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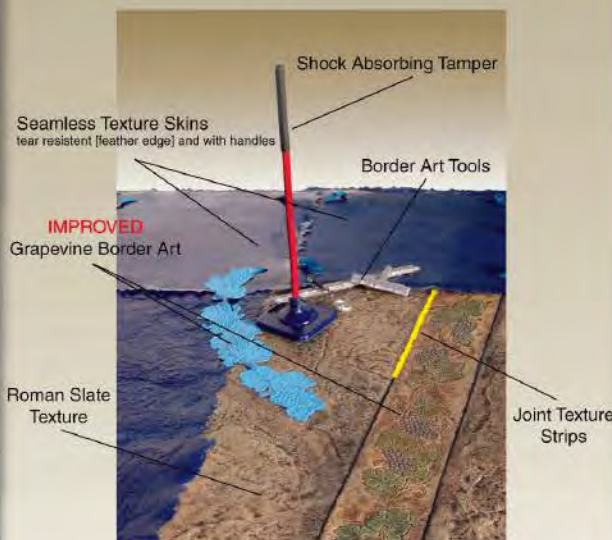
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**WEEKLY TIMECARD**

NAME: Bill Owen DATES: 12-16

	START	LUNCH	END	JOB CODES	JOB SITE/PROJECT	HOURS
Mon.	7:00	1/2	3:30		Brentwood	8
Tues.			3:30			8
Wed.			4:00			8 1/2
Thurs.			4:00		Crestview	8 1/2
Fri.			4:00			8 1/2
SIGNATURE: <u>Bill Owen</u>						TOTAL HOURS: <u>41 1/2</u>

**GIVE THEM THE JOBCLOCK.**

**Employee Report**

**Owen, Bill**

Date Range: 2/12/2007 through 2/16/2007

Day	Date	Jobsite	Start	Stop	Cost Code	Hours	Total
Mon	2/12	Brentwood	7:08 AM	12:05 PM	Placing	4:57	7:38 hours
			12:41 PM	3:22 PM	Placing	2:41	
Tue	2/13	Brentwood	7:12 AM	12:07 PM	Placing	4:55	7:35 hours
			12:43 PM	3:23 PM	Finishing	2:40	
Wed	2/14	Brentwood	7:12 AM	12:02 PM	Finishing	4:50	7:53 hours
			12:46 PM	3:49 PM	Finishing	3:03	
Thu	2/15	Crestview	7:17 AM	12:19 PM	Placing	5:02	7:58 hours
			12:50 PM	3:46 PM	Placing	2:56	
Fri	2/16	Crestview	7:13 AM	12:07 PM	Finishing	4:54	7:49 hours
			12:44 PM	3:39 PM	Finishing	2:55	

Signature: Bill Owen

Owen, Bill

**Total 38:53 hours**



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## Publisher's Letter



### Dear Readers,

I'd like to dedicate this issue to a friend of mine named Bill Shorey.

As some of you may know, Bill (a.k.a. "The Colorman") passed away a week prior to this year's World of Concrete show. He worked as a Product Specialist for Spec-West, a construction supply store in Sacramento, Calif. Bill was a wonderful friend and support to me in the days when I was starting *Concrete Decor*. In fact, our friendship started one year earlier, a point in time when I was publishing some of the first articles on decorative concrete in a sister publication called *PaintPRO*.

Bill once told me, "Bent, the pages of this magazine," namely *PaintPRO*, "show incredible passion for the trade." At the time, I didn't really understand his comment. But as time passed and our friendship grew, I began to see what he was talking about. Not my passion, but rather, his. From his standpoint, Bill loved everything about concrete. More than that, he loved helping others. Similarly, I too was infatuated with a trade I had spent years learning to master and was now anxious to share with others. Somehow, the passion for our respective trades seemed to interweave, and the result ultimately produced *Concrete Decor*.

Bill and I shared countless stories of people, products and projects. In fact, I recall making a two-hour drive to Sacramento one night to help Bill stain a concrete floor inside a new Spec-West location. No money changed hands — only an array of discussions on products and methods we both utilized as we explored the limits of some of decorative concrete's most commonly used products today.

It would seem that we were both destined to follow a similar path at that time, but fate proved otherwise. Mine was a passion to carry on a family tradition in publishing and Bill's was an unquenchable desire to provide for his family and contractors, labels that were sometimes interchangeable. This is an attribute of Bill's that he will surely be remembered for.

When Bill called me some time ago to share of his battle with cancer, our friendship and the good times we enjoyed together were everything that mattered. As I know Bill would agree, our relationship was not strengthened by our expectations of one another, but rather, the means by which we choose to impact the lives of those around us in a positive way. At the end of each day, isn't that what it's all about anyway?

To Bill Shorey, his family and friends, and those who share a similar passion for decorative concrete, I trust that this issue will fill your mind with a positive outlook on the future. Enjoy!

Sincerely,

Bent Mikkelsen, Publisher

### Get access to the *Concrete Decor* archives

Enter the access code shown below to gain access to *Concrete Decor*'s online archive of articles.

#### Login: SHOREY

This password changes monthly. To continue receiving both the print magazine and access to our archives, start your subscription today. *Concrete Decor* is the industry's foremost magazine on decorative concrete.

*Concrete Decor* now features the industry's ultimate online 'search' tool for finding just about anything related to decorative concrete. Start by logging on to [www.concretedecor.net](http://www.concretedecor.net). At the top of the page simply enter a keyword such as "stencil," "integral color," "admixture" or "rock features." In less than a second we'll search more than five years of articles and information from the pages of *Concrete Decor* and provide you with an extensive list of results.



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# Industry News



## Axis gets truckin'

Axis is a cooperative program from Essroc and Axim Italcementi Group that combines Essroc's cement capabilities with Axim's admixture science and product line, providing an integrated resource for concrete and masonry technology and products.

The Axis Team draws on its extensive product knowledge, experience and industry certifications to tackle complex material-related problems, developing solutions specifically for a customer's specific project, business and mix.

The Axis program is bolstered by Mobile Technology Units, the first of which recently debuted in the United States.

The Mobile Technology Unit is a 52-foot gooseneck trailer and truck that provides on-site technical assistance to customers. The mobile concrete and masonry laboratory assists in the development of mix designs and their subsequent trials, troubleshoots concrete problems, and delivers innovative and new cement, masonry and concrete technologies. It is equipped to perform non-destructive and durability tests on materials such as chemical admixtures, aggregates, cements, fillers and mineral



admixtures, as well as service applications in concrete and masonry. A full array of high-tech testing equipment is complemented by a diesel generator and self-leveling stands. The lab can test cement-admixture compatibility, design concrete for an extended set time, produce self-consolidating concrete with a shrinkage-compensating admixture, and perform C-270 and C-780 testing properly in the field to ensure accurate results, to offer just a few examples.

The Axis Mobile Tech Unit is operated by Regional Technology Managers, backed by technical service representatives. The first United States unit will serve the Midwest and East Coast. Similar units are already in operation in Italy and France.

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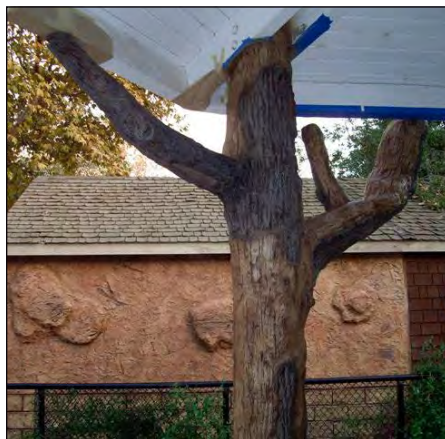




## A renewed zoo, with help from Fossilcrete

Fossilcrete teamed with Frank Lewis' Decorative Concrete Series to offer a course that had participants redesign parts of the Orange County Zoo.

This special three-day training session offered hands-on instruction for



replicating natural items such as rocks, boulders, and trees using FossilCrete's vertical stamping material. With input from the Orange County Zoo and its director, Forest DeSpaine, designs were sketched that emulated the natural landscape throughout the zoo. The FossilCrete training course utilized framing and stamping techniques that provided structure and texture. Natural-looking colors were created using FossilCrete's Nature's Palette Coloring System.

With the help of FossilCrete's ver-

tical stamping material, an ordinary utility pole was turned into a natural-looking oak tree, and a mountain lion exhibit was transformed from a cedar shingle wall into a naturalistic desert rock wall.

FossilCrete, a division of Shasta Industries, recently moved its corporate headquarters to Phoenix, Ariz., from Oklahoma.

(877) 367-7450

## Soff-Cut acquires Superior Power Trowel

Soff-Cut International Inc., the manufacturer of Ultra Early Entry concrete cutting products, has acquired Superior Power Trowel Inc. This strategic initiative will allow Soff-Cut to tap into the growth potential of the concrete flat-work market.

"For some time now, we have been quietly on the acquisition trail looking for companies that fit with Soff-Cut and can build on the brand and service reputation that's been created," said Don Hinshaw, president and CEO of Soff-Cut International Inc., in a press release.

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Floor and car collection  
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"Superior Power Trowel is an excellent fit and we couldn't be more pleased."

The acquisition will enable Soff-Cut and Superior to integrate their technologies while offering increased value to their mutual customers and dealer partners. Superior Power Trowels currently offers several different models of walk-behind power trowels and a recently introduced ride-on trowel. Soff-Cut offers a wide range of early-entry concrete cutting saws with patented blades and skid plates as well as a high-tech job-site dust collection system.

☎ (951) 272-2330

□ [www.soffcut.com](http://www.soffcut.com)

□ [www.superiorpowertrowel.com](http://www.superiorpowertrowel.com)

## Blastrac opens Australian distribution center

Blastrac Global recently marked an expanded presence in Australia, New Zealand and surrounding Pacific Island Nations with the formation of Blastrac South Pacific.

The new Blastrac South Pacific distribution center is located in Molendi-

nar, Queensland, Australia. A full line of surface preparation equipment will be in stock and available through Blastrac South Pacific, including grinder-vacs, dust collectors, and products for cutting, grinding, polishing, shot-blasting, floor-scraping and scarifying.

The new team consists of sales personnel and service technicians trained in the United States. The Blastrac name has had a presence in Australia for more than 20 years.

☎ +61-7-5577-5972

□ [www.blastrac.com](http://www.blastrac.com)

## Fritz-Pak inks deal for German gypsum retarder

A distributor agreement with German company Tricosal GmbH & Co. KG gives Fritz-Pak exclusive rights to distribute Gypsum Retarder (Retardan P) in North America. It will be marketed as Fritz-Pak Gypsum Retarder.

Fritz-Pak Gypsum Retarder is a dry powdered admixture used for extending the set time of gypsum or gypsum-containing blended materials. It is an

organic poly-oxy-methylene amino acid of high purity that does not contain any carriers or extenders. Because it is a synthetic, it has no unpleasant odor, unlike traditional gypsum retarder products that are made from animal parts. Fritz-Pak claims the performance of Gypsum Retarder is superior to current products, so less retarder is required per ton of gypsum, making the transition to this product a cost-effective solution for gypsum companies.

☎ (888) 746-4116


□ [www.fritzpak.com](http://www.fritzpak.com)

## Estimator 7.0 takes second

Quest Solutions has been awarded the second place ribbon in the Temple W. Harris Innovative Product & Technology Awards (TIPTA), given annually to Construct Canada exhibitors who have demonstrated the development or use of innovative construction technologies.

Quest won the award for Estimator 7.0, its estimating software, which features the company's proprietary 3-D

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The awards were established by the Toronto Construction Association, an organization that offers a broad range of services and programs to the industrial, commercial and institutional sectors of the construction industry.

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## Multiquip names its first Italian distributor

Well-seeded throughout most of Europe, Multiquip has moved into Italy for the first time with the selection of Beton Tool Co. (BTC), in Vicenza, Italy, about 100 miles east of Milan, as its newest concrete product dealer.

Beton Tool carries Multiquip's HTX and HHN ride-on trowels and BA Series walk-behind models. The Italian company is an equipment supplier specializing in concrete placing and finishing products, with a wide variety of trowels,



screeds, trowel blades and float pans. Using established concrete equipment sub-dealers, the company caters to concrete and general contractors throughout Italy.

Beton Tool is an integral part of Multiquip's continuing European and global growth. In addition to its United States headquarters, Multiquip has offices located in Manchester, England;

Laval, Canada; Guadalajara, Mexico; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; and Shanghai, China.

☎ (800) 421-1244

□ [www.multiquip.com](http://www.multiquip.com)

## Stamping DVD depicts patio work

Decorative Concrete Supply Inc. has released "Proper Stamping Techniques," a DVD that takes the viewer from start to finish on one patio addition.

Techniques on forming, broadcasting color hardener, stamp placement, grinding, antiquing, and sealing are all covered. Useful tips on how to set a job apart from the competition's work are interjected throughout.

☎ (972) 242-8881

□ [www.decorativecs.com](http://www.decorativecs.com)

## Scofield names president, CE

L.M. Scofield Co. has appointed Harry Moats as president and chief operating officer.

Previously, Moats worked at Scofield as operations manager from 1990 to 1998, then served as president of Precision Concrete, a leading concrete contracting company in the Southeast, until his new appointment. He is a member of the American Concrete Institute board of directors and serves on ACI Committee E703 — Concrete Construction Practices.

Former Scofield president Phillip J. Arnold has moved to the position of Scofield chairman and CEO.

☎ (323) 720-3000

□ [www.scofield.com](http://www.scofield.com)

## Cheng products represented in Oregon

Integrity Concrete Designs of Oregon has teamed up with Cheng Concrete Exchange to offer Cheng concrete countertop products in the Northwest. Integrity will also be offering troubleshooting services and hosting training seminars.

Previously, Cheng products and training have only been available by buying directly from Cheng out of Berkeley, Calif.

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## Nawkaw honored

Nawkaw Southeast was honored by the American Concrete Institute's Georgia Chapter for participation on a

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high-rise concrete restoration project in downtown Atlanta. The firm submitted the project last year for the ACI Awards Competition and walked away with First Place in the Restoration Category. This year the project was submitted under the contracting company, with mention of Nawkaw's concrete staining, and won first place again.

The exterior surfaces of the high-rise building were constructed of exposed river-rock aggregate consolidated concrete walls. After years of pollution buildup, the building's bare spots began to contrast unevenly and unattractively with the concrete surface.

Maintaining the character of the original building, Nawkaw Southeast presented a solution that included a stain wash to imitate the river rock using the company's proprietary NWRT-91 product. Not only did the river rock become more vibrant with cleaning and staining, but areas that were void of rock now appear abundant with the aggregate. Templates were designed to replicate the river rock pattern in concrete,

a process that involved strict matching of scale and texture to the existing river rock. Nawkaw stained almost 70,000 square feet of consolidated concrete surfaces, and the project took 6 months to complete.

☎ (800) 905-2692

□ [www.nawkaw.com](http://www.nawkaw.com)

### Nawkaw hires northeast rep

Masonry stain company Nawkaw Corp. has signed Patrick J. Morrissey of ConSpec Associates Inc. to handle sales and customer relations for the northeast United States. Morrissey will help Nawkaw handle masonry staining requests throughout parts of New Jersey, eastern New York and New England.

Morrissey has been president of ConSpec Associates Inc. for 30 years. He is currently a board member of both MNY ICRI and APTNE and previously was a board member of ICRI National. He also serves on the ASTM Committee F06 on Resilient Floor Coverings, and he specializes in defensible specifications and materials for the restoration

segment of the construction industry.

☎ (203) 467-4426

□ [www.nawkaw.com](http://www.nawkaw.com)

### All hail the H

Husqvarna Construction Products, part of the Husqvarna Group, has consolidated its Dimas, Partner and Target construction brands under a single brand: Husqvarna.

The old brands will be phased out in the beginning of 2007, replaced by the three-horned "H" logo of Husqvarna. Products are being delivered in the Husqvarna colors of orange and gray.

The launch will be carried out simultaneously throughout the world. A certain amount of double-branding will occur during this year to make the changeover as smooth as possible for customers. HCP's brand for the stone industry, Diamant Boart, will not be discontinued.

□ [www.husqvarna.com](http://www.husqvarna.com)

### How to Flattoo

Surface GelTek is offering monthly workshops on its "Flattooing" products. The workshops will be held at the Cohill's Building Specialties training facility in Phoenix, Ariz. Surface GelTek and Cohill's frequently co-train contractors in decorative concrete techniques.

☎ (480) 970-4580

□ [www.surfacegeltek.com](http://www.surfacegeltek.com)

### Conference planned for Chicago

The Commercial Construction Show, owned and produced by D&D Communications Group LLC, will take place May 15-17, 2007, at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont, Ill., adjacent to Chicago's O'Hare International Airport.

This high-powered trade event will bring in three D&D events: Hospitality Construction Expo, Retail Construction Expo and Healthcare Building Expo.

The three conference and seminar programs will maintain their separate identities, but will share one large exhibition hall. 📱

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## Decorative Dangers, Part 2: *On the Job*



Photos courtesy of Doug Carlton

A crew leader makes a list of items needed for the next morning.

I knew there must have been a problem when my cell was ringing at 5:45 a.m., so I took the call.

"Hey boss, it's me. The ready-mix truck is here but there is a problem."

My voice sank as I asked, "What's the problem?"

My foreman answered with disgust: "There is no color in this load. What do you want to do?"

With three words, I knew today's profit was gone: "Send it back."

There are so many situations in decorative work we have no control over that it's not funny. In this case, I specifically remembered placing the order with concrete dispatch and including the color number and poundage. You know what I got when I called the dispatch that morning.

"That's right, you wanted color in

that load. I'm sure sorry about that, Doug. Send it back and we will add color to the load."

Just what I needed — a hot load on a hotter day. No chance. Even though the concrete supplier apologized, I knew it was my fault. I got sloppy and didn't confirm the mix design on a very important pour day. Another paid education with a lesson learned.

This column is all about stacking the deck in our favor. You have probably noticed there are few safety nets in this business, which validates the importance of doing everything possible to control the controllable. Ask any successful decorative contractor and I will bet there is at least one thing they all have in common: organization.

Below are a few decorative dangers and a few ways to avoid them. I realize

there may be other ways to solve these issues, and some are surely better. But the goal here is to get the wheels turning. Space is limited, so I will cover the most common.

### **Danger No. 1: Lack of organization**

How often do you or your crew arrive on a job only to realize there are items missing that are needed to complete the project? This is by far the most common danger to both beginners and pros. Nothing is more frustrating than having a crew stand and wait while you're driving across town to pick up a sprayer or plastic. Before we throw around a few suggestions, let me say this — decorative concrete is the ultimate team sport. As with any team sport, success is determined by momentum, and momentum is lost when you are stand-





Taking the time to draw or chalk out a project puts your crew on the same page. It also helps create a team atmosphere.

ing at the checkout line. What's more, most local hardware stores do not carry stains, sealers, color hardeners, or other specialized tools needed for this type of work.

My suggestion is to get out ahead of your crew. This is best to do the afternoon before by making a checklist of all items and supplies needed. Have them warmed up and ready for the next morning. Many things on this list should be delegated (see Danger No. 3) to your foreman or another "go-to" guy. I have heard many contractors say this is hard because they don't know what they need until they get to the job. My suggestion is to get to the job before you start it. Besides, most decorative projects require the same tools or front-end work.

I used to take this time to draw a sketch of the whole floor, showing decorative saw cuts, and pencil stain colors into the pattern chosen. This sketch would hang somewhere on the project so everyone knew what color went where. This eliminates some risk and spreads accountability to the whole crew. Mistakes in decorative concrete are back-breakers in most cases.

I realize that many contractors leave the project early enough in the day to bid new projects or take care of other job-related issues. Try requiring your lead man or foreman to call and brief you at the day's end about job status and items needed for the next morning. My foreman and I do this every afternoon while he is driving back to the yard.

Try this if you are still working with your crew daily. Once or twice a day, maybe during breaks, walk your job, mapping a plan of action and job tasks for your crew. Most of us end up with our heads down, hip-deep in the trenches, when we should be planning the next move for our crew.

Remember, all important orders for items like stains, sealers, overlay materials, color hardeners, ready mix, and so on should be confirmed. My supplier will stock large amounts of common materials in my yard, inventory what's used, and bill me accordingly. This works out great for him and I never run out of important supplies.

## Danger No. 2: Lack of experience

This is damaging to not only the project attempted but

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Organizing and chalking a project leads to a successful decorative driveway with no mistakes or delays.

the industry in a whole. Now new guys, listen — I can understand having problems years ago when decorative information was hard to find, but not anymore.

I have two suggestions. First, hire a consultant to come work the job with your crew. I realize this appears to cost quite a bit but I can assure you it is money in the bank. The reason I know this is because this is exactly what I did years ago when the staining market came to town in my area. I hired Wes Vollmer to come work a project with my crew and then handed him a check at the end of the project. There is no better classroom than the one on the job.

The second suggestion is to work a "deminar" with one of the decorative industry's top guns. I hate to mention any names because there truly are a lot of great options. Stick with the ones who have proven their success. This will also be beneficial when it comes time to pick the right product for the job. Regardless of which method you decide, most instructors or consultants will continue to help answer questions long after your check clears.

Here's one other note on this danger. Chris Sullivan offers a three-hour seminar every year at the World of Concrete conference on "troubleshooting" decorative concrete. Sign up early next year because this class will fill up. I caught up with Chris after one of his classes in Vegas and told him that I had the same problem as one of the projects he offered as an example that day. Imagine my embarrassment when he told me

that that was my job, used by him to illustrate what not to do. This can be a humbling profession.

### Danger No. 3: Lack of delegation

Why is it that decorative contractors think that no one can do it as well as they can? I realize it takes time to mentor and train someone to fill tasks to your expectations, but it is ridiculous to try to be everything to everyone. Delegation is the only way to grow and expand your company and still live an enjoyable life. There is little doubt that the key to delegation is picking the right person to trust, and sometimes this may not be your lead man. Every employee brings something different to the decorative table and it is important to utilize their talents. I truly believe the secret to picking the right person is finding someone that is willing to be held accountable. Be sure to be upfront in explaining the importance of the task being delegated. The task should be performed together at first, and then solo when the task is completely understood. Remember, if you don't take the time to train someone else, you will be doing it yourself for the rest of your working life. Watch for things falling through the cracks and address them immediately but respectfully. Accountability is the best motivator in most cases.

Over the years I bet I have had dozens of surgeons for clients. We know that these guys are given some duties that cannot be delegated for obvious reasons, but I'll bet that pre- and post-oper-



ation tasks are rarely performed by these doctors. I can also assure you that someone has some answering to do when instruments needed are not at hand.

#### Danger No. 4: Too much too fast


Rushing through a decorative project is like trying to fit a square peg into a round hole. Most of us find ourselves going too fast, myself included, for one reason: money. The problem with most of our bidding processes is that we usually don't account for adversity. Few decorative projects run from start to finish without some form of adversity. It is for this reason that most decorative contractors run low-volume companies, myself included. At least once a month I find myself having to administer tailgate therapy, well, to me. These are the times I have to remember to put the job first and the budget second. I strongly believe that if our goal is quality decorative work, dollars will be the least of our problems.

Another problem with rushing a job is the number one enemy of this industry, moisture, whether the specific issue

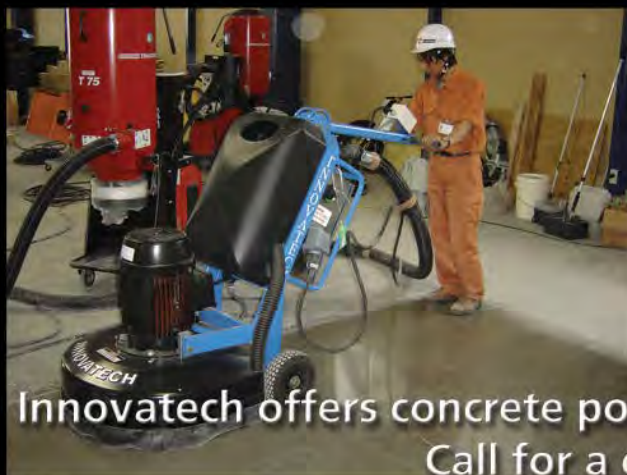
### Why do decorative contractors think that no one can do it as well as they can?

is failing to take a moisture test or not allowing a project to completely cure before sealing. Blushing, blistering, peeling, milkiness — you name it and it is most likely moisture-related. (See my tip at the end of this column.) This can be a challenge because most job superintendents have tight timetables and budgets to contend with. Trying to force these products to do what they are not designed for will only create big problems down the road. I strongly advise standing your ground on fast-track projects or at least demanding release-of-liability forms be signed before continuing. Invest in a slab moisture tester and use it on every job. This will also come in handy if fingers start pointing months down the road. Write down the moisture

number and keep it with your job file or database. If you're just breaking into the decorative business, try calling a flooring company and see what they would charge to swing by and test your floor.

To conclude, here's a decorative tip: Add a few sentences into your decorative contract about the possibilities of adverse reactions to the sealer and how they can be beyond your control. Believe me, chemists for the sealer manufacturers are as busy as Santa's elves trying to keep up with sealer compliances. Most of us do minor touch-up fixes, usually due to moisture, but this will take some of the pressure off if you find a situation that completely goes south. Remember, the goal is to fix the problem and keep your customer happy, not profit from an unfortunate situation. 

*Doug Carlton is the president of Carlton Concrete Inc., located in Visalia, Calif. His firm has completed well over 2 million square feet of decorative concrete. Doug is a past speaker at World of Concrete Asia. He can be reached at [carltondoug@sbcglobal.net](mailto:carltondoug@sbcglobal.net).*



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## From the Editor:



William J. Shorey  
Managing Editor

"I want this to make a visual statement" is easier said than it's done when you're working with concrete, a mud-like material that promises to become rock-hard in several hours. Or, maybe that mud-like material is already as hard as a rock, flat as a pancake, or plain government-issue gray. No matter how you look at it, when it comes to changing the appearance of concrete, you're faced with both a creative challenge and a great deal of work.

More than ten years ago, when I stepped out of the printing field and into the supply side of concrete, it never occurred to me that I would be hearing some of the same questions from both fields. So, it seemed ironic that whether

my job involved paper and ink or concrete and pigment, printing press or forms, finishing tools or diamond blades, my customers were all trying to make the best possible visual statement. Though paper and ink present their own creative challenges; turning flat, gray concrete into an appealing focal point seems something infinitely more complex.

If you've ever been faced with repairing or replacing concrete or changing the look of old concrete, you know that the more knowledge and experience you have, the easier the job becomes. Certainly, it's great when you're able to work with plans and specifications from an architect or designer. But sometimes, you're left to tackle the 'how to bring life to concrete' issue yourself. So, you look for resources. And that's where Concrete Decor comes in.

The decorative concrete industry is changing so rapidly that sourcing the materials, tools and techniques that bring quality and integrity to a project is somewhat of a "treasure hunt."

With this in mind, our goal is to make Concrete Decor a "treasure trove" of valuable information for everything from industry trends to common-sense techniques.

Someone once told me that they guessed the reason I love concrete so much was because it's interesting and creative to work with. But the real truth is that I'm fascinated with its potential, and compelled by how the right tools, skills and products in the right hands can bring life and color to an otherwise flat-as-a-pancake, plain-as-government-gray surface. Keep reading future issues of Concrete Decor. We'll help show you how it's done!

*William J. Shorey*

**On the Cover:** Old black and white advertisements were taken from the May, 1912 issue of Cement World (newsstand price 15c). The bottom right corner photo is courtesy of Stone Touch (see ad on page 7).

## Concrete Decor

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Concrete Decor

God bless Bill and his family --  
wife Estrelle and daughter Colleen.



# Top Dogs

**Cheng Concrete Exchange awards honor the best in concrete countertop design**



Photos courtesy of Cheng Concrete Exchange

Circle of Distinction winners were on hand to receive their awards personally from Fu-Tung Cheng. From back row, left: Mills Howell, Jack Cooper, Justin Hawkins, Fu-Tung Cheng, Keelin Kennedy, Chris Becker, Daryn Barnes; kneeling, from left: Eric Boyd, Mike Power, Mike Moncrieff, Chris Frazer.

**C**heng Concrete Exchange announced the winners of its third annual Members' Circle of Distinction Design Challenge at World of Concrete 2007. Leading the pack was Eric Boyd of Reaching Quiet Design, Charlotte, N.C., who took "Best of Show" honors at the Las Vegas, Nev., ceremony.

The industry's only concrete countertop design competition received 77 submissions, which were culled down to a total of seven "Best" category winners and seven Honorable Mention recipients. The contest was open exclusively to members of Cheng Concrete Exchange, an online resource and directory that provides building professionals, designers, homeowners and do-it-yourselfers with training, design ideas and business opportunities. The Exchange membership list includes about 275 concrete professionals.

"This year's competition raised the bar again to another level, without a doubt," said concrete countertop expert and Exchange founder Fu-Tung Cheng in a press release. "The Concrete Exchange members who submitted their work are pushing themselves, their peers, and the industry to innovate and deliver outstanding design solutions and craftsmanship. They are redefining what is possible in concrete. I am proud of the winners, and all who entered, and I relish the exchange as pupils inspire the teacher."

The reception for the Design Awards, held at Cheng Concrete Exchange's World of Concrete booth, was standing-room-only as attendees crowded in to see the submitted work and winning entries. Members from all over North America were in attendance, and nearly all Circle of Distinction award winners were on hand to personally receive their award from Cheng.

Entries were evaluated on exceptional design, technical skill and overall aesthetic appeal.



## **Best of Show:**

Eric Boyd, Reaching Quiet Design, Charlotte, N.C.

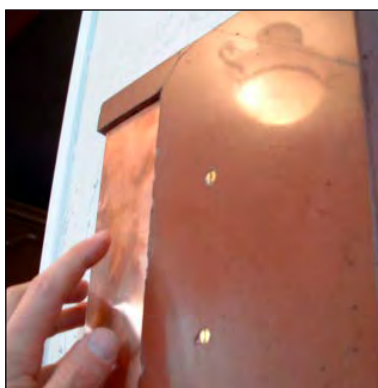




**Best Integral Sink:**  
Chris Frazer



**Best Bathroom Countertop:**  
Chris Becker



**Best Functional Feature:**  
Sean Dunston

## Award Winners:

### Best of Show:

Eric Boyd, Reaching Quiet Design, Charlotte, N.C.

### Best Kitchen Countertop:

Chris Stollery, Cast in Concrete Design, B.C., Canada

### Best Bathroom Countertop:

Chris Becker, Becker Architectural Concrete, South St. Paul, Minn.

### Best Integral Sink:

Chris Frazer, DC Custom Concrete, San Diego, Calif.

### Best Decorative Finish:

Gregory Mata, Cutting Edge Decorative Concrete, Richfield, Ohio

### Best Functional Feature:

Sean Dunston, Concrete Jungle, Colorado Springs, Colo.

### Best Three-Dimensional Application:

Keelin Kennedy, Barefoot Design, Chicago, Ill.

## Honorable Mention:

Jack Cooper, Cooper's Custom Surfaces, Cardiff by the Sea, Calif. (2)

Mike Moncrieff, New Edge Design, Lynden, Wash.

Sean Dunston, Concrete Jungle, Colorado Springs, Colo.

Michael Power, Power Design, Waco, Texas

Ian Wyndlow, Liquid Stone Studios, B.C., Canada

Justin Hawkins, Livingstone Studios, Lincoln, R.I.

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# Mike Miller

## The Concretist Inc.

Benicia, Calif.



Photos courtesy of Mike Miller



by Chris Camara

**M**ike Miller isn't crazy about the term "architectural concrete." He doesn't like "decorative concrete" much either.

Miller considers himself an artist first and a concrete contractor second. To his ears, "architectural concrete" sounds too modular, too forced. Decorative concrete? "To me, it implies someone putting icing on a cake." He prefers "sensory concrete," which reflects the vision of his company: To give the material a voice.

Miller, a well-known consultant to the industry and founder of The Concretist Inc. in Benicia, Calif., respects the properties of concrete. He embraces its cracks, imperfections and variations, incorporating all of its characteristics, warts and all, into his work. In fact, he thinks the materials are more in control over the final product than he is.









By contrast, consistency was the watchword for Miller when he started out. He was raised in the business. Miller's father was a cement salesman who eventually became the general manager of a cement manufacturer. Miller began as a cement broker and later worked for L.M. Scofield Co., a company that prided itself on the uniformity of its concrete-coloring products.

But in Miller's travels around the country as a technical troubleshooter for Scofield, he found the variations much more interesting than the consistencies. Concrete in New Jersey looked one way, but in Hawaii the character was differ-

ent. Spilled suntan lotion that resisted Scofield's stain may have been a mistake, but Miller thought it might look charming in a certain setting. Another snafu, fertilizer spilled onto wet concrete, created interesting variegated patterns.

"I had a lot of ideas, things I wanted to try, and it got to the point where I would burst if I didn't try some of these ideas," Miller says, "so I took off on my own."

He no longer strives for uniformity, but for a more natural, free-spirited look in his floors, walls, counters and fireplaces. His floors have featured stylized, yet realistic, colorful autumn

leaves, sumptuous grapes, and sea-inspired kelp, nautilus and fossilized fish designs. The Concretist, which employs 13, is all about collaboration, joint ventures and informal partnerships. Kelley Burnham, who coined the term "sensory concrete," is Miller's business partner and chief designer. The Concretist's artists and craftspeople may share their talents or work alone if they choose. Miller has a strong technical background, bringing a touch of the mad scientist to his artistic side.

Miller says that disasters are temporary to Concretist artists. They can quickly adjust to the vagaries of the









concrete, stains and other materials they use. "Every job we do is not perfect. In fact, every job is loaded with mistakes, but people are over the moon with almost every job." Miller's philosophy brings to mind Miles Davis, the jazz trumpet innovator, who said, "Do not fear mistakes, there are none."

Miller says: "I try to let the concrete do what concrete wants to do on its own, and not beat myself up too much to get it to do things it doesn't naturally want to do."

His deep experience with various coloring systems and staining techniques make him a much-sought-after

consultant to the industry. When he was younger, those talents would show up in layers and layers of multiple colors and intricate details — the concrete artist's version of a show-off guitar riff. Huge projects were once Miller's forte, such as his massive floors for Las Vegas casinos, but he's been scaling back ever since. He's more interested in smaller projects that require far more thought, research and design. "Less is more" is his design philosophy now. (Miles Davis said: "Don't play what's there, play what's not there.")

One of his favorite projects is his recent collaboration with Bob Harris of

the Decorative Concrete Institute to create a sales floor in a Whole Foods Market in Duluth, Ga., that is adjacent to the Chattahoochee River. They created a hand-sculpted, stylized map of the rich natural history of the river that winds 900 lineal feet around the store. Using needle scalers, scarifiers and diamond grinders, they carved 3/8-inch relief into the polished, gray concrete. A casting resin, which is usually used in sculpture, filled the basin with what looked like bubbly water. "It was really satisfying to do, and it was satisfying at every stage of construction."

Miller isn't proprietary about his

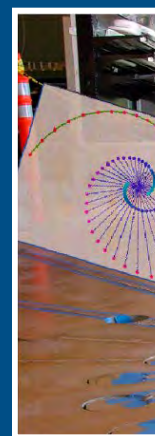
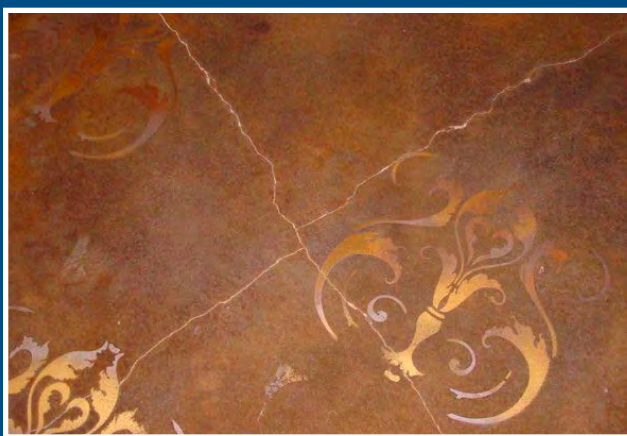
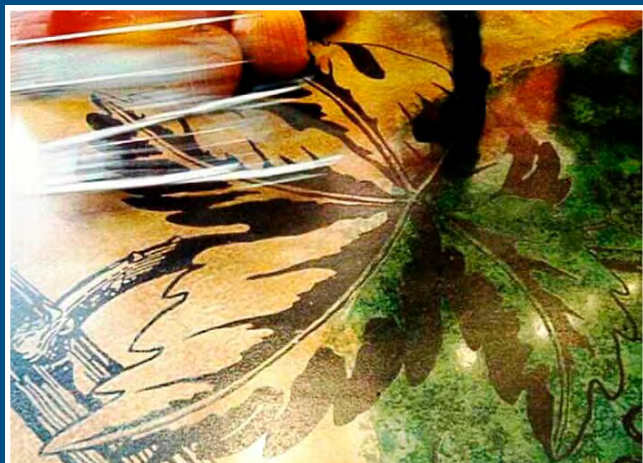


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work or his techniques. "There's nothing top-secret about this stuff," he says. "If you think it is top-secret, you're wrong." He likes to share his ideas and hear from others. This approach goes back to his father's early influence and his work at Scofield, where he was mentored that his sales numbers were less important than learning as much as he could and sharing his expertise with his customers — and that the numbers would come on their own.

Miller continually looks for ways

to maintain his excitement and interest in his work, and for that inspiration he looks to artists. "Most artists are people who are explorers by nature, and they're really good problem-solvers. I've continually teamed up with people like that."

He says he appreciates their fresh approach to concrete art, and that he sometimes must stop himself from telling them something won't work, so he can learn something new. "Always be the beginner," he says. "That's what I've tried to do." 📱









# Getting it done with the least risk

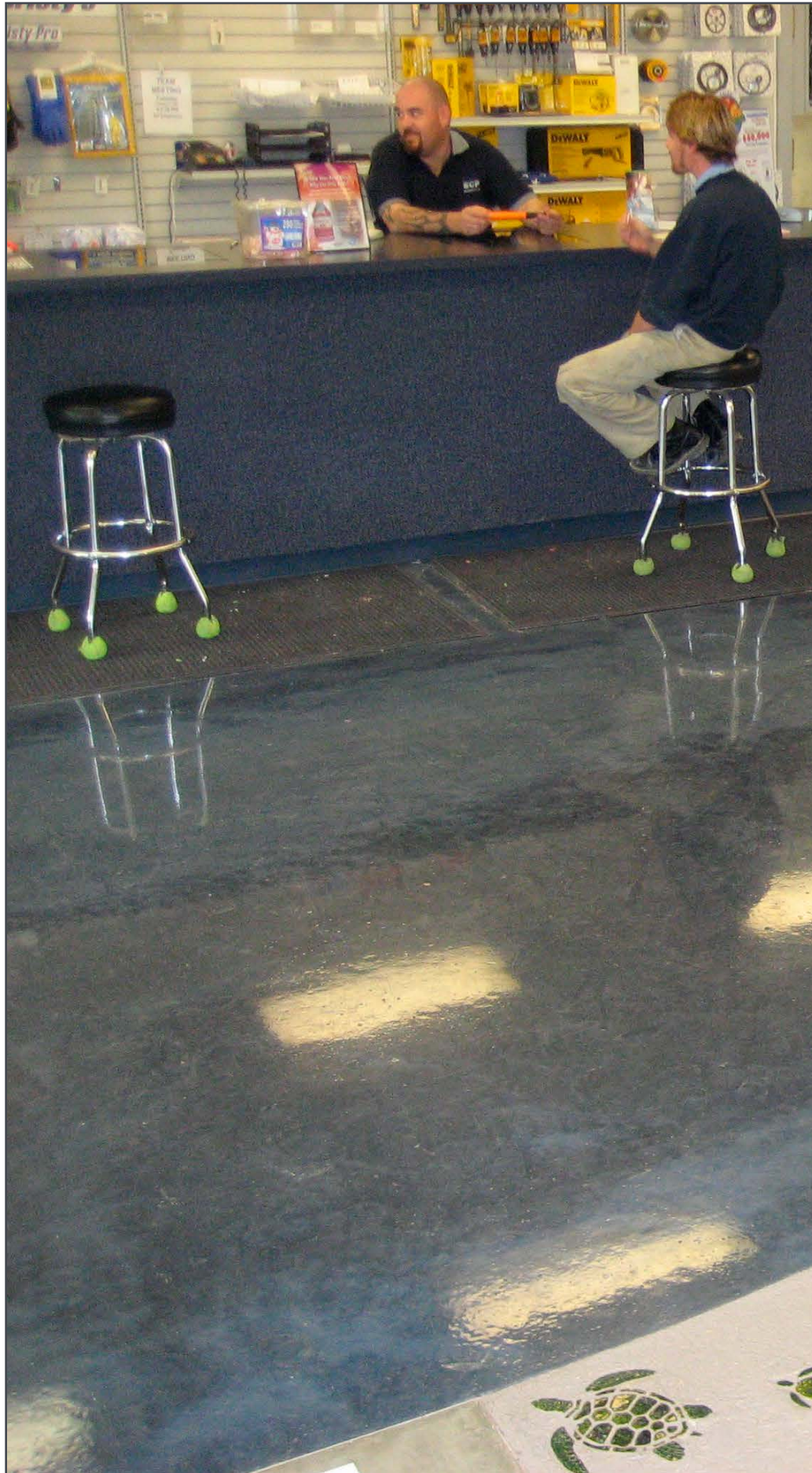
by Susan Brimo-Cox

How much of a gambler are you? When you're considering applying an overlay over an existing overlay, most experts will tell you not to do it — the risk is too great.

The fact is, unless you're the contractor who applied the existing overlay, "you're banking on what the guy in front of you did," says Marshall Hoskins, senior technical representative at Specialty Concrete Products Inc. "It's a roll of the dice."

Seth Pevarnik, manager of technical service at Ardex Engineered Cements Inc., agrees. There are three major areas of concern, he says. You may not know what the existing overlay product is. You don't know if it was mixed correctly. And you don't know if the substrate preparation was done correctly.

Even if you do a test area, you can't be 100 percent certain your overlay will work over the existing one. Why? "What works in a small area may not work in a large area," Pevarnik points out.







# Overlays Over Overlays





Overlay manufacturers don't want to assume the risk either. As Scott Wyatt, director of technical services at Floric Polytech Inc., explains, "When you're doing overlays, the first thing a manufacturer will tell you is to rip up what was there. They don't want to guarantee that their product will adhere to someone else's."

With those cautionary caveats acknowledged up front, there may be times when you're asked to apply an overlay over an existing one. Can it be done? Of course. But you need to limit your risk and liability.

### **Making the decision**

From a practicality standpoint, deciding to apply an overlay over an overlay often comes down to a few factors: cost, time, the condition of the existing overlay, and what kind of overlay you're planning to apply on top.

If the existing overlay is a thin-mil overlayment, such as a microtopping or pigmented epoxy, then removal to get back to the original uncontaminated substrate can be fairly easy and efficient, says Trevor Foster, regional sales man-





ager and principal trainer at Miracote Products. "This will ease the mind of the contractor/manufacturer that they are in direct bond with the original substrate, and they will sleep easier at night."

Scott Thome, director of product services at L.M. Scofield Co., says one of the key questions to ask when deciding to apply a new overlay over an old one is why the overlay is being covered. Is it for aesthetic reasons or because there are problems? "If it is only to change the look and it is performing well, then placing new over old is an acceptable option. However, if the old overlay is cracked or has a weak surface, then removal would be the better option."

Material compatibility is critical. Hoskins points out that different overlays have different characteristics related to flexural strength, compressive strength and bonding strength. "You need to make sure the characteristics [of the old and new overlays] are compatible," he emphasizes.

For example, don't put a high-psi overlay on top of one that is softer. You'll get cracks.

Another compatibility issue, says





Thome, is expansion and contraction with temperature change. For example, high-modulus materials tend to expand and contract very quickly. Low-modulus materials react more slowly. "If you place a low-mod material over a high-mod in an environment that will exhibit fast temperature swings, there could be delamination occurring between the two."

The way a product cures also might be an issue. Pevarnik says he wouldn't put a self-leveler over a microtopping because of the way self-levelers cure. "It can cause tensile-strength stress as it cures, pulling the microtopping."

Considering surface texture, Foster reports the easiest overlays to go over are thin-mil overlays, because they are typically semismooth or smooth. For the same reason, he says, self-leveling overlays are good to go over. Stamped overlays, on the other hand, are the least cost-effective to go over because of the amount of prep work involved to smooth them out.

Thome also observes that major pre-filling, such as of grout joints, can be problematic. "Most topping materials require a surface profile no greater than plus or minus 1/8 inch. If there are deeper areas than that, the material will cure slower in the deep areas and cracking or discoloration could occur."

### Don't skimp on prep work

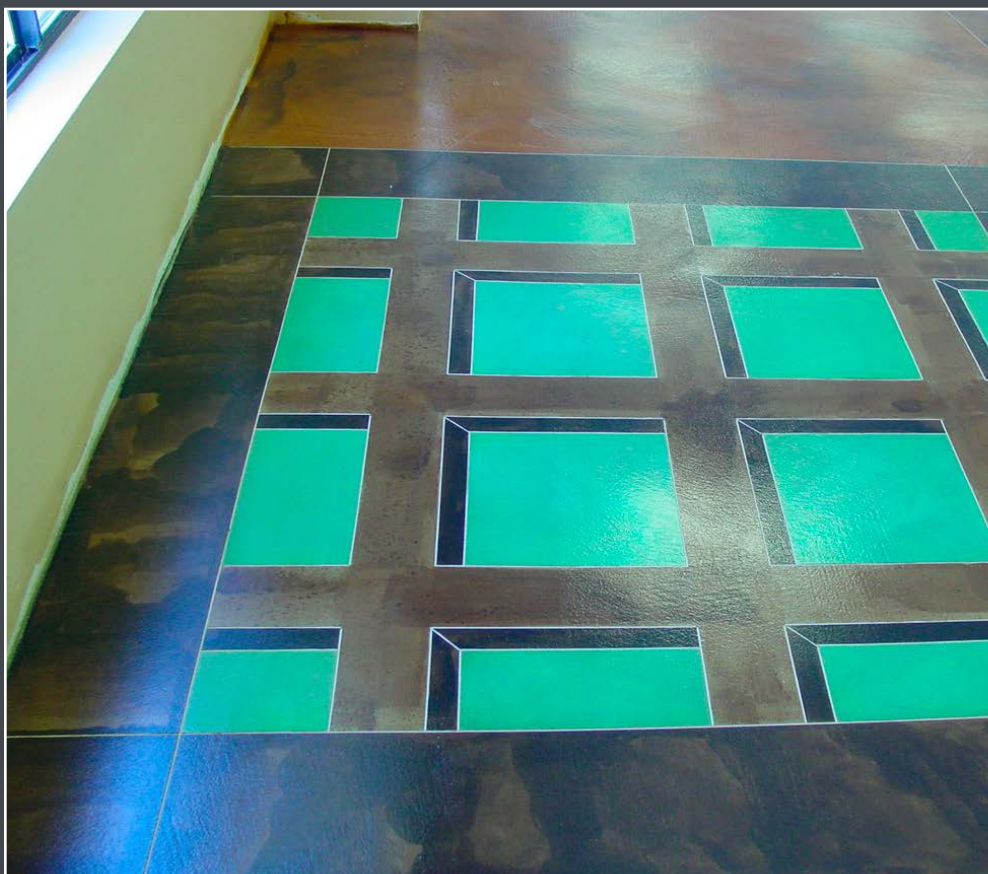
If applying a new overlay over an existing overlay is the chosen option after ensuring compatibility of materials, the next critical step is surface preparation.

Following the manufacturer's recommendations for surface preparation is the best advice. "Over an existing overlay material, 99 percent of the time it will include some type of mechanical prep," Thome observes.

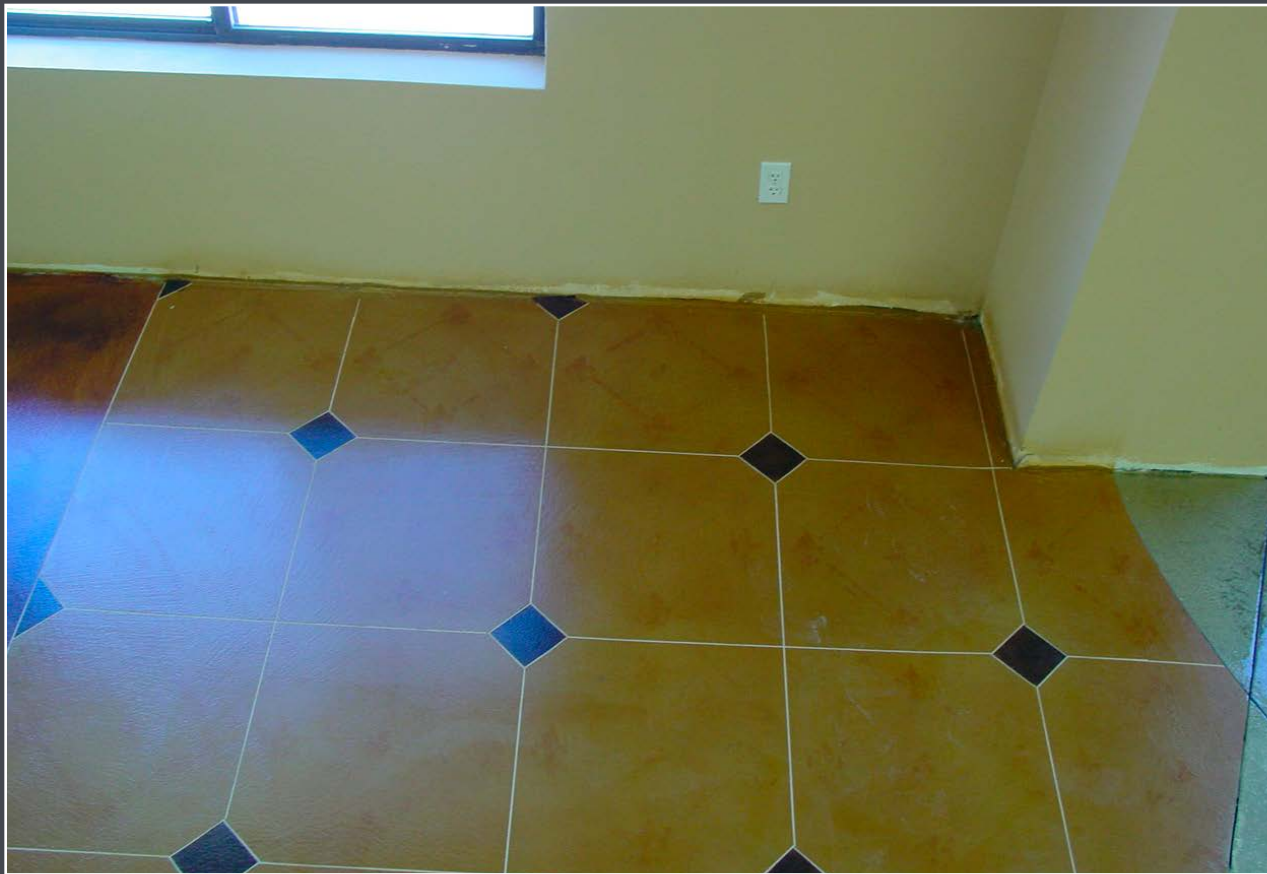
Sanding, grinding or shot blasting will leave behind a surface with strong adhesive properties. "You want to mechanically abrade the surface to create some profile," Foster says.

A clean, sealer-free, contaminant-free surface is also imperative.

"The number-one most important thing when putting one overlay over another is to completely remove any sealer on the existing surface," Wyatt says. "Any sealer remaining on the surface











will be a bond breaker.”

The importance of proper priming cannot be emphasized enough. Many experts recommend epoxy primers, but different situations call for specific primers. Consult your manufacturer and use what is recommended.

Brian Vicari, owner and CEO of The Concrete Colorist Inc., says it all comes down to the prep work. “If you rush the steps and apply over an old sealer you can get delamination. If you didn’t prime properly, the old overlay can suck moisture out of the new overlay, drying it out too fast or creating pinholes.”

The overall objective is to ensure a good chemical bond and a good mechanical bond between the overlays. Talk to the experts and just about all will agree that 99 percent of all issues arise from poor prep work.

### Other details worth consideration

If you’re familiar with concrete, you know about joints. Many of the same joint issues apply when applying one overlay over another.

You can try to hide old functioning joints in the new overlay by incor-

# Tips & Tricks

When applying overlays over overlays, certain tools and techniques can make the job easier. Here are a few that might work for you:

- ≥ Over a stamped surface, it saves time and material to knock down the high spots first before floating a leveling product.  
—Scott Wyatt, Floric Polytech Inc.
- ≥ I always recommend using at least a water-based epoxy for a primer and putting the cementitious overlay into the primer tacky. This promotes tremendous chemical adhesion.  
—Trevor Foster, Miracote Products
- ≥ Most toppings that are self-leveling or “stampable” are placed with a gage rake similar to the one Mid-West Rake provides. The finishing process is usually performed with a smoothing paddle, fresno, funny trowel or hand trowel depending on the material’s consistency.  
—Scott Thome, L.M. Scofield Co.
- ≥ When putting down a base coat, use a three-foot squeegee. It gets you up on your feet away from the work, so you can spread material nice and flat, faster.  
—Scott Wyatt, Floric Polytech Inc.
- ≥ Squeegees work great with very thin microtoppings, but I’m a fan of a troweled-down look. I like the Magic Trowel, a tool that leaves a very consistent surface that looks like a sweat finish.  
—Brian Vicari, The Concrete Colorist
- ≥ If applying over a colored overlayment, i.e. chemical stained, topical stained, dyed, etc., make sure your system will be thick enough or dark enough to hide existing color underneath.  
—Trevor Foster, Miracote Products



porating them into the surface design. "Any joint in the existing overlay that's a functioning joint — expansion, isolation, construction or control — must be honored or they will show through the new overlay," Pevarnik says.

On the other hand, decorative joints in the existing overlay probably will not show through the new overlay, depending on what was used to grout the decorative joints. Cementitious grout is typically not a problem, but Pevarnik says elastomeric or flexible joint material could telegraph or cause a hairline crack in the new overlay.

How many overlays can you layer on top of another? Perhaps the sky is the limit if everything is done properly. From a practicality standpoint, however, there are several considerations, such as door thresholds, floor vents and the like.

Foster also suggests weight may be a factor. "If applied over and over to a wood substrate, you need to look at weight requirements, too. Four or five overlayments might stress the wood joists and wood beneath the overlays."


For Hoskins, the bond is the critical issue at every layer. With potential

delamination possible at each layer, he says, the fewer number of layers the better. "The more layers you have, the more critical areas you have."

Other considerations include if the work is being done in an interior setting, where you have a controlled environment, or outdoors. Traffic load may also be an important issue to figure in.

If you accept a project to apply an overlay over an existing overlay, be sure to do all you can to protect yourself from liability — especially if you did not put down the existing overlay. Everyone likes to guarantee their work, but how do you guarantee someone else's work? You can't.

Vicari recommends you put it in writing with the client that you are putting something on top of someone else's work. "That's the tricky part. You can test it and ask the right questions, but you don't know if they did the right prep work. Let the client know all the risks about going over someone else's work."

His best advice: If you're not confident about the existing overlay, remove it. 

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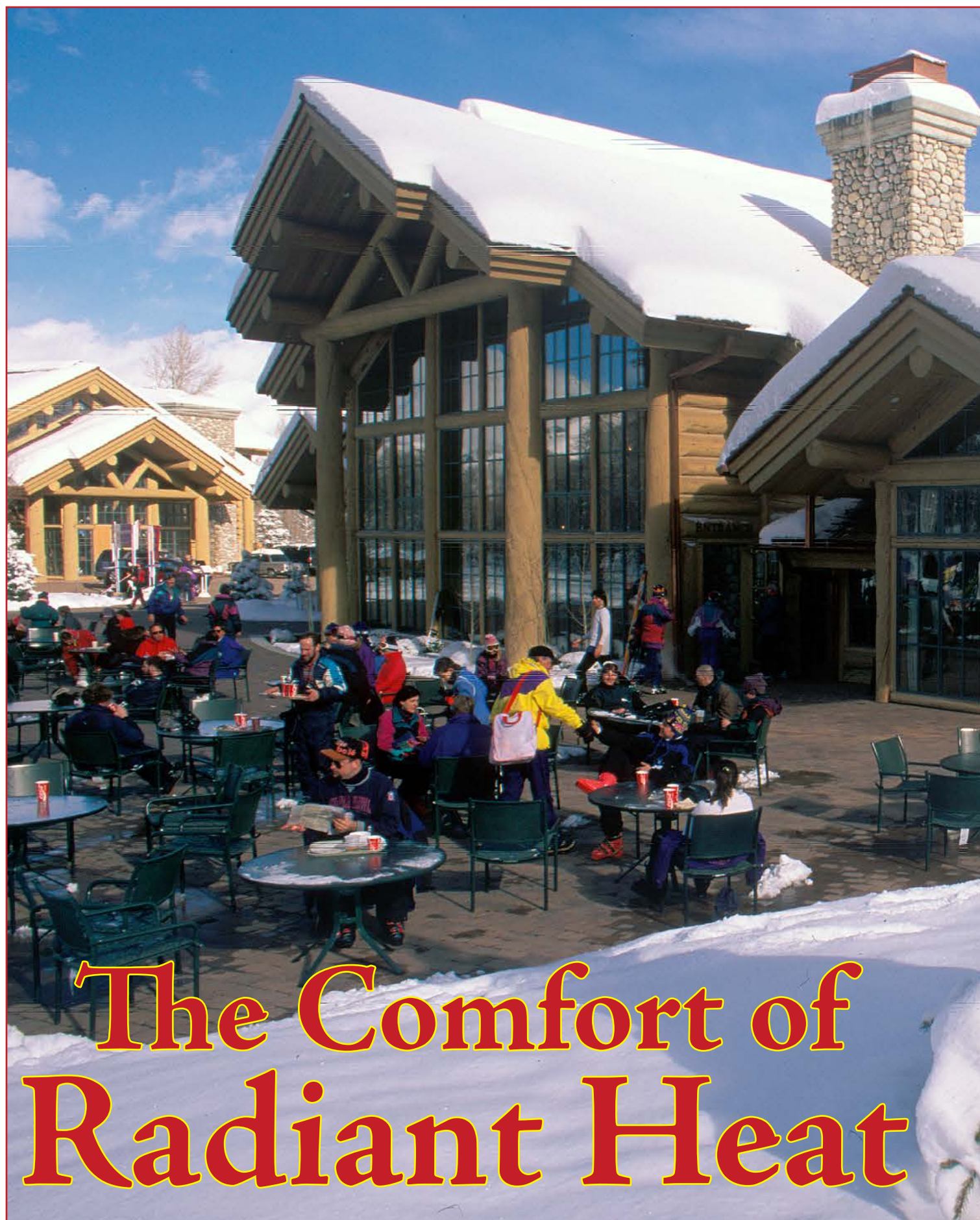


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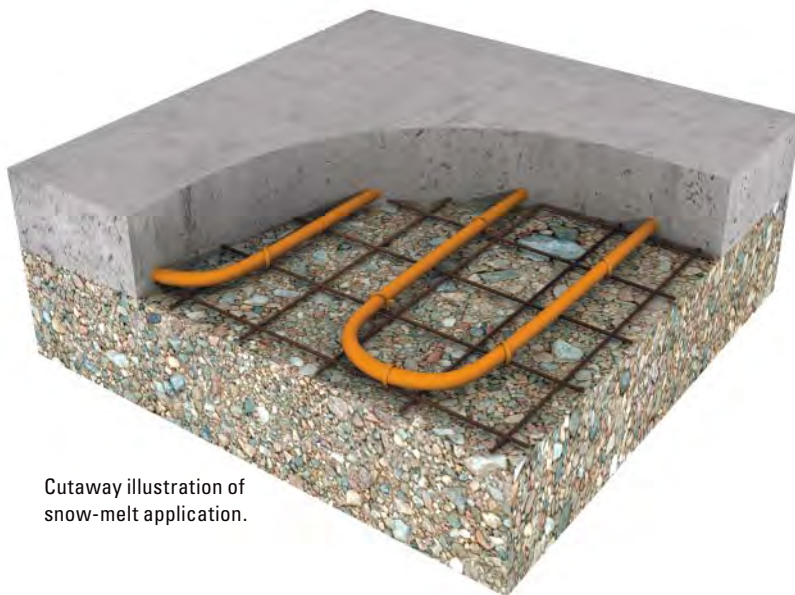


# The Comfort of Radiant Heat





Photos courtesy of John Vastyen



Cutaway illustration of snow-melt application.

by John Vastyen

Bob “Hot Rod” Rohr isn’t your everyday installer of heating systems. The Rogersville, Mo., heating expert got turned on to radiant heat about 15 years ago and dove, well, toes-first into the technology. He now specializes in radiant heat and — as an important side interest — loves to challenge himself by putting radiant heat into unusual concrete masses.

Of course, he installs the heat form in concrete floors, where most folks would expect to feel the warmth that radiant heat delivers. He’s also applied radiant in walls and ceiling spaces, chiefly as a solution to heating interior spaces when he can’t get enough BTUs out of the floor.

Then, several years ago, a strange thing happened. On a cold winter day, he was driving past a nearby concrete lawn ornament business when the idea occurred to him: Why couldn’t these concrete forms also be radiantly heated? So he approached the business with the idea and was soon delivering radiant tubing to be pressed into the mold of a large dog, a German wire-haired terrier, which quickly became the world’s first concrete hot dog!

At the next meeting of the Radiant Panel Association, Hot Rod lugged his newly created radiant dog onto the show floor. The 40-inch tall concrete version of man’s best friend — which Hot Rod named “Aqualung” — appeared in brown, black and white, weighing in at a mere 420 pounds. Show attendees loved it. When connected to a homeowner’s hydronic (hot water heating) system, the sculptural whimsy, which he’ll make to order, warms towels outside a bathtub or makes coats toasty warm inside an entryway.

The dog’s trade-show popularity quickly led to a heated Venus statue, which required a considerably larger and more challenging heat system. She was shipped to New Hampshire where, for three years, she’s dutifully warmed bathroom towels and washcloths.

However, many of Hot Rod’s concrete masses are more pragmatic. A few years ago, he installed about two miles of radiant heat tubing in an all-concrete home in Springfield, Mo. The 3,800-square-foot home had 18-inch walls. Some of these were heated. The floors, stairways and a small pond sculpted into a massive back deck, all in concrete, were also tubed for radiant heat.

Concrete countertops have become one of Hot Rod’s favorite surfaces to heat. In his own home, he and a friend, Tom Ehlers,





Above: Bob "Hot Rod" Rohr with his hot dog.

Below: Radiant tubing is prepared for a home in Idaho Falls, Mo.



who owns Springfield-based Stone Effects, installed radiant tubing in bathroom countertops and a tub surround before the concrete was formed, stamped and dyed.

"Now my wife, Ellen, lingers in the bathroom, and the cats also bask in favorite radiantly heated spots, so that walking from room to room is like a slalom course. I'm not sure it's a good thing, but the people and critters seem to be pretty happy with it," says Hot Rod.

Even though Hot Rod learned early on that heat moves to cold (it doesn't rise), he was surprised to find that washcloths and towels, stored on a shelf below the radiantly heated countertop, are toasty warm all winter long. "My next big project at the house is one we've avoided for years: a total remodel of the kitchen with, of course, artfully sculpted, radiantly heated concrete countertops."

### Why it's warm

Indoors, radiant floor heating works by using water-filled tubes or electric heating elements to warm the mass of a floor. The surface of the floor then gently emits energy that moves easily to all the objects in the room, making them — and your customer's feet — cozy warm.

"Radiant heat from a floor will warm everything in a building, giving every surface an inviting sensation that can

Below: Snow-melt application on a city sidewalk.







A bird's-eye view of a concrete pour with radiant heat equipment.





Above Left and Right: Bob “Hot Rod” Rohr installs radiant heat equipment on an under-concrete job in Branson, Mo.

be felt,” says Dan Chiles, vice president of marketing for Watts Radiant Inc. “The floor becomes the warmest surface in a room, not the coldest.” Surprisingly, those surfaces most uncomfortable without radiant heat — concrete, stone and tile — become the most comfortable with radiant because they transfer the heat so well.

Whether hydronic or electric, radiant floor heat costs less to operate than other forms of heat. Because radiant floors offer more comfort at lower thermostat settings, most people find that they’re comfortable at lower room temperatures.

### A system is the sum of its parts

Hydronic (water-based) radiant floor systems are used in larger areas or for an entire home or building. Generally, hot-water radiant is best suited for spaces of 500 square feet or more, or where hot water is already used as a heat source. Hydronic tubing can be embedded in concrete slabs, in thin slabs over frame floors, stapled up between floor joists, or installed on top of the subfloor.

An electric system may be the best choice for small areas like a master bathroom. Of course, if electric energy is locally affordable, it could be used to heat or provide floor warming to an entire home or business.

PEX (Cross-Linked Polyethylene) tubing can be used for radiant heat and snow-melting applications. Some care must

be taken to protect it from job-site puncture, crushing or exposure to the sun’s light. Another candidate is Watts Radiant’s “Onix,” EPDM (Ethylene Propylene Diene Monomer) tubing that is more resistant to job-site abuse and UV radiation. Special distribution units, called manifolds, channel the heated liquid into multiple radiant floor pipe circuits. Manifolds are usually located close to the heated area, although they can be installed in a mechanical room. Each manifold set includes a supply (hot) and a return (cooler) manifold. Manifolds usually include balancing valves to control the flow of heated water to each circuit, or loop. Circuits are the loops of PEX or EPDM tubing that begin at the supply manifold and end at the return manifold. The combination of manifolds and circuits heat a defined area that’s called a zone. A zone can be one room or several rooms.

### All this and snow melting too?

While considering, or recommending, a radiant heat system, look at the floor plan carefully to see if there might be a door, a sidewalk or a garage entrance that faces north or is exposed to ice and snow buildup. The home or building owner should be encouraged to ask the radiant designer to add one or more snow-melting zones onto the heating system.

This entails moving a solution of heated water and anti-freeze from a heat exchanger attached to a space-heating boiler





Above Left and Right: Part of a concrete home built in Springfield, Mo.

or dedicated heat source underground to cold surfaces outside. The user can activate snow-melting zones when the weather report calls for freezing precipitation, or simply wait for the microprocessor control to do the job.

For a snow-melt system, the designer specifies tubing embedded in outdoor or garage slabs. The designer must consider local weather, insulation, pipe spacing, pipe diameter and circuit length. PEX or EPDM synthetic rubber radiant tubing should have at least two inches of concrete over the top of the tubing. Usually, building codes provide exact measurements for this.

Snow-melting has several benefits. Icy surfaces are no longer a concern and are maintenance-free. Facility maintenance costs are reduced because ice-melting chemicals aren't required. These chemicals kill landscaping, increase building cleanup as they are tracked inside, and can degrade concrete and asphalt.

And in today's litigious society, the cost of a snow-melt system is more than returned with one avoided lawsuit.

These systems are well suited to commercial applications — especially critical areas like hospital and senior-housing entry areas, helicopter pads and delivery ramps. They can also complement an artfully stained or stamped decorative concrete surface. Why shouldn't your craftsmanship be admired year-round?



Snow-melt slab.





Radiant heat for an interior space that was later covered by stamped concrete.

Typically, most of the components of a snow-melting system, especially the heating plant, sensors and controls, are installed by a plumbing and mechanical contractor. But concrete contractors should be involved when it's time to embed the heating elements in the slab.

In most cases, tubing is spaced from 6 to 12 inches on center and circulates a solution that has been heated 110 to 140 degrees Fahrenheit. Tube spacing is varied according to the degree of snow-melting required.

Tubing is usually strapped or tied to rebar or rewire. Even if rewire is not needed for structural reasons, it is needed to keep the tubing from floating to the surface of the concrete during the pour. A minimum of 2 to 3 inches of covering must be maintained over the top of the tubing. Tubing can also be clipped to rewire, hooked to a base material with turf hooks, stapled into rigid insulation, or otherwise connected to a compacted base.

At expansion joints, where slab movement could cause stress, it's necessary to take special precautions. "We recommend slipping the tubing through collars cut from plastic pipe or pipe insulation and placed several inches below the expansion joint," explains Whitworth. "Another key precaution is that the system must be pressure-tested before and during the concrete pour to ensure that no damage has been done to the heating elements during installation."

Where to get started? It's always best to involve the talents of a professional installer who knows and has experience with radiant heat, preferably a member of the Radiant Panel Asso-



Bob "Hot Rod" Rohr at work.

ciation. You can then choose, with confidence, to what extent you'd be involved in the process. 🛠️

*John Vastyan is president of Common Ground, Uncommon Communications, based in Manheim, Penn. He specializes in communications for the radiant heat, hydronics, geothermal, plumbing and mechanical and HVAC industries while serving business-to-business manufacturers and trade associations.*





Radiant heat being installed under a helicopter pad.

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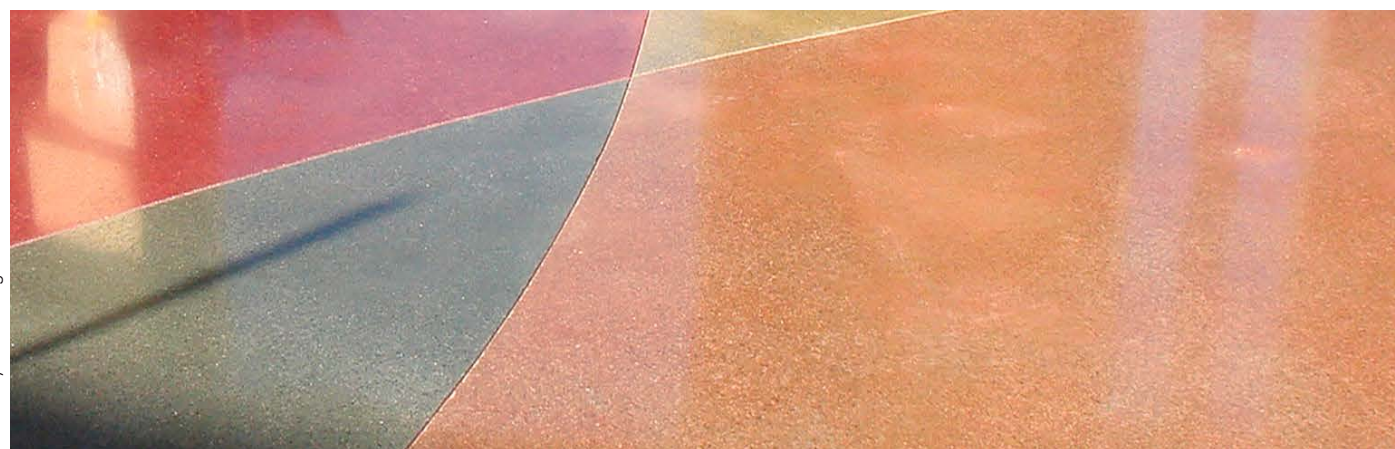


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Photos by Peter Wagner



## Talking the Talk, Walking the WOC

**C**hanges occur, and though my change wasn't as drastic as Victor Kiam's when he bought the Remington Shaver company back in the 1960s just because he liked the shaver so much, mine was a major change.

In the last column I wrote in 2006, I focused on concrete being truly renewable, and in the article I talked about AmeriPolish and their new penetrating agent. Well, I guess that I wrote a pretty convincing article, at least for myself, because I ended up leaving a position that I enjoyed at RetroPlate to join AmeriPolish as their Vice President, Marketing & Product Development. Changes happen in life — some are controllable, some aren't. I hope that all of you make the most of them, just as I plan to, because 2007 is looking to be a breakout year for the polished concrete industry, with or without color.

Walking the walk, not just talking the talk, is more important than ever for our young industry. As the polished concrete industry enters its second decade, we're still the infants of the floor coating and floor covering industry,

an industry that is worth more than 25 billion dollars annually. We have an immense opportunity for profitable growth, but this will only happen if we become more professional in our approach, our investment in education, our pricing, and in our treatment and respect for each other. While we are battling over who was first, or who's the best, the coatings and coverings people are addressing our assault on "their market." Did you know that Formica now makes a Solid Surfacing countertop called "Real Concrete," a surface that provides the high-end look of polished concrete? It is an honor to be copied, but only if you take your competition as seriously as they take you.

I did not have the opportunity to walk the World of Concrete this year as I have in the past, but from what little I did see, I was excited to see the growth in our industry. I was impressed, not only in the number of manufacturers exhibiting, but in the new or updated products being offered, along with the excitement of both newcomers and industry veterans. Ten years ago every-

thing in our industry was borrowed, whereas now we create for our own. Ten years ago the industry existed to fix failing concrete in industrial facilities. Now with the options of dyes, acid stains, dry shake hardeners and integral color, you have the ability to deliver an exquisite, yet cost-effective, color alternative in place of carpet, linoleum, vinyl, composition tile, terrazzo and stone. If you look at the "food chain," each additional or successful step fosters growth down the chain. For every gallon of dye, someone buys 2 gallons of densifier; for every square foot you densify, you buy two to eight different grits of diamonds; and as your workload or job size increases, you buy more equipment.

Let's look at the anatomy of a slab, using AmeriPolish's slab in our outside booth at the World of Concrete. The WOC slabs are only days old instead of weeks old. Even so, the slab was more real-world than we would have liked, but it's exactly what could happen on a real job site, just on a smaller scale. Even at only 450 square feet, it still required all steps, all products.





## Day One:

We arrived Friday, January 19, in order to set up our equipment for a Saturday morning start. The weather was not looking promising, and the slab was outdoors and uncovered.

## Day Two:

We checked our equipment; the vacuum hadn't been delivered. Change No. 1: We went dry, using a broom and shop vac instead of an industrial vacuum to keep the area clean. At the first test, we realized that we had a soft slab, confirming a soft floor due to freeze-thaw the previous week. Change No. 2: We changed to hybrids and eliminated the metals, as we were concerned with chewing the floor up. After our initial anxiety and a little finger-crossing, we established our ability to proceed. Following our grinding up to 400-grit resins, we cleaned the floor thoroughly and laid out and sawed the graphics lines.



Starting out with a soft slab.



Creating a decorative saw cut.

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Taping and masking.



Protection from the wind.



Applying dye.



Applying densifier.

### Day Three:

Prior to spraying each color, the area was masked off, ensuring color coverage only on the planned area. With the dyes, it was important to have a clean, dry surface. In addition to the normal masking, we also had to create “portable” walls of cardboard and so forth to stop wind gusts of 40 miles per hour from scattering the sprayed dye.

For each color of dye, one very light application of dye was applied, then a few minutes later, a second was applied. (Always apply the dye with a conical tip, with a consistent spray pattern.) We then moved on to each successive color, taping and applying prior to scrubbing and rinsing the slab to remove the normal dye residues. Change No. 3: History at the WOC dictates that since the slabs are so hard and we are only worried about a few days wear, densifiers are not required. But with the freeze-thaw we experienced, a densifier became a necessity that wasn't planned on, neither by ourselves nor by many other manufacturers that were exhibiting. L&M graciously provided us with FGS PermaShine in order for us to complete our slab.

### Day Four:

We completed our polishing steps of 800-grit, 1,500-grit and 3,000-grit diamonds, and applied our Stain Shield for protection against oil and water-based spills. A polished and densified floor is still concrete and therefore porous to some degree. Additionally, whereas densifiers deliver increased strength and abrasion resistance almost immediately, the tightening up of the floor continues for four to eight months. Late Monday, the floor was completed and ready for the attendees who came for education and entertainment.

### Days Five to Seven:

Time to listen, talk and learn.

### Day Eight:

We had a good ballgame, appreciative fans, and more than 1,000 hits, but the game was over and it was time to take down the bleachers for another season.

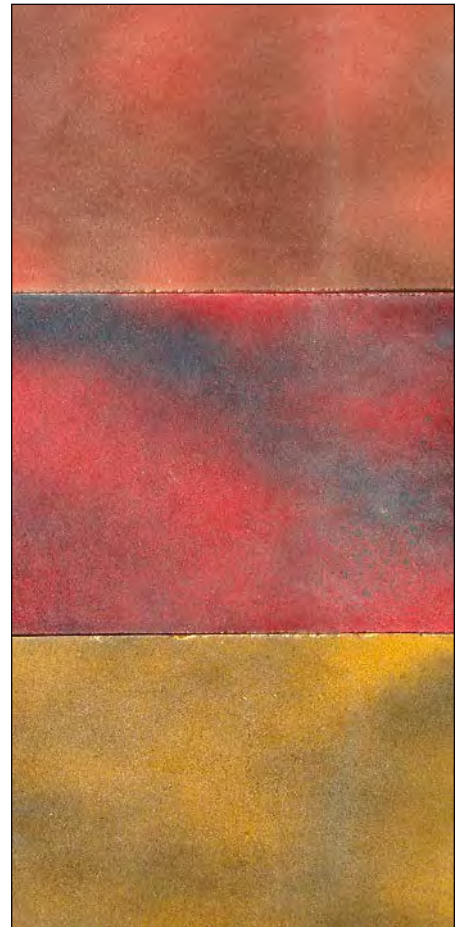
It shouldn't matter if you're a Red



The finished product.



The polished slab.







The AmeriPolish booth at the World of Concrete.



Show's over — time to pack up.


Sox or Yankees fan. What does matter is that we help educate each other on how to be better players and a more successful team, and learn how to raise the awareness in our industry.

Part of AmeriPolish's commitment to the industry is training and education, and with that in mind, I will be taking a road trip across North America in 2007, conducting seminars on add-

ing color to polished concrete. I will not only teach the applications of dye, but will also discuss how integral color, dry-shake hardeners and acid stains fit into the mix. The goal is to not only raise the knowledge and expertise of both veterans and newcomers to our industry, but equally importantly, to raise our own knowledge through interaction with all of you in the field. Please contact me


at [pbwagner@thedyeguys.com](mailto:pbwagner@thedyeguys.com) to learn more about The North American Dye Guys Tour 2007. 📧


*Peter Wagner is Vice President, Marketing & Product Development, for AmeriPolish. He is responsible for working with applicators and equipment manufacturers throughout North America for training and education purposes pertaining to polished concrete. He has more than 20 years in the flooring industry and is starting his eighth year in the polished concrete industry.*

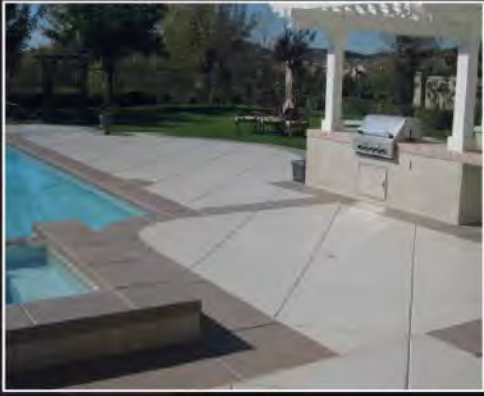


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Photo courtesy of Franmar Chemical Inc.

## Soy-based Products: Spilling the Beans

Soybeans are one of the oldest crops in the world, but soy-based products are new to the decorative concrete industry. There are soy-based products available for every phase of a project. Should you be using them?

All soy-based products share some attractive advantages. They are nontoxic and release no harmful fumes or nasty odors. They are biodegradable, so spills don't require hazmat cleanup. They comply with VOC regulations and sidestep the need for health and safety inspectors on job sites. But what about other practical issues like ease of application, cost, effectiveness and durability?

Here's a rundown of the types of products available and what it's like to use them.

### Strippers

Imagine smearing a stripping chemical on concrete with your bare hands, leaving it to penetrate the coating you want to remove, returning at your convenience to scrape off the residue, and then simply rinsing the surface clean with plain water. That's what it's like to use Soy Gel Paint and Urethane Remover, according to Jason Davenport, marketing director for Franmar Chemical Inc. He says the product can remove polyurethanes, acrylic sealers, and even epoxies.

"If you get this stuff on your skin, it does not burn," Davenport says. "The only problem some people have is if they're allergic to soy."

The soy-based stripper works slower





Photos courtesy of Eco Safety Products LLC



than harsh chemicals such as methylene chloride, but timing is not critical. Soy has an extremely low evaporation rate, is nontoxic, and won't harm the underlying concrete, so you can leave it unattended as long as you want. Depending on the type and number of layers of coating you're removing, penetration could take from a few minutes to a couple of hours. "It will go through 25 layers of paint in one application if you give it enough time," Davenport says.

A couple of things look like disadvantages at first glance. "When people first use it, they think it's a gooey mess," Davenport says. "But considering the alternatives of sanding or using something more harsh, it's a whole lot easier."

Cost is another potential put-off. At \$60 a gallon, Soy Gel looks awfully expensive. But the large coverage rate brings the cost down to around 30 cents per square foot. The product can even be collected and reused, as long as it retains its gel consistency. Furthermore, there's no need to buy neutralizers or cleaning agents; a surfactant incorporated in the product reacts with plain water to easily rinse the surface clean.

John Bennett, president of Eco Safety Products LLC, points out another advantage. "All of our soy-based strippers are even DfE approved, and those certifications are very difficult to achieve."

He's referring to the Environmental Protection Agency's Design for the Environment program, which promotes products and processes that are cleaner, more cost-effective, and safer for workers and the public.

## Mastic removers

"A lot of mastic removers evaporate,

and then the mastic re-adheres to the surface," Davenport says. "So you have a working time between 1 and 15 minutes to remove it or you'll have to do it all over again."

Not so with his company's Bean-e-doo Mastic Remover. Although it is a liquid, its evaporation rate is so low that it can be applied and left to soak indefinitely. Workers can strip it off whenever they finish with other tasks. Again, cleanup is as easy as rinsing with water.

Like other soy-based products, Bean-e-doo has an extremely high flash point of 600 degrees, making it safer to apply than more volatile products. "A lot of people like to use the soy because they can smoke while they're using the mastic remover," Davenport says.

## Form releasers

Soy Form Release from SoyClean can be sprayed, brushed, or rolled onto forms and molds. Not only is the product an effective release agent that won't stain the concrete, but soap and water will clean it up. It costs about 9 cents per square foot. "We've had customers say the petroleum-based product eats away at certain forms. This one doesn't," says SoyClean director of marketing Kurt Brannian.

## Stains

Eco Safety Products makes Soy-Crete Architectural Soy Concrete Stain, a semitransparent true penetrating stain. "It is a VOC-compliant material with no hazardous components, so it meets all environmental air quality regulations and assists in green building, LEED-certified projects," Bennett says.


The stain's semitransparency lets the pigments interact with the porosity and

density of the concrete to create a natural mottled look. "You're always going to get a very rustic look without any artistic talent," Bennett says. "And people with artistic talent can do just about anything they want with the material. The installer has complete control over the entire stain process." During about the first four hours after application, the stain can even be washed off with soap and water. After it cures, though, it becomes permanent.

Application involves fewer steps than acid staining, resulting in substantial savings in labor costs. "We have converted acid stain installers that have easily shaved half the labor time in a project," Bennett says. "And they eliminate all the hazmat issues of disposal of the acid material and the need for respirator gear."

## Sealers

SoyClean's SoySeal concrete sealer and waterproofer, a penetrating sealer that can be applied with a fan-tip sprayer, doesn't affect the color of decorative concrete. Over two years of outdoor testing by ASTM standards attest to its durability. "The cost is probably a little bit more, but it's certainly not prohibitive," Brannian says. Depending on the application, the cost is between 6 cents and 12 cents per square foot.

Eco Safety's Acri-Soy penetrating sealers have demonstrated an interesting environmental and performance bonus, according to Bennett. "In high-moisture content areas like coastal communities, the soy seems to deter the growth of mold and mildew," he says. "We're hoping to get more scientific data to find out what is it in soy that resists mold and mildew." 





## Polishing Machines

**M**any of the technological concepts that manufacturers use in making concrete-polishing tools are not new. Some of these companies began by developing polishers for stone and marble, and discovered more recently that their expertise is of great service to concrete contractors.

A lot of factors can change the effect a polishing machine has on a floor: weight, rotation speed (measured in RPM), configuration of the diamond-abrasive face, the speed at which a worker moves the machine, the difference between active and passive planetary movement, the direction of spin, densification, the degree of cleaning between grits, and on and on.

In compiling this Tooling section, *Concrete Decor* magazine focused on walk-behind models, handheld models, edgers and other tools that can be helpful to decorative contractors on small and medium-sized jobs.

### Progrind floor grinding serie

The Progrind range of planetary grinders from King Concepts has been designed to offer operators a variety of options in terms of speed and direction control with King's Dual Drive Technology.

Progrind floor-grinding machines are the only planetary machines with drives that are truly independent. They offer independent control of satellite/grinding disc speed, planetary head speed, satellite/grinding disc direction, and planetary head direction. This independence allows operators to control both speed and direction of either the planetary rotation or of the grinding heads, resulting in a virtually unlimited number of potential speed and direction combinations. What's more, this planetary grinder can be set to counter-rotate for concrete and stone polishing applications, and it can be set so both systems rotate in the same direction for aggressive cutting.





Dual Drive technology can be found in machines such as the Progrind 680, King's mid-sized model for large and small commercial jobs.

■ [www.kingconcepts.com](http://www.kingconcepts.com)

## Lavina Surface Preparation System



Developed and manufactured by Superabrasive Inc., the Lavina Surface Preparation System gives users control over RPM, speed and feed, relative pressure, tool bond resistance and more.

Both the Lavina 20 and Lavina 25 floor-polishing machines can be used wet or dry. Wet use is enhanced by a self-leveling skirt that keeps dirt from spraying. Dry use is complemented by vacuum

hose connections. The Lavina 20 and 25 are single-belt driven planetary machines. On both machines the tools touch the rim of the skirt, so there is very little distance between the tools and edge. In addition, the machines are easy to assemble, disassemble, ship and repair.

As for diamond tools for polishing concrete, Superabrasive offers the T-Bone and NATO tools.

☎ (678) 714-6840

■ [www.superabrasive.us](http://www.superabrasive.us)

## Hum-B B-3000 Surface Grinder

The Hum-B B-3000 three-head planetary machine contains a patented counter-rotating planetary drive system. Combined with advanced diamond abrasives, the drive system delivers an aggressive flat grind for removing surface material and preparing or polishing concrete and stone surfaces.

The Hum-B B-3000 is a lightweight, low-cost preparation tool designed for residential and light commercial applications. The system



incorporates three drive belts, one for each spindle. The belts normally last up to one year, but replacing the belts does not take more than 30 minutes. The machine operates smoothly with minimal control needed. Also, the Insta-Lock pad driver system makes the B-3000 quite versatile, as drivers can be changed from abrasive grinders to carbide scrapers within seconds. The B-3000 comes with a 120-volt single-speed or a 240-volt variable-speed motor.

☎ (866) 954-9700

■ [www.cdclarue.com](http://www.cdclarue.com)

## Machines from VIC



VIC International offers several options for the polishing professional.

The EdgeMaster blends edges with the center of the floor with ease. Its versatility allows it to be used on concrete countertops as well as small floor areas such as bathrooms or closets. The machine delivers a high-quality polished surface with exceptional depth and clarity. It can be used in wet or dry polishing applications.

The ConcreteMedic Multi-Surface Machine is a dependable and powerful 115-volt floor machine designed to make small jobs highly profitable. It features a rugged motor and a removable weight system. This unit can take on a 45-pound drive plate with an additional 50 pounds and still maintain low amps at a coarse grind. The 45-pound plate is a static planetary plate that allows the machine to mimic the scratch pattern of a planetary machine, so it can leave behind the polished equivalent to a much larger, heavier planetary machine.

■ [www.vicintl.com](http://www.vicintl.com)



## HTC 500

According to HTC, the folks at the Decorative Concrete Institute recommend and use the HTC 500 on many of their decorative concrete jobs and training courses.

Rugged and classic in shape, the HTC 500 is an ideal machine for prepping overlays on concrete and for decorative concrete polishing. It's more powerful than the HTC 420 but easier to handle than the HTC 650HDX. The single-phase, 220-volt machine is powered by a 7.5-horsepower engine that delivers 300 to 1,300 RPM. What's more, the machine can apply 265 pounds of grinding pressure. Finally, it is simple to use and backed by an experienced technical support team, which help make it a popular choice among decorative concrete contractors.

☎ (877) 482-8700

🌐 [www.htc-america.com](http://www.htc-america.com)



## StoneGrind 3000 and StoneEdge 1300

StoneOlogy, a new line of propane concrete grinder/polishers from Eagle Products, includes the StoneGrind 3000. This machine sports a 22-horsepower propane engine, two vacuum ports, and three 13-inch counter-rotating heads for a total grinding width of 30 inches. Because each head contains four diamonds, the operator can walk faster and get better results. StoneGrind 3000 increases production by 40 percent compared to electric machines that have similar head pressure and horsepower. Contractors can stop polishing at 800 grit and get the same results as workers who complete a polishing job at 3,000 grit.

The StoneOlogy line also includes the StoneEdge 1300 edge-

er. This machine offers a rotating left-to-right front head with the ability to cut a straight line only 1/4 inch from wall edges or obstacles. It has 165 pounds of head pressure, 300 percent more head pressure than competitive machines. Between the power of the engine, the pressure of the head and the four diamond discs, contractors can cut 300 to 400 linear feet an hour.

☎ (800) 633.0519

🌐 [www.stoneologyproducts.com](http://www.stoneologyproducts.com)



## CONTRx Polishing System

Equipment Development Co. Inc. has introduced CONTRx Polishing Systems, a new brand of polishing systems aimed at contractors who are looking to polish concrete areas of 10,000 square feet or less.

Like the EDCO brand of concrete equipment, CONTRx offers industry knowledge, reliable machines, training, and warranted products.

☎ (800) 638-3326

🌐 [www.contrxsystems.com](http://www.contrxsystems.com)



## Blastrac 5-inch Grinder-Vac

The Blastrac 5-inch Grinder-Vac is a shrouded concrete grinder system that controls dust to reduce clean-up time, provide better visibility and increase productivity. The grinder promotes a virtually dust-free work area. The Grinder-Vac's tough yet flexible polyurethane dust shroud allows hundreds of hours of use. It connects to a variety of available dust collection systems.

The Blastrac 5-inch grinder can easily be converted to a polisher with the conversion of a polishing tool.

☎ (800) 256-3440

🌐 [www.blastrac.com](http://www.blastrac.com)



## Diamond DS polisher line

Diamond Products, a Tyrolit company, has introduced a new line of floor-polishing tools and equipment.

The line includes the DS 175 7-Inch Polisher for use with



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3-inch pads, the DS 301 Planetary Hand Polisher, the DS 302 12-Inch Single-Head Walk-Behind Polisher, the DS 602 24-Inch Dual Head 2 HP Walk-Behind Polisher, and the DS 605 24-Inch Dual-Head 5 HP Walk-Behind Polisher. A selection of wet and dry resin polishing pads and cup wheels can be used to produce seven different levels of polishing activity, ranging from heavy material removal to mirror finish.

☎ (800) 321-5336

### Surface Pro Quick Change Coupling System

GranQuartz Stone and Concrete Systems has launched the Surface Pro Quick Change Coupling System, designed for concrete polishing professionals who are tired of changing out traditional diamond plates.

Surface Pro comes with only one plate, but the plate sports a unique design that allows instant interchangeability of coatings removal, grinding and polishing diamond segments without using tools. The polishing arm of the system incorporates a means to quickly attach polishing pads backed with QRS (Quick Release System) to a machine base plate. Take any of the high-quality Surface Pro metal or resin pads and stick it to the QRS backer plate, and the machine is ready to be put to work.

☎ (866) 639-0960

### I-Shine Polishing Pads

The new I-Shine Polishing Pads from Innovatech boast a new resin diamond matrix that is so good at cutting and polishing concrete, the user in many cases does not have to use metal bond diamonds.

The pads' special matrix is designed to not glaze over on hard concrete like many diamonds do. These new diamonds are on a high-strength buffing-type pad, and the diamonds are attached with a specially designed glue that keeps them on at high temperatures and fast speeds. I-Shine pads also allow the user to polish concrete three times faster than the traditional phenolic-resin method, and these pads do not leave the plastic resin burn marks on lippage that normal phenolic resins do. These diamond pads polish up, down, and over the lippage, leaving an even shine in low spots.

The pads are available in 30-grit to 3,000-grit for wet and dry polishing. They come in all sizes to fit a range of different polishing machines on the market, but last up to 18,000 square feet per set when used with Innovatech's Predator polishers. I-Shine pads stick to the Velcro on the bottom of the grinding plates. In seconds, the user can switch out all four heads on the bottom of a planetary grinder to the next grit diamond. 

☎ (800) 267-6682

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Photos courtesy of Steven Ochs



## Marketing Your Work With Photos

**Y**ou can be the best in the business, hard-working and honest, or you may even be a member of that endangered species known as the “craftsmen.” You can run around trying to convince others that you are the one for the job, and in fact, your unsolicited references may be singing your praise as well. But, in today’s world, we tend not to listen anymore. There are so many of us, we are all talking, and our words have become background noises for the stimuli that really distract us. If you want to say something today, you have to use the language that transcends culture, geography, and time. You have to use imagery.

As a professor of digital photography, I try to convince my students that, regardless of what their achievement is, they need to capture it, document it and exhibit it. If a product has quality, a good image of it will speak for itself. These images can be used in printed portfolios, Web sites, CDs, PowerPoint presentations, and proposals for corporate or civic projects.

One way to get the photos of your work out there is to send them to the manufacturers whose products you use. If the work highlights the products in a positive way, the manufacturers may wish to run these images in several different

media. Also, step-by-step photos are very important to those who conduct workshops, distribute products, and write training manuals.

When recognized experts in the field choose to publish one of your photos, you have automatically become legitimate in the eyes of your future clients. I know that sounds ridiculous, but in their minds, the publication has validated the quality of your work. “If you are good enough to be in this magazine or a book, you must be the real thing.” You immediately have their trust and confidence that the work you do for them will be as good as what they see in the publications.

How do you get published? Well, first of all, do quality work. Secondly, invest in the best digital camera you can afford and a tall, sturdy ladder. Personally, I have hung off the side of houses, off tree limbs, and out of neighboring windows to get the shots I need. Thirdly, set your camera on the highest quality. If you are using a high-end consumer camera, set it to “RAW” or “TIFF.” These settings will give you the largest file, but don’t forget to process the RAW as a TIFF before sending it, because it is very unlikely the publisher will have the appropriate conversion software on hand.



While TIFF files are uncompressed, JPEGs usually contain 1/4, 1/8, or 1/16 of the information captured. Most of your point-and-shoot cameras will only record in JPEG format. So, again, set them to the highest quality available. Remember, the file size reflects limitations on resolution and image size.

Finally, take lots of photos from several vantage points throughout different times of the day with the hope that one of them will say it all. Remember, if editors have to choose between great shots of good work and mediocre photos of great work ... well, you can figure that one out for yourself.



### Some tips for photographing decorative concrete:

1. Turn off your flash. Although the flash may travel 10 feet to 15 feet, the camera will only collect the amount of light it needs to expose the closest subject. The rest of your floor will drop off into darkness.
2. Shoot from the highest vantage point you can to see the overall work. Sometimes it is much safer to stand on a nearby building and zoom in than to use a wide-angle setting from the top of a ladder. This technique will also reduce the distorted perspective commonly seen in wide-angle photos.
3. Outdoors, use natural lighting at a time when shadows and highlights aren't distracting. The best light could be a cloudy day or a midday sun. It all depends on what shows off your work the best.
4. Indoors, you will most likely need artificial lighting. If there isn't enough ambient light available, quartz construction lights work very well. Do not point the beam at the floor. Instead, bounce it off the ceiling or a wall to diffuse the light evenly across your work.
5. Avoid shooting toward the light source. This can cause your photos to come out too dark or cause a "haze" that will diminish your details.
6. For close-up details, a soft light at a low angle works the best. So early morning or just before dusk is a great time to photograph scored or stamped textures.

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7. Experiment with the “white balance” setting on your camera. In 90 percent of all shots the “auto” white balance setting works just fine, but when using artificial lights, the colors may be inaccurate.
8. Limit the degree of photo editing you do. Every brand of photo software will allow you to crop edges and adjust brightness, contrast and color. Remember, the editors will do this too, to meet their needs and the
9. Give editors a variety of good photos to choose from. One of the most forgotten shots for the amateur photographer is the “vertical.” The layout for most journals and books is vertical, so get comfortable turning your camera on its side.

If you want to edit photos to display in your portfolio, one tool you may find helpful is the “contrast adjustment.”

Not only will it create more dynamics between the lights and darks, but it will also intensify your colors. Keep in mind that you should only use these editing tools to exhibit your work more accurately and not to embellish or falsify the truth. You will, at some point, be expected to live up to your image.

Adding your story is always an incentive to getting published. Whether it is about the technical process or the people involved, even a great photo may need a little help. If you don't feel confident about your writing skills, don't worry about it and just concentrate on telling your story. The editors will do their jobs, and in most cases, subject to deadline, they will send you a final draft for your approval.

Another thing you can do to facilitate this process is to obtain model releases for people who are present in your photos, especially if they are minors. Sample model release forms are available online and range from very legal and lengthy to incredibly simple. Personally, I would never sign a three-page model release because of the fact that I would never read it or trust it. Just a simple “pocket form” is fine for most situations. Nowadays, I include a property release statement or make it a line item on the contract so images of the work can be used for educational or promotional purposes. And when I send out photos, I send a copy of the model/property release with them. This puts my publisher at ease and makes it much easier for them to print my photos. Because of the society we live in, some of the best photos just aren't worth the liability.

Again, the goal of getting published isn't to feed an ego, but to attain the confidence of your clients — trust, credibility, and the assurance that their money will be well spent. When your photos become published, go ahead and make copies available to the client. In the past, we have actually matted, framed, and presented these to homeowners. Public acknowledgement may increase the value of their home and the value of your work at the same time. 📷

*Steven Ochs is an associate professor of art at the Department of Art and Design at Southern Arkansas University. He also serves as the artist/designer for Images in Concrete.*

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## Product Profile

# Pneumatic Chip-broadcast Hopper Gun

**T**raditionally, when decorative or specialty flooring contractors wanted to broadcast decorative vinyl color chips or colored quartz onto a horizontal or vertical surface, they preferred doing it by hand. Now, the pneumatic chip-broadcast hopper gun from Arizona Polymer Flooring Inc. is giving those hands some help.

When used in conjunction with a variable-psi air compressor, the gun will shoot vinyl chips across a 15-foot-to-20-foot span, allowing the applicator to apply color chips easily without having to step onto a wet base coat. The gun efficiently optimizes the amount of chips used and reduces chip cost per application. That's a good thing, as chip cost can be one of your biggest expenses when you are putting down this type of floor.

While the gun is being used to broadcast chips onto a vertical surface, the pressure of the compressor can be reduced to approximately 20 psi. Pressure this low will allow the chips to float easily and stick to the surface uniformly, with no bounce-back and no waste of time or material.

"The gun is designed to replace hand-broadcasting, which is inefficient in terms of both time and material costs, and it gives the applicator greater control over the distribution of the chips or quartz," says Arizona Polymer Flooring director of sales Peter Collins.

What's more, using a tool to distribute chips just plain looks more professional than chucking them by hand, he says. "It reflects a higher degree of professionalism in the eyes of the contractor's customers."

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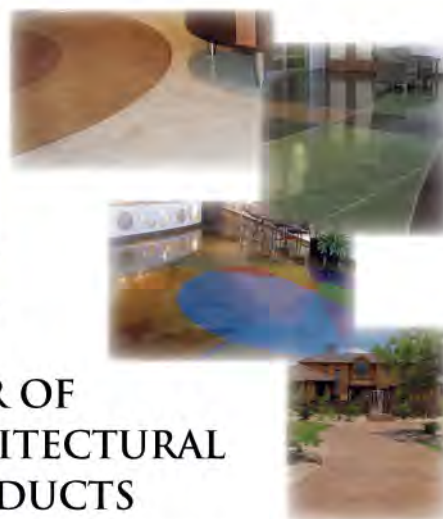
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## American Concrete Institute

### More new publications from ACI

The American Concrete Institute announces the availability of six new publications:

**117-06:** Specifications for Tolerances for Concrete Construction and Materials and Commentary — This document specifies standard tolerances for concrete construction. It is intended to be used as the reference document for establishing tolerances for concrete construction by specification writers and ACI committees.

**234R-06:** Guide for the Use of Silica Fume in Concrete — This report describes the physical and chemical properties of silica fume, how silica fume interacts with portland cement, the effects of silica fume on the properties of fresh and hardened concrete, recent typical applications of silica-fume concrete, how silica-fume concrete is proportioned, specified, and handled in the field, and areas where additional research is needed.

**360R-06:** Design of Slabs-on-Ground — The report addresses the planning, design, and detailing of slabs-on-ground, primarily industrial floors. Background information on design theories is followed by discussion of types of slabs, soil-support systems, loadings, and jointing. Design methods are given for unreinforced concrete, reinforced concrete, shrinkage-compensating concrete, post-tensioned concrete, fiber-reinforced concrete slabs-on-ground, and slabs-on-ground in refrigerated buildings, followed by information on shrinkage and curling problems.

**522R-06:** Pervious Concrete — This report provides technical information on pervious concrete, including application, design methods, materials, properties, mixture proportioning, construction methods, testing and inspection.

**523.1R-06:** Guide for Cast-in-Place Low-Density Cellular Concrete — This guide provides information on the materials, properties, design, proper handling, and applications of cast-in-place low-density cellular concretes having oven-dry densities of 50 pounds per cubic foot or less. Roof deck systems and geotechnical applications often incorporate these low-density cellular concretes.

**ITG-4.2R-06:** Materials and Quality Considerations for High-Strength Concrete in Moderate to High Seismic Applications — This document addresses materials and quality considerations when using cast-in-place, normal-weight, high-strength concrete in structures that must be designed for moderate to high seismic applications.

☎ (248) 848-3800

□ [www.concrete.org](http://www.concrete.org)

## American Society of Concrete Contractors

### Concrete CEO Forum scheduled for summer

The American Society of Concrete Contractors (ASCC) will hold its CEO Forum June 28-July 1 at The Grove Park Inn, Asheville, N.C. Participants in this industry forum include CEOs, presidents, owners, CFOs and other top manag-

ers of concrete contracting firms. It is open to ASCC members and nonmembers.

The Forum includes seminars, roundtable discussions, networking opportunities and a golf tournament. Mac Anderson, founder of Successories Inc. is the keynote speaker, while Ron Magnus, FMI Corp., will present a three-hour interactive workshop on attracting, motivating and retaining your workforce. Other seminar topics include immigration, developing an in-house training program, and succession planning. Two roundtable sessions will discuss best practices and workforce issues.

☎ (866) 788-2722

□ [www.ascconline.org](http://www.ascconline.org)

## Concrete Sawing & Drilling Association

### Alliance releases sawing and drilling safety series

The Alliance between the Concrete Sawing & Drilling Association (CSDA) and the Occupational Safety & Health Administration has released a new safety series called “CSDA/OSHA Best Practices for Sawing and Drilling Operations.” The series was developed to promote the safety of workers in the sawing and drilling industry.

The first document published, “Highway Work Zone Safety Checklist,” provides the industry with the best procedures and practices for performing sawing and drilling operations in a highway work zone to prevent accidents. Coming soon is a document covering respiratory protection from hazards associated with silica. The Alliance is also working on developing a “Motor Vehicle Safety Best Practice Seminar” for sawing and drilling professionals as well as nonindustry professionals.

☎ (727) 577-5004

□ [www.csda.org](http://www.csda.org)

### Online training for cutting operators

The Concrete Sawing & Drilling Association has announced online training and testing for concrete cutting operators. The program is available through ProTraining.com.

Safety videos for Flat Sawing, Wall Sawing, Core Drilling, Hand Sawing and Wire Sawing have been converted to online safety courses. These courses cover the five basic techniques of sawing and drilling with diamond tools.

ProTraining.com is an operating division of Leading Edge Technology Inc., a private company that provides online testing. To access these five courses on the CSDA Web site, visit the CSDA Web site and click on the “Online Training” icon.

☎ (727) 577-5004

□ [www.csda.org](http://www.csda.org)

### Rookies trained in Wall Sawing 101

The Concrete Sawing & Drilling Association (CSDA) has added a three-day course, Wall Sawing 101, to the 2007 CSDA training program. Wall Sawing 101 is offered March 20-23, 2007, at the facility of a CSDA manufacturer-member in Olathe, Kan.

Wall Sawing 101 gives operators the opportunity to ex-



pand their concrete-cutting knowledge and skills to become experts in the setup, operation, troubleshooting and preventive maintenance of wall saws, as well as in hand-sawing, ring-sawing and chain-sawing. In particular, this three-day course aims to give newly hired operators the training to work wall saws and handsaws. The course covers blade and diamond chain selection, how diamonds work with each piece of equipment, and safe work practices, as well as offering classroom and hands-on training on proper set-up, operation and preventive maintenance.

CSDA now offers hands-on, entry-level training in four of the five cutting disciplines: flat sawing, core drilling, hand sawing and wall sawing. More 101 courses are in development, including Wire Sawing 101. For information on what courses are available in 2007, visit [www.csd.org](http://www.csd.org) and click on "Training."

☎ (727) 577-5004

🌐 [www.csd.org](http://www.csd.org)

## National Association of Home Builders

### Program teaches Spanish with building industry in mind

A new educational resource from Home Builders Institute, the workforce development arm of the National Association of Home Builders, will help residential contractors improve their communications with Spanish-speaking workers.

Sed de Saber - Home Builders Edition is being developed in partnership with Retention Education LLC as an English as a Second Language (ESL) learning tool for the residential construction industry. It includes seven self-paced, interactive books that use Leap Frog Enterprise Inc. technology to teach 500 vocabulary words and more than 340 phrases commonly used in home building. The program takes about 16 weeks to complete and includes an assessment tool to gauge progress at set intervals. Each kit is reusable and can be shared among workers and their families and friends. A team of experts from the home building industry is being consulted to ensure that the material is accurate and relevant for the job site.

The program also teaches language skills to facilitate such everyday activities as parent-teacher conferences, visiting the doctor and finding addresses.

🌐 [www.hbi.org](http://www.hbi.org)

## Portland Cement Association

### Hogle named PAC overseer

The Portland Cement Association has named Jessica C. Hogle director of legislative affairs. She will oversee PCA's political action committee, PCA PAC, as well as represent the cement industry in a variety of Capitol Hill activities.

Hogle brings a strong reputation in Congressional fundraising and consulting for a variety of Congressional and national candidates.

🌐 [www.cement.org](http://www.cement.org)

## RMC Research Foundation

### Truck driver manual offered in Spanish

The RMC Research Foundation announced the release of the Spanish Edition of the Truck Mixer Driver's Manual: Manual del Conductor de Mixer. This new version of one of the most popular educational publications offered by the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association (NRMCA) will help teach Spanish-speaking drivers in their native language.

The RMC Research Foundation's board of trustees funded this project to help educate drivers who are new to the industry. These workers are increasingly coming from the Spanish-speaking community, claims the Foundation. "Given the projected shortage of drivers our overall business faces, we wanted to act now to help support the industry with this excellent educational tool that may help in further promoting us as 'an industry of choice,'" stated Foundation chairman Dominique Calabrese in a press release.

A project to translate NRMCA's Concrete Delivery Professional (CDP) Program modules is currently underway, and the results will be released later in 2007. 🚚

🌐 [www.nrmca.org](http://www.nrmca.org)

🌐 [www.rmc-foundation.org](http://www.rmc-foundation.org)



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# Product News



## Stow mixes it up

Contractors can mix a wide selection of materials with Stow Construction Equipment's new Collomix line.

The line of 10 versatile mixing systems makes quick work of everything from grout, concrete and mortar to paint, epoxy, dyes, and more, all in less than 90 seconds. Mixes are completed with even color distribution and no material clumps.

Six in the line are hand-held mixers that are ergonomically designed to incorporate the natural position of the hands and arms, enabling the operator to maintain upright body posture

throughout. These single- and dual-speed models combine durable gear systems and a practical design for premium productivity. They're offered in single- and dual-shaft configurations and ideal for stiff mixes.

Collomix's four versatile mixing stations are for those who prefer a more rigid unit. These hand-guided models are held in place by a portable stand, but can be moved in all directions to reach every corner of a mixing container. The stand is roller-mounted, has a five-point standing base for stability, a wide working surface to hold the bucket, and can be easily folded for transportation.

Each unit incorporates forced-action



mixing technology for effective mixing from the bottom, top, or parallel. The systems come with 2-cubic-foot to 3-cubic-foot bucket capacities and a host of accessories.

☎ (877) 289-7869

🌐 [www.stowmfg.com](http://www.stowmfg.com)

## Cheng launches improved countertop product line

Designer and author Fu-Tung Cheng's company, Cheng Concrete Exchange (a division of Cheng Design Products Inc.), has partnered with Canada-based Interstar Corp., a manufacturer of concrete pigments, admixtures and fibers, to expand and improve the



performance of the CHENG Concrete Countertop Products line.

The improved, re-branded CHENG Concrete Countertop line provides the industry's first comprehensive, high-performance line of concrete countertop products that will yield consistent, professional results. A few of the marquee products in this line include: CHENG Pro-Formula Mix, CHENG Slurry, CHENG Sealer, CHENG Wax, and CHENG Polish.

CHENG Pro-Formula Mix is designed for precast concrete countertops. This formulation combines rich color, strength and workability into an all-in-one concrete countertop mix. Pro-Formula Mix is radically improved with premium-quality pigments that deliver vibrant, stable, long-lasting color. It's manufactured with special admixture modifiers that ensure stronger, smoother countertop surfaces, and it's reformulated with water requirements that increase ease of use and yield more consistent results. It's available either with new designer colors or in a nonpigmented CHENG Pro-Formula Base.

CHENG Pro-Formula Slurry backfills voids on a countertop that appear after grinding it or releasing it from a mold. It comes in the Pro-Formula palette of colors for a seamless, monochromatic look, or in contrasting colors that create a veined effect.

The long-awaited high-performance CHENG Sealer provides a streak-free finish that maintains the natural luster of concrete through a proprietary formula. CHENG Sealer offers a nontoxic, non-yellowing, water-based formula, plus exceptional adhesion and durability.

CHENG Wax has been specially blended for use on concrete countertops. The water-based food-safe product is made from Brazilian yellow carnauba, which helps prevent stains by forming a nonabrasive, durable protective layer.

The spray-and-wipe CHENG Polish forms an additional protective layer on concrete countertops, helping to prevent stains on the concrete surface. It comes in a spray-on bottle.

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Reader Service 09

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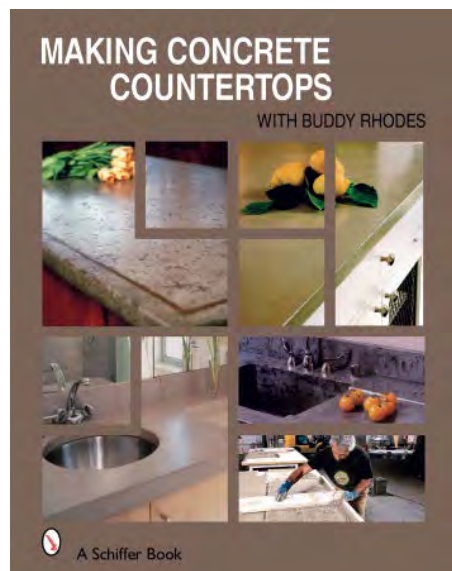
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## Buddy Rhodes debuts book, mix



Concrete countertop pioneer Buddy Rhodes has produced a step-by-step book, "Making Concrete Countertops With Buddy Rhodes," that reveals his time-tested techniques in precise detail.

In this book, Rhodes shares skills and experience from more than 30 years of experience in concrete art and fab-

rication. More importantly, he shares the process he pioneered for creating the natural, stone-like pressed surface countertops that have become his hallmark. He also details techniques for hand-troweled and polished countertop surfaces.

Color photographs and descriptive text trace every step in the multi-part processes, including exactly how Buddy produces his signature veined finish, once a tightly held trade secret. This manual will also guide craftspeople through each step of creating a cast concrete countertop, from the careful process of measuring for a template, through building a mold, to casting and installation. A gallery of more than 60 color images explores actual kitchens and baths featuring Rhodes' handcrafted countertops.

Rhodes has also launched a product line of artisan concrete countertop products. Buddy Rhodes Concrete Mix can be used to create one-of-a-kind countertops, fireplaces, furniture, and other products. Rhodes' concrete mix is a clay-like material that can be tinted, mold-

ed, and even formed vertically to create fresh, new possibilities.

■ [www.buddyrhodes.com](http://www.buddyrhodes.com)

## New from Newlook

Newlook International Inc. has released four new products: Newlook Concrete Sealer, Newlook Eco Acid, Newlook Concrete Degreaser, and Newlook Concrete Cleaner.

The new products help round out Newlook's current product line of water-based, nonacrylic concrete stains. Each product can help end users prepare concrete for the application of Newlook Concrete Color Stains or any other penetrating stain. They will also assist in cleaning and protecting previously stained concrete.

Newlook Concrete Sealer is a penetrating, water-based sealer that is brushed onto concrete surfaces for lasting protection. The abrasion-resistant, penetrating sealer gives concrete a breathable matte finish.

Newlook Eco Acid is a concrete preparation solution. This alternative to muriatic acid is a noncorrosive etching or profiling solution that helps contractors prepare a hard-troweled or polished surface for applying penetrating stains.

Newlook Concrete Degreaser is a heavy-duty concrete degreaser. It will help contractors remove any oil, dirt, glue, or other foreign substances that would prevent color stains from penetrating.

Newlook Concrete Cleaner can be diluted to provide a multipurpose, economical cleaner that removes grease, oil, dirt, food or soot from various surfaces. Less heavy-duty than the Degreaser, it can be safely used on anything from stained concrete to laundry.

Also, Newlook's Web site has been upgraded. The new version includes a Downloads and Videos section, business development documents to assist contractors in promoting Newlook Concrete Color Stains, a photo gallery, a FAQ section and a color chart section.

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## Designed for dust



The newly redesigned DS2 Powerhouse Series vacuums from Ruwac are suited for continuous dust extraction. Ideal for any industry dealing with fine, dry problematic materials like powder and dust, the Powerhouse Series is powerful enough to be used in central vacuum systems while remaining portable. It features a newly redesigned, maintenance-free filtration system.

Powerhouse Series vacuums can perform all day, extracting fine materials such as concrete, plaster, and soot without loss of performance. The DS2 Powerhouse Series features Ruwac's latest innovation: a maintenance-free filtration system with an improved dirt release function. Equipped with an oversized, pleated MicroClean filter, the Powerhouse Series is 99.9 percent efficient at 0.5 microns, removing fine dust from work environments. The vacuums range from 265 CFM to 506 CFM, and each includes an extra-large drop-down dustpan. All vacuums are HEPA-ready.

☎ (413) 532-4030

■ [www.ruwac.com](http://www.ruwac.com)

## Tips from Binks

The new Binks 114-Series Premium Air Assisted Airless Tips are designed for superior spray pattern uniformity

that delivers consistent coverage. They also provide new levels of quality when spraying stain, toner, lacquer and topcoat applications. These tips offer three times the fan pattern uniformity of competitive air-assisted airless guns when measuring the variation of spray uniformity throughout the spray pattern.

The new 114-Series Tips can be used with the Binks AA-1500, AA-4000 and MAG AA Automatic Spray Guns. The Binks AA-1500 and AA-4000 spray guns

also feature new AA-10 air caps that improve coverage when spraying primers and urethane topcoats. The design offers better balance between atomizing air and fan air, which improves atomization quality. These new air caps also reduce buildup of acid-catalyzed coatings and improve fan pattern adjustment for hard-to-reach or recessed areas.

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### MAPEI launches Easy

MAPEI has introduced Ultraplan Easy, a fast-setting, self-leveling underlayment.

Surface preparation is now as easy as "clean, prime, and pour."

Ultraplan Easy is intended to reduce the need for mechanical surface profiling of concrete before floor coverings are installed, significantly reducing cost savings per square foot of installation. Developed with MAPEI's "green innovation," Ultraplan Easy is LEED-compliant and helps to contribute valuable points toward LEED-certified projects.

MAPEI provides a total solution for surface preparation with Mapecem Quickpatch and Mapeprime 1K. When contractors apply Ultraplan Easy with Mapeprime 1K primer, their projects are eligible for MAPEI's 10-year project warranty. Other MAPEI primers are also available for use with Ultraplan Easy when leveling specific substrates.

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MultiQuip's three new MTX-Series rammers aim to take the tough work, the fatigue, and the strain out of compaction.

The MTX-70, MTX-80 and MTX-90 gasoline-powered models deliver up to 3,500 pounds of impact force for effective compaction of cohesive and mixed soils. Each rammer excels in trench work, around retaining walls, when solidifying bases for concrete slabs and footings, and in confined areas. Each model also incorporates an antivibration system.

The MTX-70 delivers 2,900 pounds of impact force on 645 to 695 blows a minute, and it is fueled by a 3-horsepower Honda GX100 engine. The MTX-80 generates 3,150 pounds of centrifugal force and is driven by a 3.5-horsepower Robin EH-12-2D engine. The MTX-90 generates 3,500 pounds of impact force on 660 to 700 blows per minute and is also powered by a Robin EH-12-2D engine.

All three MTX Series rammers feature recoil start, travel speeds of up to 36 feet per minute, and diaphragm carburetors that allow operators to transport the unit without flooding the engine.

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### New former for Grasscrete

The Bomanite Corp. has released details about a Molded Pulp Former for the production of Grasscrete, a pervious concrete product.

Based on the original European single-use ABS plastic product, this new version of the tool combines the benefits of increased production while eliminating the issue of melting the ABS to create the required voids.

The original "ABS Former" is made from thin-walled, vacuum-formed ABS plastic. The new "Molded Pulp Former" is made from recycled newsprint and various other clean paper byproducts such as post-industrial roll ends and post-consumer circulated print.

The ABS Former is cast into the concrete as part of the pouring process. Once the concrete has adequately cured, the ABS Former tops are burned with torches to open the voids. The Molded Pulp Former uses only simple starch as a binder, which is easily broken down with pressurized water to open the voids.

The ABS Former requires bridg-

ing or scaffolding, as it cannot bear the weight of workmen. The Molded Pulp Former can bear even the weight of wheeled concrete.

Grasscrete is a void-structured cast-in-place concrete product that is continuously reinforced to form the most robust grass concealed or decorative permeable product on the market. Pervious concrete products such as Grasscrete improve the environment through wastewater management, minimization of heat island effect and various other detrimental issues associated with non-porous paving surfaces.

■ [www.bomanite.com/grasscrete](http://www.bomanite.com/grasscrete)

### Fast Fomo foam

Fomo Products Inc. has developed Handy-Stick, a durable, pressurized polyurethane foam construction adhesive that is compatible with all polystyrene substrates.

The fast-curing foam adhesive is free from VOCs and solvents. It is packaged in pressurized cans, one of which offers a yield equivalent to 30 standard tubes of caulk-type adhesives. When

dispensed, Handy-Stick delivers more than 1,000 lineal feet of adhesive bead without changing cans, and the fast open-time profile ensures that users spend less time waiting for sufficient bond strength to develop. The professional dispensing gun also provides maximum control of the applied adhesive. Handy-Stick's airtight seal meets the American Air Barrier Association's (AABA) standards for air barrier construction materials. It can function in multiple climates because, as a polyurethane adhesive, its durability is not affected by harsh environmental conditions.

Fomo developed the Handy-Stick Polystyrene Construction line with its extremely quick working time specifically for the ICF construction and architectural foam shape markets. Handy-Stick Subfloor claims an open time of 20 minutes and Handy-Stick General Use has an open time of 5 minutes.

☎ (800) 321-5585

■ [www.fomo.com](http://www.fomo.com)

### A vacuum designed for concrete site cleanup

As the industry's first vacuum to use plastic poly filter bags, the CS 1500 wet/dry vacuum from CS Unitec Inc. is ideal for concrete and masonry dust and debris cleanup.





The heavy-duty plastic poly filter bag holds up to 10 gallons, more than 20 times the amount of concrete dust collected by paper filter bags, and allows for simple, safe disposal of this waste. The CS 1500's patented air guide feature maintains equal vacuum pressure inside and outside the bag to make it possible to use the plastic poly filter bags.

The 24- by 18- by 24-inch vacuum has a 13-gallon canister volume and a 25-foot cord that enables the operator to move freely around the work area. For general debris cleanup with a vacuum wand, it can be used with or without a paper filter bag. It also features a water detection sensor with automatic switch-off when the maximum filling level in the tank is reached. The vacuum can even be used with a porous slurry filter bag to capture the heavy concrete slurry from drilling or sawing wet concrete. The grit and concrete debris are collected while water passes easily through the special bag into the tank, allowing easy disposal of the captured slurry.

To maintain maximum air flow and suction power, the CS 1500's electro-magnetic pulse filter-cleaning system automatically shakes dust from the dual-filter system. Two parallel-mounted polyester filters capture 99.93 percent of all particles 0.3 microns and larger. Optional HEPA filters will capture 99.9977 percent of all particles 0.3 microns and larger.

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## Underlayment gets clients back on their floor

USG's Specialty Products Division has added Levelrock brand Quik-Top Floor Underlayment to its family of Levelrock poured gypsum-concrete underlayments. This new self-leveling product dries within 15 hours, minimizing downtime during flooring installations.

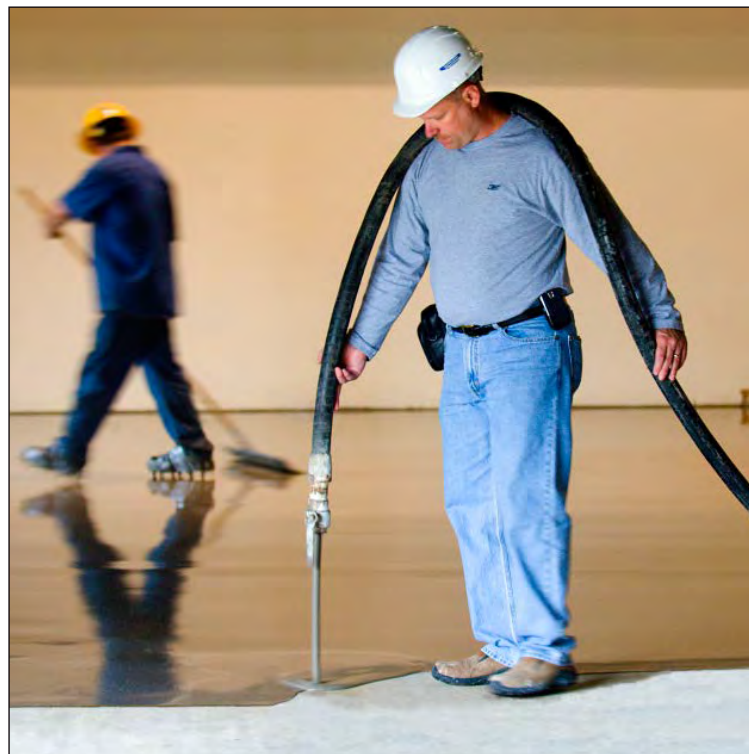
Levelrock Quik-Top is ideal for repairing damaged or uneven flooring or for topping rough or spalled concrete. It can be applied over cement or gypsum concrete subfloors, creating a monolithic, high-strength (5,000 to 6,000 psi) surface that accepts a variety of floor coverings, including carpeting, ceramic tile, wood laminate, hardwood and vinyl. The underlayment can also function as an attractive decorative finished floor when used with an approved Valspar coating system.

Conventional poured concrete requires 20 days or more, while other gypsum-concrete underlayments need five to six days to dry. This product's quicker drying time and high production rates

allow for continued trade traffic within hours of installation. The fast drying time limits the potential for mold and mildew formation by covering the surface too early, and because the product formulation has less water than competing products, it introduces less moisture into the structure. Quik-Top also offers an extremely strong, economical, high-performance surface that won't flake or powder.

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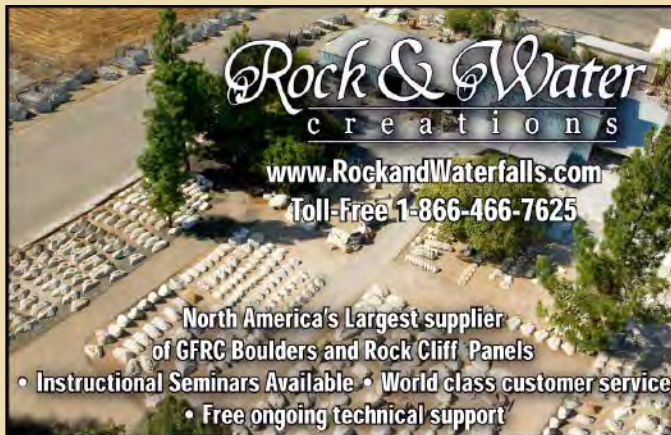
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Photos courtesy of Mesolini Glass Studio

## Island of glass

Mesolini Glass Studio, started in 1977 by Gregg Mesmer and Diane Bonciolini, is located on Bainbridge Island, Wash. The couple is known for their various works in glass art, from glass dishware to walking surfaces in concrete. Through commissions, grants and donations, Bonciolini and Mesmer have been able to share their talents, providing many workshops and project opportunities for local students. And much of their public artwork involves the help of young people, creating glass art for schools and communities in the Northwest.


The mural shown here is no different. In 2005, Mesolini Glass Studio was commissioned by the Rotary Club of Bainbridge Island to create a concrete-and-glass mosaic map of the island to be placed at the new Rotary Gateway Park. This 312-square-foot map was constructed, paver by paver, outside their studio. They fabricated 78 pavers, each 2 feet by 2 feet by 2 inches, from concrete and more than 30,000 pieces of recycled glass.

Each tile was made individually using concrete that was a mixture of cement, sand, pea gravel, acrylic additive and

color. Zinc meant for terrazzo floors was used as an outline to delineate the shape of the island. The zinc was bent to the necessary shape and was placed in a mold with freshly poured concrete.

The icons were placed next. Under Bonciolini's direction, art students at Sakai Intermediate School had created collaged glass images of trees, buildings, hikers and other people, places and things significant to the island. These images were fused in a kiln at the Studio, sandblasted to give them a less slippery walking surface and treated with a glass epoxy to bring the glass back to a matte sheen. Finished images were then placed onto an illustration of the island.

Then, finally, came the recycled glass, following the illustration carefully so the pavers would match up with each other at installation. Pavers were made one at a time, left to set up in their molds and then removed the next day.

Bainbridge Island Rotary Club funded this piece as a gift to Bainbridge Island residents celebrating Rotary's 100th year on the Island. 



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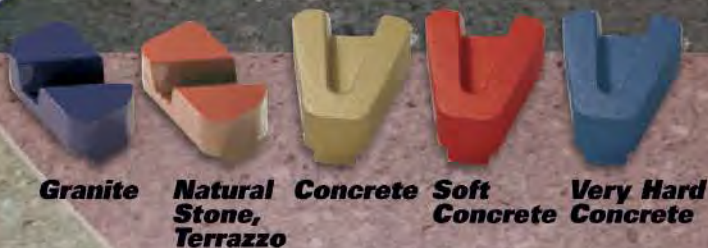
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