concrete. Liquid releases are clear and not all can accept color, so they are not used as frequently as powdered releases.

"Powder antique release is the most popular method of releasing the tools from the fresh concrete," Thome reports. "It also offers you the option of adding one or multiple colors into your work."

R. Michael Potts, owner of Ideal Construction Inc., says the release should go on very thin. "You are just looking to make a barrier between the concrete and the stamp. Don't put too much down, or your pattern will only be in the release powder and not in the concrete."

Don't work too far ahead either. Cofoid recommends broadcasting only one or two rows ahead of stamping and cautions, "Never trowel release agent."

Photographs courtesy of Rafco





Your Stamping Concrete Toolkit

You'll need basic concrete finishing tools as well as tools for stamping. Here's a look at what you should have on hand:

- Well-constructed forms
- Strike-off tool
- Bull floats, wood and magnesium
- Fresno
- Edging tools
- Hand tools and trowels
- Joiners
- Stamping and texturing tools
- Small texture skins
- Tampers
- Detail tools, S-tool, chisels and touch-up wheels
- Soft bristle broom
- Water hose
- Pump sprayer

Don't forget safety equipment:

- Rubber gloves
- Latex gloves
- Dust masks
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape

Photographs courtesy of Increte

Stamping the concrete

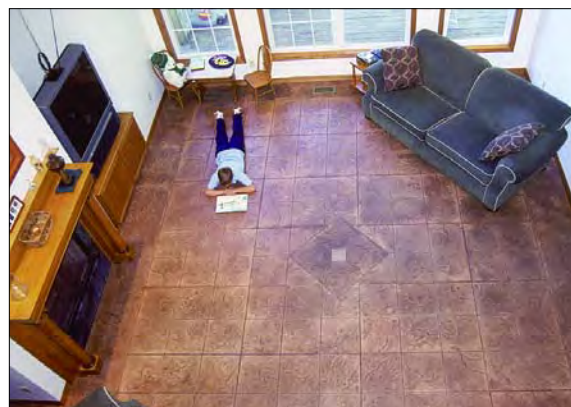
When do you begin stamping? The concrete has to be firm enough to support the weight of the stamper and the tools, but plastic enough to accept the imprint. With rigid tools you can usually start sooner. Soft tools will require you to wait a bit longer, and then you'll likely need to use tamping tools. Some contractors say you can judge the concrete by pushing your finger into the slab. If it goes in about ¼-inch, it should be ready to stamp.

Typically, you begin stamping where you began the pour. But there may be exceptions. For example, Branum says he prefers to start against a wall line or edge that is adjacent to any structures.

It's also important to know what parts of the pour are in the sun and shade. Concrete in the shade takes longer to firm up, while areas in the sun will stamp sooner.

Keeping grout lines crisp and eliminating squeeze lines is a matter of properly placing, aligning and lifting the tools. But Cofoid says not to worry if things aren't always perfect. "The stamping process is not perfect. Slight imperfections make it look more natural — stones are not perfect, bricks are not perfect."

Plan the job out in advance. For example, if you have a crew of five (three finishers and two laborers), Thome says, "During the imprinting process you will need one person moving the imprinting tools, one person tamping or walking the tools in, one person on each side of the pour handing the tools to the tool setter and cleaning the tools as needed. The final person is probably the most important person — the detailer."



Photographs courtesy of Solomon Colors

Finishing the job

Many experienced stampers recommend waiting until the next day to wash off excess release agent. Many caution against beginners using pressure washers, especially if you want some release agent to remain in the grout lines for additional color. (But be advised that release agent needs to be removed completely from the wear surface for a sealer to bond properly.)

"I like to first broom off the excess release, cut all my joints, and then wash it down with water from a hose," Potts says.

Cofoid likes to rinse off release before cutting joints.

Like traditional concrete, stamped concrete needs control joints. In order to hide them you can try to line them up with grout lines in the pattern. With random stone patterns you might consider incorporating accent strips to accommodate the joints. If you use embossing skins for a continuous texture, joints usually are not distracting.

Proper curing time before applying a sealer is important. Follow the directions provided by the manufacturer.

Getting the right training pays for itself

Contractors and experts agree that practice, practice, practice is the way to go. Working alongside an expert is a great way to get comfortable with stamping, and having your

crew practice in sand is a good way to familiarize them with a new pattern.

Carlton suggests that contractors take advantage of training seminars. "Paying for training by someone with 10 years-plus experience is money in the bank," he says, "and creates a list of satisfied customers."

Training satisfies several needs, Thome points out. "As someone interested in obtaining a better understanding of the business and how it can fit into their marketing program, the demo or introduction workshop might be enough. ... To become familiar with the process and actually imprint a slab, the comprehensive workshop is the one to attend."

Training classes are offered by manufacturers, independent schools and industry organizations. "Organizations such as the ASCC Decorative Concrete Council are an excellent training resource for contractors looking to improve their business and their skills," Brantum says.

One other piece of advice comes from Cofoid, who says to sell your work using actual samples. Form up 12-inch by 12-inch samples, but don't worry about them being perfect. "A perfect sample may give you trouble because the customer will expect perfect color. ... [and] if you sell off photos you may have trouble because the color may not match up," he says.



Don't just waterseal it...

GLAZE 'N SEAL IT!

#1 Concrete Solution

Glaze 'N Seal "Wet Look" Lacquer is the product preferred by professionals.

Its unique "Deep Penetrating Formula" provides exceptional long lasting resistance against oil, grease and efflorescence.

Use it on colored concrete, stamped concrete, exposed aggregate, any porous stone and more!

The application is quick and easy with dependable, long lasting results.

- Deep "Wet Look"
- Stain Resistant
- Fast Drying
- Resealable
- 200-400 sq. ft./gal.



Other Products


- "Natural Look" Penetrating Sealer
- "Medium Sheen" Multi Purpose Sealer
- "Natural Look" Stone Sealant

Quality Products for the professional since 1962 Call 1-800-486-1414

CIRCLE #40 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Concrete Marketplace

is a paid listing of quality-related products.
If you would like more information about any of these products, circle the appropriate number on the reader service card found between pages 52 and 53 of this issue.



Florid Polytech
Advanced Polymer Technology
Architectural Toppings and Resinous Flooring

1-(866)-4FLORIC
435-6742

Polymer Modified Cementitious Coatings
Stains
Resinous Flooring
Waterproofing Membranes

CIRCLE #36 ON READER SERVICE CARD


**Buying or Selling New
Or Used Equipment?**

ConcreteIron.com

www.concreteiron.com (866)267-IRON

CIRCLE #14 ON READER SERVICE CARD


GREAT CURVES
IN HALF THE TIME



Cut concrete forming time in half with Poly Meta Forms®. This revolutionary system out performs wood hands down. Poly Meta Forms®:

- Won't absorb water, rot, crack or splinter
- Have built-in end connections
- Are 50% lighter than wood
- Can be used over 100 times

Call today for a free Poly Meta Forms® video (VHS or CD).



Metal Forms Corporation
3334 N. Booth Street
Milwaukee, WI 53212
www.metalforms.com
Tel: 414-964-4550
Fax: 414-964-4503

CIRCLE #54 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Quick Imprint Systems, Inc.
Patterns: 36"
Cobblestone • Brick • Silverdale •
Stone Slab • Brick Pinwheel • Flagstone
Toll Free: 800-746-8820
www.concreteroller.com



Made in USA • U.S. Patent No. 5,033,906

Quick PAT.
IMPRINT SYSTEMS, INC.

CIRCLE #60 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Sawtec® Crac-Vac Saw

The Sawtec® Crac-Vac saw from Blastrac can be dolly-mounted to cut artificial grout lines and score cuts in stained concrete or overlay-finished decorative concrete floors. Cuts to 1 1/8" depth. Patented vacuum housing and internal impeller control dust, reduce cleanup time.



Call 800-256-3440

CIRCLE #06 ON READER SERVICE CARD

**Coyote Propane
Powered
Autoscrubbers "Plus"**



- Scrubs all types of surfaces
- Strips
- Runs diamonds, carbides and sanding plates for concrete coating or polishing

Coyote Cleaning Systems Inc.
P.O. Box 1176 • Lynnwood, WA 98046
Phone: 1-800-777-0454
www.coyotescrubber.com

CIRCLE #22 ON READER SERVICE CARD



Originators of leading chemical bonding agents
WELD-CRETE®

True to its claim, Weld-Crete® is the proven concrete bonding agent for practically every application. Simply brush, roll or spray Weld-Crete onto concrete or any structurally sound surface. Then come back hours, days or weeks later and finish with new concrete, stucco or plaster.

For more information contact:
Larsen Products Corp. 1-800-633-6668 or www.larsenproducts.com

CIRCLE #48 ON READER SERVICE CARD



BUTTERFIELD COLOR
Engineered Concrete Performance

Manufacturer of the finest tools and materials for the Professional Concrete Craftsman.

Visit our website or call to find out why 100% of our customers stay with us!

Distributors Wanted!
www.butterfieldcolor.com
800-282-3388

CIRCLE #10 ON READER SERVICE CARD



MOLDS MOLDS MOLDS

- Over 200 easy to use molds
- Good for your extra concrete
- Increase your sales & profit

Call for FREE catalog
ARMCON MOLDS
800 699 2799
www.armconmoldsusa.com

Post & Rail Molds

CIRCLE #04 ON READER SERVICE CARD



SC SURECRETE
DESIGN PRODUCTS
www.surecretedesign.com
800-544-8488

- Premier Decorative Concrete Products
- Progressive Technology
- Superior Service
- Unparalleled Training
- Complete Customer Satisfaction

CIRCLE #80 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Want to know more about decorative finishes?

Subscribe to the best coatings journal in the industry!

Every issue gives you:

- New Product Information
- Powerful Selling Ideas
- Designer Insights
- Technical Expertise
- Great Tips

Call today:

1-877-935-8906

or subscribe on-line at
www.paintpro.net

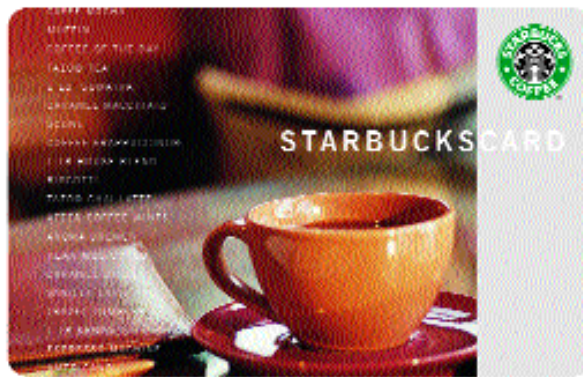


PaintPRO
The Professional Painter's Journal

Earn a Starbucks Card loaded with \$3.

Simply complete Concrete Decor's 5 minute Reader Survey online at www.concretedecor.net. Just click on Reader Survey and answer each question. Then sit back and enjoy a cup of "Joe" on us.

It takes 5 minutes.



We appreciate your support.

Starbucks, the Starbucks logo and the Starbucks Card design are trademarks or registered trademarks of Starbucks U.S. Brands, LLC.

Decorative Concrete Maintenance

Keep your job looking beautiful to enhance both your reputation and your wallet.

by Christina Camara



Photographs courtesy of Concrete Science

The growth of the decorative concrete industry in recent years has allowed contractors to challenge their creativity with a huge array of new designs, colors, textures and techniques. But after the job is done, maintaining that dazzling, just-completed look is often overlooked.

Cleaning and resealing an old job isn't nearly as interesting as creating a new design, and it's less profitable too.

However, industry experts say contractors are missing a great opportunity. Making sure decorative concrete looks fresh for years to come can bring a number of benefits—satisfied customers, repeat business and a new profit center, to name a few.

Clients appreciate a contractor who can not only work wonders with concrete, but can also help them keep their patio, deck or driveway looking impressive. New products are available to handle almost any maintenance situation, even ones that initially look impossible.

Routine maintenance is fairly straightforward. The No. 1 priority is to make sure the surface is clean and dry before it is resealed. Most decorative surfaces can be cleaned with water and a mild cleaner. Scott Balch, a ConcreteScience contractor in Dallas, uses pressure washing, extraction cleaning or both. "Acrylic sealers are more forgiving when it becomes time to reapply," he says. "Most situations require only the cleaning of the surface and the application of the new acrylic sealer."

Julio Hallack, a concrete restoration specialist based in Turlock, Calif., says many people use cleaning chemicals that are too powerful and eat away the concrete. Don't use ammonia, he says, and Simple Green should be used only if it is diluted with 20 parts water.

"You want to use something really, really mild," he says. "There's no need to go in with a heavy-duty detergent."

Through his business, Concrete Innovations by Hallack, he offers his clients simple rules for dealing with stained concrete floors: Dust mop every

day and wash with cold water and a mild, diluted citrus cleaner once a week. "If people follow these simple recommendations they may need to reseal their floors in two to three years."

The two- to three-year resealing schedule is also recommended for stamped and colored concrete, depending of course on the kind of traffic and wear it is exposed to. "If you wait longer, you may notice the color fade slightly," he says. "But just like waxing a car, reseal your stamped concrete and the color will be as vibrant as the day it was installed."

Light commercial floors may need resealing every six months, and heavy-duty commercial floors, in supermarkets for example, are stripped, buffed and resealed with water-based products every week, Hallack says.

Cleaning is the first and most important step to any concrete

maintenance program, but the next step — making sure the concrete is dry — takes patience.

"Contractors are guilty of rushing in and trying to put sealers on before the floors are dry. They trap moisture and it's a big mistake," Hallack says. "Floors need to be dry 100 percent." Hallack recently let a floor dry for two complete days, then did a moisture test before he started resealing.

Dealing with problem areas

When contractors face mildew stains, sun damage, or just particularly stubborn dirt, they may need to dig deeper into their bag of tricks to come up with a solution.

Contractors can choose from a range of products and techniques for cleaning and maintaining problem areas on decorative concrete, says Scott Buscher, marketing director for

Prosoco Inc., a custom formulator of specialty cleaners and protective treatments for masonry and concrete.

Balch uses a more aggressive cleaner and a hand-held nylon brush for small areas and low-speed buffers with scrubbing pads for large areas. "Stains normally just require more elbow grease," he says.

Chemist Mark Granados of Surtec Inc., which manufactures sealers, cleaners and specialty maintenance products in Tracy, Calif., recommends inspecting for water damage. If materials such as leaves or firewood have been left on a patio for a long time, moisture could be trapped underneath. Moisture problems must be fixed before new sealer can be applied.

Contractors say sunlight is another big enemy of acrylic sealers. Sometimes customers will complain that the sun has faded half of their patio. Dirt and mildew can also damage one part of the project, while the other side looks great.

"If your sealer has yellowed, not a whole lot can be done to restore that," Granados says. If mold and mildew have intruded, the cause of the moisture problem must be fixed. "Your sealer is only as good as your foundation."

Balch says he would first give the patio a thorough cleaning and then try to reseal using more or less sealer on different parts of the patio. "If an even look can not be achieved, the process becomes more complicated," he says. "It becomes necessary to remove all or a portion of the old sealer prior to application of the new sealer."

Buscher says faded concrete can be revived by acid-staining or applying a protective treatment that enhances its appearance. "When just a portion of the surface needs work, though, it's usually best to clean, stain or protect the entire surface to ensure uniformity of appearance," he says. "Surfaces that are beyond redemption usually got that way because of neglect or errors in installation. In these rare cases,



replacement is the answer, with an eye toward not making the same mistakes a second time."

How many times can a sealer be applied to the surface before a complete stripping is required?

There's no magic number, but when the buildup of sealers starts to discolor or distract from the original look, it's time to strip, says Steven W. Hicks, president and CEO of ConcreteScience International Inc.

Some water-repellants penetrate into the pores of the concrete and form a barrier against water intrusion that may last as long as five years. A film-forming sealer on top of that is "the best of all worlds, as long as you are not trapping escaping moisture," Hicks says.

Sealers can be applied many times to the surface if it is properly maintained, Granados says, and that means keeping it clean. He recommends frequent sweeping and cleaning of interior concrete to minimize dirt and grit. "That doesn't sell many chemicals, but we like to recommend walk-off mats in entryways because even a high-performance sealer can be scratched."

Control joints deserve special attention

Keeping control joints free of water and debris will also lengthen the life of any decorative concrete project. If water seeps through the joints and into the substrate, the concrete will deteriorate. Dirt and debris in the joints can cause damage to the joint nosings as the concrete moves, Balch says.

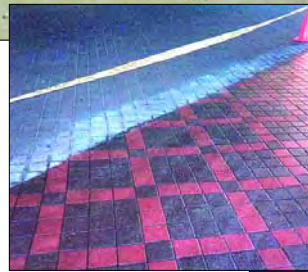
If the job will see only foot traffic, contractors prefer a polyurethane sealant, which can flex as the concrete moves and also comes in a variety of colors. On driveways, flexible epoxy sealants are preferred because they can stand up to vehicular traffic, keeping the joint shoulders intact.

3M is offering new urethane adhesives and sealants to repair cracks and spalls in as little as 15 minutes. The company says its urethane sealants



Photographs courtesy of Concrete Science

are flexible enough to compensate for expansion and contraction around a joint. The products can also be used to fix spalls, often found at concrete joints in heavy traffic areas.



Giant "bathtub ring" responds to solution

Two weeks before the new Bronco Stadium opened in Denver, ConcreteScience was called in to quickly solve a problem that 15 companies hadn't been able to fix.

Instead of concrete risers, the stadium used metal risers so fans could stomp their feet and create the pounding noise known as "Rocky Mountain Thunder." The problem was that rain on the metal risers created rust, which ran down the concrete walls and stained them, making the stadium look like it had a giant bathtub ring.

A sample was sent out to ConcreteScience chemists in Kansas City. They created four possible solutions, and one worked. Scrubbing the walls by hand was a mammoth project, but once the solution was



vacuumed up and the walls were treated with a water repellent, it looked good as new, Hicks says.

"We have stain removers for just about anything," says Hicks, who recently partnered with Prosoco Inc., which markets ConcreteScience products. "I think almost any stain can be removed if people are willing to take the time and figure it out."

Keep in touch with customers, experts

Hicks believes contractors should pay more attention to maintaining their work. He says contractors can be even more successful if they organize their business to make maintenance a higher priority. It's good fill-in work when times are slow, it targets existing customers and it can be high-margin work, he says.

A few easy marketing techniques could go a long way. Good business owners send out a maintenance reminder postcard one year after the job is done. Others pick up the phone and see how their work is holding up.

"If you don't call them, they will not call you," Hicks says.

Hallack says contractors should not be afraid to learn from each other and to network with good companies. Scofield and Miracote experts, for example, are extremely knowledgeable and love what they do, he says. Even though contractors may be competing for the same customers, the industry as a whole will benefit from more collaboration.

"I love to share what I know," he says. "I hate to see the contractors go through the nightmares I went through. We all should be committed to sharing information."



Remove embedded oil stains with ease

Pour-N-Restore lifts and absorbs embedded oil stains without scrubbing or rinsing. Just apply, let it dry from a liquid to a powder, and sweep it up.



Pour-N-Restore is citrus-based, biodegradable, phosphate-free, and smells like fresh oranges. To top it all off, Pour-N-Restore is now available in this convenient squeeze bottle.

For more information, call toll-free 1.800.508.7939 or visit our website www.pour-n-restore.com/decor.



pour-n-restore.com/decor



CHENG concrete exchange™

Join the concrete design network for Building Pros!

- SAVE on NeoMix concrete countertop products
- ACCESS Fu-Tung Cheng's concrete forms & ideas
- LEARN from expert-led countertop workshops
- GET LISTED on our "Find a Contractor" web section

concreteexchange.com



Created by Author of
Concrete Countertops

510.849.3272

Decorative Concrete: “Keeping It Simple”

by Doug Carlton



It's unbelievable what is being done with concrete. Just look no further than this publication's ads and articles. We have staining over stamping, stamping over overlay, stamped walls, stained walls. It's crazy — who keeps raising the bar? The answer is THE MARKET. This explosion of decorative concrete is market-driven. Folks want it, and it's more than just a fad. It must be a little overwhelming to contractors just entering this exciting business.

That's why I'm writing this. It doesn't matter if you're just starting or have millions of square feet under your belt. The secret is to KEEP IT SIMPLE.

The goal in decorative contracting is to provide a service that meets the expectations of your client. That means the harder the job, the higher the expectations. Thankfully, the complexity of most jobs is decided by the pocketbook. Most jobs are kept simple because there are limited funds. Simply put, our clients get more for their money by keeping it simple. Let us look at some examples.

A prospective client asks about stained floors for their new office building currently under construction. After a few questions concerning colors, floor designs, etc., you realize your owner knows very little about concrete staining. They have noticed

floors at their favorite restaurant or have been advised by a friend that concrete staining is the way to go. You quickly realize a floor design must be determined before an accurate bid can be provided. This is your best opportunity as a decorative contractor to design an affordable project, and more importantly, a project you are comfortable with and confident you can complete.

As tempted as you are to design a life-size bald eagle using all the stain colors known to man, you show the client pictures of a two-color checkerboard design. You explain how the checkerboarding will be separated by decorative saw cuts, colored grout, and then protected with sealer and wax. You have created a project that can be completed on time, on budget, and to all expectations.

Now let's try a stamping scenario.

Your local pool company informs you of a client interested in stamping their deck. I will tell you this: Pool deck stamping with a coping edge is one of the most challenging of all decorative undertakings. Realizing this, you inform your client that an earth tone integrally colored (color in the

ready mix) could easily be matched to their house trim color. You explain how a subtle, seamless texture stamp (no grout lines to contend with) with decorative deep scoring

would provide the color and imprinting that makes stamped concrete so desirable. Everyone wins. Costs are kept within budget. Job difficulty is kept within limitations of a developing decorative crew.

Decorative contractors can control the simplicity in many more ways. Keeping control of the project from start to finish, using communication, repetition, and basic fundamentals, is key.

Organization, from selling the project to collecting a check, should not be overlooked. Paul, our customer representative, marks all color containers with the client's name as they enter the yard.

Frank, our foreman, matches colors with clients as materials are loaded for each project. This double-check system is a necessity in successful decorative projects. All control joints, saw cuts, slopes, ready mix access, washout area, are predetermined prior to placement of concrete. These repetitive fundamentals minimize mistakes and wasted time. You will notice these steps becoming second nature to your crew in no time.

Another way to keep things simple is to limit color and pattern selections.

Pull out four different color charts during your tail-gate meeting with your prospective client and watch the confusion start. We show one color chart at a time. No more than two stamped samples per visit. You will be shocked at how many clients will pick from what is available.

Controlling the decorative project from the sales call to the final installation is our responsibility. Remember, building a successful and profitable decorative company always starts with a satisfied customer.



Doug Carlton is the owner of Carlton Company, located in Visalia, Calif. Carlton Company has been doing decorative concrete for over 10 years. Doug can be reached at carltondoug@sbcglobal.net.

HoverTrowel
MAKING THE JOB EASIER

The HoverTrowel is not only the industries' lightest power trowel it is also the most versatile. Learn more about the HoverTrowel and our full line of polymer flooring equipment on www.hovertrowel.com

HoverTrowel
610-856-1961
www.hovertrowel.com

CIRCLE #42 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Will not blow out dust.
Filters may be cleaned without removing the lid.
25 lb capacity pre-filter included with each unit.
Commercial grade 12" hose.
Washable filters.
Excellent on concrete dust.

Love-Less Ash
COMPANY
800-568-3949
www.lovelessash.com

CIRCLE #52 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Manufacturers of Quality Waterproofing & Decorative Coatings for Concrete & Plywood

Excellent Coatings Inc.

**Maximum Protection
Proven Durability
Lasting Beauty**

Visit Our Website at:
www.excellentcoatings.com

(800) 473-3817

CIRCLE #34 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Decorative Concrete Consulting and Training

**mix it
pour it
grind it
profit
from it**

Next Cheng Concrete
Countertop Hands-on Workshops:
March, April & May 2004
concreteexchange.com
510 849.3272 x 217



SINCE 1986

CONCRETE SOLUTIONS

ULTRA SURFACE® PRODUCTS, STAMPS AND TOOLS

TRAINING CLASSES EVERY MONTH
Free intro packet: (800) 232-8311

**ULTRA SURFACE®
CONCRETE POLYMER**

*Unique and Revolutionary,
But it is Not New!*

REPAIR • RESURFACE • STAMP

Try our 5 gallon pail offer for \$150.
(Shipping included in mainland USA).
SATISFACTION GUARANTEED OR YOUR MONEY BACK

PRODUCTS • TRAINING • SUPPORT
www.concretesolutions.com

2 DAY FLOOR COATING SCHOOL

Learn how to install:

1/4" Stamped Concrete, Knockdown Coatings, Micro-Toppings, Stenciled Coatings, Acid Stains, Solvent Stains, Waterborne Stains, Epoxy Flooring, Granite Finishes, Color Quartz Finishes and Waterproof Walking Deck Coatings in the Los Angeles area.



www.garagecoatings.com

1-800-535-3325

www.deckcoatings.com

Alternative FINISHES

- Staining concrete since 1993
- References available
- Acid stain floors, walls, counter tops, etc.
- Decorative scoring (sawcuts)
- Custom colors, color grouting
- Clear coat sealers
- Waxing, highspeed buffing

On the job training at your site

Wes Vollmer
(210) 655-5940

**Concrete
Design
Specialist**

www.alternativefinishes.com

Business Opportunities

Changing the Rules Isn't Cheating™

When material costs have you by the throat...

When your competition thinks dropping the price is the only way to get a job...

When the weather controls your life...

When rain washes your profits down the gutter...

Change the Rules in Your Favor

Seriously Profitable
Innovative Concrete Engraving Systems
Discovery and Training Seminars Monthly

Catalog 1-888-884-2114
www.Engrave-A-Crete.com

Help Wanted

Colorado Hardscapes, an award-winning leader in the design and construction of decorative concrete and premium flooring, is currently accepting applications for foreman in the Premium Flooring Division at its Denver location.

FOREMAN

The position requires a minimum of 5 years experience in the following:

- Acid Staining
- Topical Staining
- Decorative Saw Cutting
- Micro Top Coatings
- Epoxy Coatings
- Leadership and Crew Management

This is a hands-on position and requires someone with excellent leadership and time management abilities.

Colorado Hardscapes offers a competitive wage and benefits package. To apply send cover letter and resume with salary requirements to: Gil Rodriguez, Human Resource Administrator, 8085 E. Harvard Avenue, Denver, CO 80231, or email at: grodriguez@coloradohardscapes.com, or fax to: (303) 750-8884.

Bemus Landscape, Inc.

Orange County, CA based landscape contractor seeks highly experienced and qualified Hardscape Superintendent to oversee all concrete and measuring installations. Projects are extremely high end custom residential estates. Volume oriented environment. 30 years in business. Competitive salary, benefits, vehicle, 401k w/match, etc. Email resume to: jon.parry@bemuslandscape.com, or fax to: (714) 557-1007

Business For Sale

Decorative Concrete Business FOR SALE Beautiful Southern Oregon

- 15 Year History • 3 trucks • Bobcat
 - Stamps • Showroom
 - Great Reputation • Bomanite Franchise
- (541) 899-8560 or www.cementworksinc.com**

Decorative Concrete Supplies

The Decorative Concrete Store

Coloring Agents Release Agents
Stains & Sealers Stamps & Stencils

Concrete Hardener & Densifier
Repair and Overlay Materials
Finishing Tools and Hardware
On-Site Training and Consultation
Concrete Countertops
Eco-Block Insulated Concrete Forms

Two Locations to Serve You:

880 Pleasant Valley Dr., Springboro, Ohio 45066
3546 Eastern Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45226
Phone: (513) 533-9200 • Fax: (513) 533-3078
Toll Free: (866) 483-3330
www.DecorativeConcreteStore.com

Engrave-A-Crete, Inc.

Our Seminar Attendees Say:

"The 2 day session was the most information packed seminar I have attended in 20 years"
— Jerome, FL

"Engrave-A-Crete has surely raised the bar of the industries standards." — Christopher, MS

"Information was clear, concise, very friendly, and knowledgeable." — Dan, CA

Discovery and Training Seminars

Easy as 1... 2... 3... for beginners and experts.
Advanced hands-on decorative concrete engraving, scoring, cutting, and staining techniques with exceptional equipment. Learn how to make fast, high quality, great paying installs plus how to market and sell your services. Discover new advanced tools and increase your skills. Free information packet.

"You inspired me. I can see a future in this business." — Raebein, CO

1-800-884-2114
1-941-744-2400
www.engage-a-crete.com

Training Materials



Giving away Profit!

What's NEW with

- Imprinted Concrete
- Concrete Stains
- Self Leveling Overlayments
- Texturetop™
- Concrete Sealers
- Specialty Tools Equipment
- Application and Product Training

For more information call

Decorative Concrete
Systems

1-800-938-4148
1-541-938-4005 (fax)
www.dcsystemssupport.com

Advertisers Index

Free Product Information

Please circle the number(s) on the attached reply card and mail today.

Advertiser	Page #	Reader Service #
Alternative Finishes	Classified	—
Applied Concrete Technology	22	02
Armcon Molds	CM	04
Bemus Landscape Company	Classified	—
Blastrac/Sawtec	CM	06
Buddy Rhodes Concrete Mix	18	08
Butterfield Color	CM	10
Cement Works	Classified	—
Cheng Concrete Exchange	47, Classified	12
Colorado Hardscapes	Classified	—
ConcreteIron.com	CM	14
Concrete Science International	Inside Front Cover	16
Concrete Solutions	7, Classified	18
Concrete Texturing Tool and Supply	37	20
Coyote Cleaning Systems	CM	22
Custom Concrete Creations	7	24
Dayton Superior	5	26
Decorative Concrete Store	Classified	—
Decorative Concrete Systems	Classified	—
Edgewater Industries	47	30
Engrave-A-Crete	Classified	—
Exakttime	1	32
Excellent Coatings	49	34
Florac Polytech	CM	36
Fritz-Pak	9	38
Glaze 'N Seal	41	40
HoverTrowel	49	42
Institute for American Craftsmanship	32	44
Kelly Moore Paint Company	37	46
Larsen Products	CM	48
L.M. Scofield Company	Back Cover	50
Love-Less Ash	49	52
Metal Forms	CM	54
Polytek	55	56
Proline Stamps	13	58
Quick Imprint Systems	CM	60
Rudd Company	33	62
Seal Krete	53	64
Sherwin-Williams/ H&C Stains	18, 31	66
Slip Industries	33	68
Southern Color Company	23	70
Stamp Master	55	72
Stegmeier Corp.	54	74
Sto Corp	24	76
Super Stone	Inside Back Cover	78
SureCrete Design Products	CM	80
Tygar Manufacturing	54	82
Versatile Building Products	19, Classified	84
VIC International	19	86

CM: Concrete Marketplace is on pages 42-43.

Classified ads are on pages 50-51.

When contacting an advertiser, please mention **Concrete Decor**.

Form creates look of old-world stone

B.E.P. Forming Systems, a leader in big panel forms and accessories, has introduced a new fabricated aluminum form design that gives the look of old-world stone at a fraction of the cost. The new Georgian Stone Panels are fabricated on an aluminum, removable and reusable Big Panel that completely eliminates the expensive and repetitive cost of form liners. The new panels, available in any length and height, utilize a reusable taper tie system, requiring no extra parts or special attachments. Once stripped, the "stone" surface is immediately ready for any paint, coating or treatment, and properly maintained, the new forms can be used for a thousand pours or more.

B.E.P.'s other new product for 2004 is the POWER taper tie system, a strong, semi-automatic, self-spacing, reusable taper tie system that is attached to any B.E.P. form. It installs safely and easily on one side of the form and has no loose parts, increasing job efficiency and eliminating the need for laborers to work in dangerous trenches.

The POWER taper tie is extremely strong, achieving a 40,000 lb. safe working load (SWL) rating. It is available in nominal and full-width dimensions. For more information call (866) 237-3676 or visit www.bepformingsystems.com.

Heater thaws ground, keeps temp even

Ground Heaters Inc. has introduced a new Ground Heater model. Built with a side access panel, the E1100 is easier to maintain and repair than previous units. It has many new features that make it easy to use.

As with the previous model, the new E1100 is able to thaw up to 1,650 square feet of frozen ground at a rate of one-foot-deep per day. It also can heat up to 2,200 square feet of ground to prepare for concrete placement,

prevent frost penetration and assure proper concrete curing. It is equipped with a digital temperature controller that allows the user to raise or lower the temperature to the desired level. Built with a 45-gallon fuel tank, the E1100 can provide up to 72 hours of continuous operation. For more information, call (231) 799-9600 or visit www.groundheaters.com.



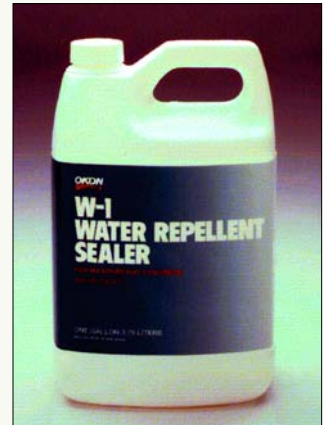
Sealer keeps water out

Okon W-1 Water Repellent Sealer lessens environmental erosion like dusting, chalking, cracking and spalling. When applied as directed, Okon W-1 will not change the natural appearance of concrete, masonry, stucco or plaster and can be used under or over painted surfaces.

The product is designed as a one-coat system that effectively seals concrete and masonry surfaces, preventing damaging moisture penetration that can cause problems such as efflorescence, freeze-thaw damage and staining.

The application of Okon W-1 Water Repellent Sealer to traditional plaster and diamond finish plaster leaves interior walls with a sealed, natural finish. The "rag-on, rag-off" application process provides the walls with a protective coating on these hard, steel-trowelled plaster surfaces, while maintaining their original beauty and color.

Okon W-1 Water Repellent Sealer is a 5-percent solids water-based premium sealer. VOC emission is well below the limits established for water repellents by the EPA and the state of California. For more information, visit www.okoninc.com or call (303) 377-7800.



Truck-bed toolbox rolls with ease

Slide Systems Rollerbox Professional makes loading, unloading and storage virtually effortless because it rolls on rails from cab to gate and back again. With its 300-pound load capacity and stiff .090" mill-finish body construction, the Rollerbox Professional can accommodate anything that's needed to take to the job: pipe wrenches, drills, sockets, circular saws, hammers ... even heavy construction equipment. The big upper compartment is great for large items, while the lower unit features six pull-out galvanized steel drawers on smooth ball bearings. Three of the drawers may be replaced with an optional deep drawer, and the whole lower unit is detachable.



What truly sets the Rollerbox Professional apart is the Slide System, which can be combined with utility racks and tie-downs. This system mounts atop any full-size pickup's bed rails via the existing stake pockets and requires no drilling. Once installed, the Rollerbox smoothly rolls from cab to tailgate, forever ending the need to climb on or over the truck bed. For more information, call (888) 91-SLIDE or visit www.slidesystems.com.

Unit keeps multiple rooms warm

The HotBox, from Mosebach Manufacturing Company, is a durable, portable industrial heater that is ideal for plaster and

concrete curing applications. Unlike fuel-powered blasters that release moisture into the air, the electric-powered HotBox delivers a dry heat. The unit's powerful blower circulates this dry air farther and faster, servicing multiple rooms with one heater and reducing curing time.

The lightweight unit is capable of delivering up to 147,000 BTU's of heat, bringing a space up to temperature quickly. A three-position thermostat, with fan-only and temperature settings from 40 degrees to 150 degrees, provides a range of temperature control options. For more information, call (866) 629-4328 or visit www.mosebachresistors.com.

Mortars Ideal for Concrete Repair

Sto Corp. has introduced Trowel Grade Repair Mortar with integral corrosion inhibitor (CR701CI). The product, an enhanced reformulation of CR701, is designed to provide an integral corrosion inhibitor that has been a requirement by many specifying engineers.

Sto Trowel-Grade Mortar is a polymer-modified, cement-based mortar for structurally repairing or overlaying deteriorated concrete. Used on horizontal or vertical surfaces for repairs from ¼ to 2 inches or extended with aggregate for deeper horizontal applications, its formula provides increased strength gain and improved performance for repair applications.



SEAL THE DEAL!



ORIGINAL Waterproofing Sealer

clear primer / bond prep / seals and protects vertical surfaces
binds chalky surfaces / strengthens mortar joints

Introducing the new look – the new line of Seal-Krete® brand specialty coatings for concrete and masonry protection and beautification.

Updated packaging, application-specific formulas and the same professional quality performance that has made Seal-Krete a trusted brand for over 20 years.



Easy to use – Seal-Krete Original Waterproofing Sealer goes on milky white, dries clear.



Seal-Krete Original binds chalky surfaces – specified for residential and light commercial use.



Convenience Products • Auburndale, FL • www.seal-krete.com • 800-323-7357 • 863-967-1535

CIRCLE #64 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Sto has also released a new Extended Full Depth Repair Mortar. The product is an enhanced formulation of Sto's CR311, offering the additional benefit of a factory-blended extension aggregate to allow for increased product quality and job performance when extension is necessary. Sto Extended Full Depth Repair is a cement-based mortar for structurally repairing or overlaying deteriorated concrete. It is typically used on horizontal surfaces for repairs from 1½ to 6 inches and provides increased strength gain and improved performance for repair applications. It also takes advantage of the added quality and convenience of a factory controlled addition of pre-washed, kiln dried, and rounded pea gravel. For more information, call (800) 221-2397 or visit www.stocorp.com.

Grease remover leaves concrete clean

Unlike conventional cleaners that pool ineffectively on the surface, Safe n' Easy Oil/Grease Remover penetrates beneath the porous surfaces of asphalt, concrete and masonry to lift oil and grease particles up and out. New from Dumond Chemicals, the non-toxic, non-abrasive and non-flammable product is biodegradable, and will not harm asphalt, concrete, or the paints and sealers commonly used on both.

A clear liquid, Safe n' Easy Oil/Grease Remover cleans without scrubbing and is available in one- and five-gallon



containers. Once brushed or sprayed onto the grease-stained surface, it is left to dwell for upwards of three hours (determine dwell time by patch testing) while it penetrates and lifts grease,

motor oil and heavy dirt. Hose or pressure-wash when cleaning is complete. For more information, call (800) 245-1191 or visit www.peelaway.com.

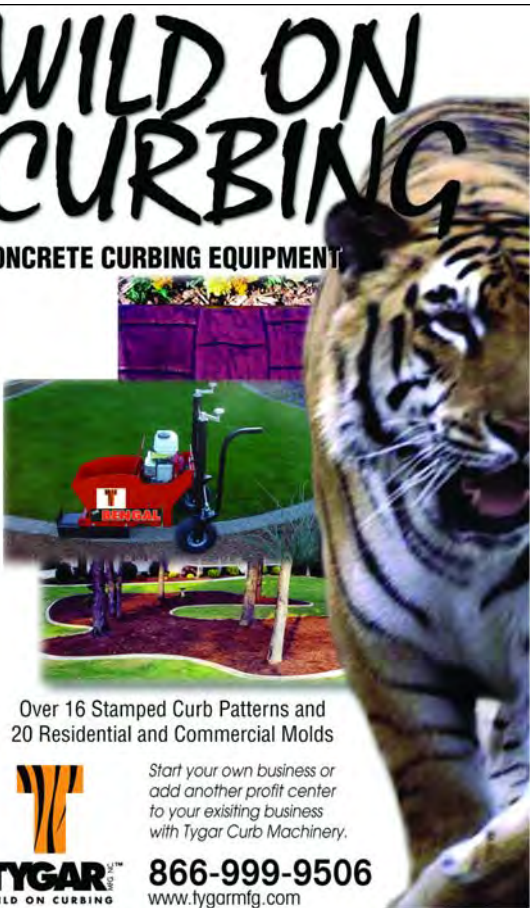
Floor system keeps sound and moisture out

Hacker Industries, Inc., a leading supplier of gypsum concrete floor underlayments, now offers builders and architects the Dry Floor System.


The system combines the technology of Hacker Industries' most innovative product, Firm-Fill 3310, with Quiet Qurl Moisture Control Sound Mat. The extremely low water demand of Firm-Fill 3310 accelerates drying time and minimizes moisture while the resilient layer of Quiet Qurl Moisture Control provides optimum sound control and prevents moisture from escaping to the subfloor.

WILD ON CURBING

CONCRETE CURBING EQUIPMENT



Over 16 Stamped Curb Patterns and
20 Residential and Commercial Molds



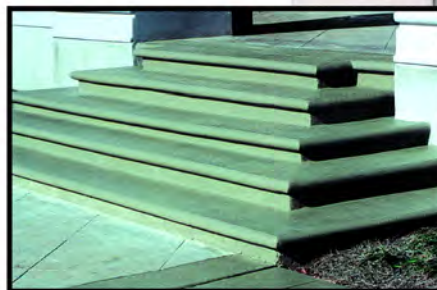
Start your own business or
add another profit center
to your existing business
with Tygar Curb Machinery.

866-999-9506
www.tygarmfg.com

TYGAR
WILD ON CURBING

WALL CAP & STEP LINER FORMS BY STEGMEIER

- Cast on site
- Flexible
- Versatile
- Economical
- Easy to install
- Many profiles available



STEGMEIER 
CORPORATION

1111 W. Harris Rd., Arlington, TX 76001
800-382-5430 • (FAX) 800-356-3602
www.stegmeier.com

"In recent years, two of the most talked about issues are sound control and moisture resistance in multi-family housing and high-rise projects," said Kerry Hacker, Vice President of Hacker Industries, Inc. "Our new Dry Floor System provides a solution to both concerns."

Firm-Fill 3310 is a high strength (up to 3300 psi), cost-efficient gypsum concrete floor underlayment which flows evenly over subfloors, creating a smooth, flat, crack-resistant surface for virtually all types of finished floor coverings. The fast-setting surface and low water demand rapidly eliminate water, allowing for an accelerated drying time. Firm-Fill 3310 also delivers improved sound performance and possesses over 82 UL listings.

Quiet Qurl Moisture Control Sound Mat is a new product from Keene Building Products. Quiet Qurl Moisture Control offers the same great sound control system as all Keene products but with a new moisture-closed top. For more information, call (800) 642-3455 or visit www.hackerindustries.com.

Grinding tool offers portability

DeWalt has introduced a versatile 4½-inch cordless cut-off and grinding tool powered by the company's 18-volt battery system. The tool produces 350 maximum-watts-out and offers cordless versatility for cutting floor lines with a diamond cutting wheel.

For durability, the tool's metal gear case dissipates heat away from the bearings, gears and motor. Sealed ball bearings in the

motor add longevity. For convenience, the tool has a universal flange, keyless guard adjustment, and spindle lock so users can change wheels quickly and easily. The trigger switch and lock-off button allow for easier gripping, while a three-position side handle provides better control during surface and edge cutting. For more information, call (800) 4-DEWALT or visit www.dewalt.com.



Wagman introduces new trowel blade

It used to be difficult to finish light colored concrete, light-reflective concrete and epoxy with a power trowel without the risk of leaving burnish marks from steel trowel blades.



Wagman solves this problem with its new Poly Pro steel reinforced plastic power trowel blade. The Poly Pro is designed to give a hard finish without leaving burnish

marks, yet it remains stiff enough to use on ride-on power trowels, as well as walk-behinds. A steel backing adds rigidity to the plastic, providing a stiffer blade than previous plastic blades.

For more information on sizes, pricing or where to purchase blades, call (717) 854-2120 or visit www.wagmanmetal.com.





StampMaster

Concrete Texture Mats by
Creative Urethane Concepts, Inc.

- Over 100 patterns available for commercial/residential use.
- Largest Stamp Manufacturer on the East Coast.
- Flex and Seamless are also available.
- Lifetime Warranty on mats*
- Most orders shipped same day.
- West Coast Distributors Wanted.

Call toll free: 1-888-901-6287
Phone: (803) 376-4430
Fax: (803) 376-4528
Email: sales@stampmaster.net
www.stampmaster.net

*Use under proper conditions with appropriate decorative concrete products.

Polytek® THE MOLD RUBBER EXPERTS

Manufacturer of Liquid Mold Rubbers

- Pourable • Brushable • Sprayable
- Liquid Polyurethanes & Silicones

To Make Your Own

- Flexible Form Liners
- Stamping Tools
- Texturing Skins
- Architectural/Ornamental Molds
- Cast Stone & Block Molds
- Blockouts, Hole Formers & Reveals





Technicians with Hands-On Experience

- Seminar/Workshops/Newsletters
- Moldmaking **Manual & Catalog**

Polytek®

DEVELOPMENT CORP.

55 Hilton St., Easton, PA 18042 (800) 858-5990 Fax: (610) 559-8626 Website: www.polytek.com


CIRCLE #72 ON READER SERVICE CARD

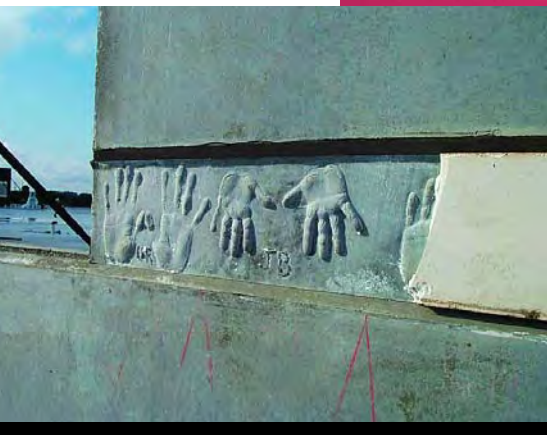
CIRCLE #56 ON READER SERVICE CARD

The Final Pour

Lending a Hand

Almost 2,000 kids earned an “A” in decorative concrete when they helped create a band of handprints that circles their new elementary school in Melbourne, Fla. Over a period of nine days, future students of the school were bussed to the site, where they cast their hands for posterity into the tilt wall panels, using almost five tons of plaster in the process.

The 96,000-square-foot school was built under the guidance of H.J. High Construction Company, located in Orlando, Fla. H.J. High was established in 1936 and specializes in general construction, construction management and design/build services. 



Conceptions in Decorative Concrete Design Systems

- ChlorStain®
- SuperSurface®
- SuperTex®
- Stamp Tool Patterns
- Color Hardener
- Crack Repair Kits
- Integral Colors
- Powder Release
- Epoxy Coatings
- Sealers
- Overlayment Systems
- Bubble Gum Liquid Release®
- Training Seminars



Global Manufacturing Facility

1251 Burlington Street
Opa-Locka, FL 33054
(305) 681-3561

South Miami

4900 SW 75th Avenue
South Miami, FL 33155
(305) 264-6101

Riviera Beach

1700 Australian Avenue
Riviera Beach, FL 33404
(561) 848-9838

Las Vegas

5230 South Valley View Blvd., Suite E
Las Vegas, NV 89118
(702) 795-7242

www.superstone.com

© 2004 SuperStone, Inc. (USA). ChlorStain, SuperSurface, SuperTex, and Bubble Gum Liquid Release are Trademarks of SuperStone, Inc. All rights reserved.



CIRCLE #78 ON READER SERVICE CARD

CHROMIX® Admixtures



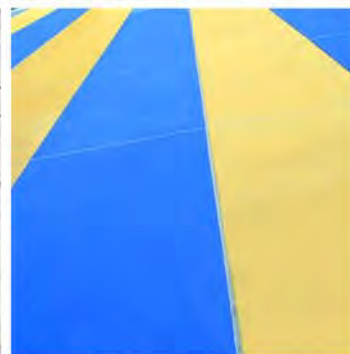
For Color-Conditioned™ Concrete

LITHOCHROME®
Chemstain™ Classic



LITHOTEX®
Pavecrafters®

SCOFIELD®
OVERLAY



LITHOCHROME®
Color Hardener

SCOFIELD® Texturetop™
Stencil Grade or Stamp Grade



New
Stencils



engineered systems for coloring, texturing and improving performance in architectural concrete since 1915

- showcase** Project examples with information on products and techniques.
- systems** Product descriptions, selection criteria, and compatible components.
- tech-data** Technical bulletins and specifications.
- training** Step-by-step guides for installation & "Do's and Don'ts".

New technology

New techniques



1 800 800 9900 or www.scofield.com