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Publisher's Letter



Dear Readers,

I am of the opinion that almost nothing of significant value comes for free. Each Sunday morning, however, sitting in that wooden pew, half-way back on the right side at church, the pastor's words remind me that there is one exception.

With each passing week, I find myself humbled but increasingly grateful for the blessings I have.

One of those blessings, you may be interested to know, is the sincere pleasure I have in knowing you. Every opportunity I have for getting together with members of this trade allows me to gain a better sense of who you are and who I'm talking to in these pages. The recent World of Concrete show was one such opportunity. Not only did I get the chance to see many good friends, I also had the good fortune to make several new ones.

Starting my journey home from Las Vegas the Saturday morning after, on my 18-hour drive back to Oregon through the desert and over snow-covered mountains, I had some much-needed time to reflect on my week. A common theme that ran through most of my thoughts was the faces of people I met. In particular, it was the expressions of enthusiasm that I saw on so many of you. Now you know why this trade is so contagious!

Decorative concrete continues to gain interest. I've seen this interest grow steadily with every passing season. In you I see an excitement to learn, to create, and most importantly, a desire to connect with others. These attributes not only fuel my enthusiasm for publishing, it's the stuff that I'm confident will lead your business and this trade to increasing measures of success, and most assuredly, to lands far and wide.

We're all aware of the fact that hard work comes along for the ride. Not always do things go right. Neither is it easy to fix errors that might ultimately pull hard-earned dollars out of our pockets. At those moments, when the excitement fades and work gets the better of us, that's when perseverance and yes, a degree of humility are critical.

If others don't understand our struggles, how can they ever appreciate the full measure of our creations? Today, other industries are going as far as to create new associations to address the impact that decorative concrete has on their respective businesses. If there were ever a time we needed to polish our shoes and straighten our ties, it's now.

Enjoy.

Bent Mikkelsen, Publisher

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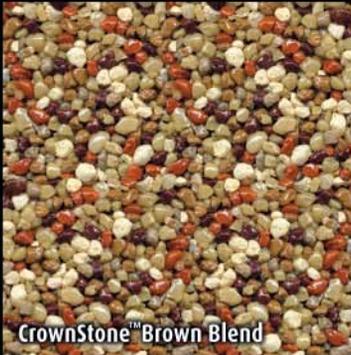
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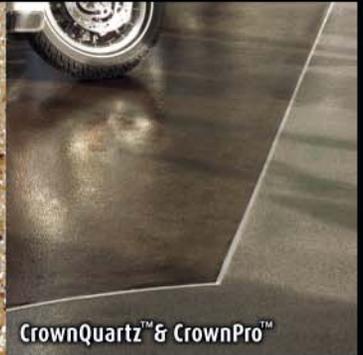
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by Christina Camara

On the Cover: Concrete is taken to new heights in this elevated two-story treehouse. Read more about this decorative concrete hideaway on page 32.

Photo courtesy of Arro Design

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picture courtesy of: Total Polish Solutions

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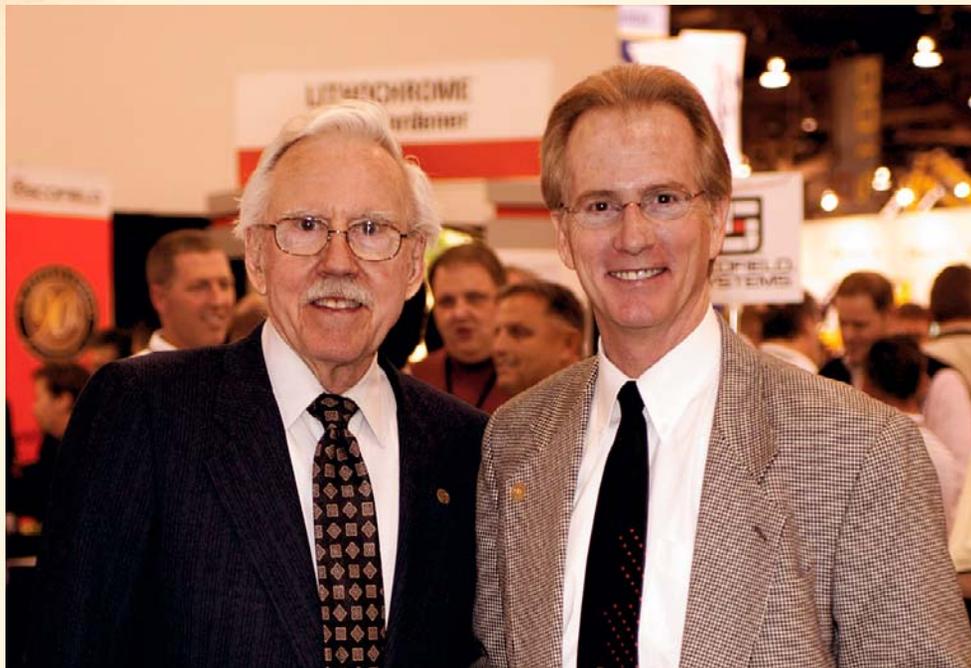
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Industry News



Dave Arnold (left) and his son, L.M. Scofield's current CEO and chairman Phil Arnold.

David R. Arnold of L.M. Scofield Co. passed away Dec. 18, 2007, at the age of 84. The former chairman of L.M. Scofield, Arnold was the driving force behind Scofield's growth for almost four decades, according to a statement released by the company. "Far beyond Scofield, his pioneering vision and leadership helped define and create the architectural and decorative concrete industry of today," it said.

Dave Arnold received his B.S. in Engineering from the California Institute of Technology at age 19 and served as one of the youngest commissioned officers in the Navy. He started a career as a professional engineer and worked as a manager of engineering and construction services for Signal Oil Co. In 1962, the Arnold family acquired Scofield, and Dave became the company's general manager.

Arnold created "engineered systems" of compatible families of products that were formulated to

enhance the strength and durability of concrete while achieving consistent performance and appearance. He also promoted the advantages of integrally colored concrete for all kinds of horizontal and vertical construction projects. He developed comprehensive Tech-Data Bulletins for Scofield products, and they became the basis for the development of industry standards, including the Construction Specifications Institute Spec-Data program.

On behalf of the decorative concrete community, Concrete Decor magazine and its staff offer our deepest condolences and warm wishes to the Arnold family. David Arnold's presence will be missed, but his legacy endures.

The Arnold family has designated the Braille Institute of America as the recipient of donations made to the David R. Arnold Memorial Fund.

 www.brailleinstitute.org

FMI report predicts growth in 2008

The 2008 U.S. Construction Overview, published annually by FMI, forecasts a 5.8 percent growth in put-in-place construction for 2008, after a decline of 3.7 percent in 2007. Construction put in place in 2008 will be worth \$1.21 trillion, it predicts.

The Overview offers a comprehensive report on vital construction trends. It forecasts growth or decline in each market segment and geographic region, noting both short-term and long-term considerations. The 2008 edition also covers several standout trends in the construction industry: green building, employee ownership, productivity improvement, and the existence of a large Hispanic work force.

www.fminet.com

Concrete polishing accreditation program boasts independence

The Concrete Polishing and Processing Technical Institute, located in Stevensville, Md., has announced what it calls the industry's first unbiased accreditation program. Available accreditations are Tradesman, Craftsman, Master Craftsman and Master Craftsman 50.

The Institute has been developed for the education and accreditation of contractors, as well as the promotion of mechanically processed ground, honed and polished concrete. It will also help define how concrete processing contributes to LEED certification. The Institute's board of directors is rooted in the craft of stone restoration. They work directly with clients as contractors.

[\(410\) 626-7471](tel:+14106267471)

www.cptinstitute.org

CWS certification program debuts

Concrete Washout Systems Inc. has announced the creation of the CWSP Certification Program for licensed CWS operators.

Key components of the CWSP Certification Program include



John Anderson (left) is Ideal Work's new international sales manager.

A new international sales manager at Ideal Work

John Anderson has joined Ideal Work, a leading European manufacturer of decorative concrete products, as international sales manager to help develop the company's export business.

Luca Seminati, managing director of Ideal Work, and Anderson developed their relationship with the help of

Brickform. Anderson worked as Brickform West Coast Regional Manager for two years. Ideal Work is the exclusive partner for Brickform in Europe and the Middle East.

[+39-0423-748430 \(Italy\)](tel:+390423748430)

www.idealwork.it

operational training on-site and at CWS headquarters in northern California, plus environmental regulation education and construction-site operator information. The Concrete Washout System is licensed to independently owned and operated CWS partners.

[\(916\) 607-0005](tel:+19166070005)

www.concretewashout.com

Resurfacing company calls for distributors

Surfacing Technology, a manufacturer of concrete resurfacing and restoration products, is seeking distributors.

For anyone wishing to start a business or add profit margin to an

already existing business, Surfacing Technology offers regular improvements in its product line, training, knowledge assistance, field-based technical support, marketing tools, competitive pricing, and national advertising and promotion.

[\(888\) 654-7866](tel:+18886547866)

www.surfacingtechnology.com

CCI advanced mixes and sealers class returns

The Concrete Countertop Institute has scheduled three 2008 sessions of its "Mixes & Sealers 301" class: Feb. 20-22, March 26-28 and July 23-25.

Offered at the CCI training facility in Raleigh, N.C., this advanced class is designed for experienced concrete



countertop makers who are having technical difficulties with mixes and sealers. Jeff Girard, P.E., president of The Concrete Countertop Institute, will serve as instructor. The class has been lengthened from two days to three days to allow more classroom and hands-on time.

The two-day "Advanced Sinks & Molds 202" is offered immediately preceding "Mixes & Sealers 301," and

has itself been expanded to include more mold-making techniques with materials such as rubber, foam and fiberglass, plus more mold shapes such as vessel sinks and ramp sinks. Immediately following "Mixes & Sealers 301," the one-day class "Fiber Optics in Concrete Countertops" is available.

These advanced classes are open only to concrete countertop professionals who have been making

concrete countertops as a business for paying customers for at least one year.

☎ (888) 386-7711

🌐 www.ConcreteCountertopInstitute.com

News from ASTM

The ASTM plans a symposium on "New Developments in Test Methods for Self-Consolidating Concrete," to be held Sunday, June 22, 2008, at the Hyatt Regency Denver, Denver, Colo. The objectives of the symposium are to provide a forum on the use of test methods and consider the application of new methods to qualify self-consolidating concrete mixtures.

Also, all interested parties are invited to join in the activities of Subcommittee C09.49 on Pervious Concrete as it develops its first proposed standard, WK16885, Test Method for Density and Void Content of Pervious Concrete. WK16885 will be used to verify that fresh pervious concrete represents a producer's mix design for a given project. Engineers, test laboratories and producers investigating mixture proportions will also use the proposed standard.

A proposed standard being developed by ASTM International Committee C09 on Concrete and Concrete Aggregates will monitor clogging and long-term permeability of pervious pavements, as well as determine if early sealing of the pavement has occurred during construction. This proposed standard, WK17606, Test Method for Permeability of Pervious Concrete Pavements, is under the jurisdiction of Subcommittee C09.49 on Pervious Concrete.

Finally, a recently approved revision to ASTM International standard C150, Specification for Portland Cement, includes three technical changes to the document. The changes are part of a joint effort between ASTM and the American Association of State and Highway and Transportation Officials to harmonize C150 with AASHTO's standard, M 85, Specification for Portland Cement.

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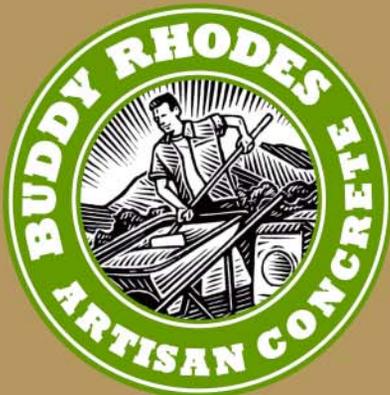
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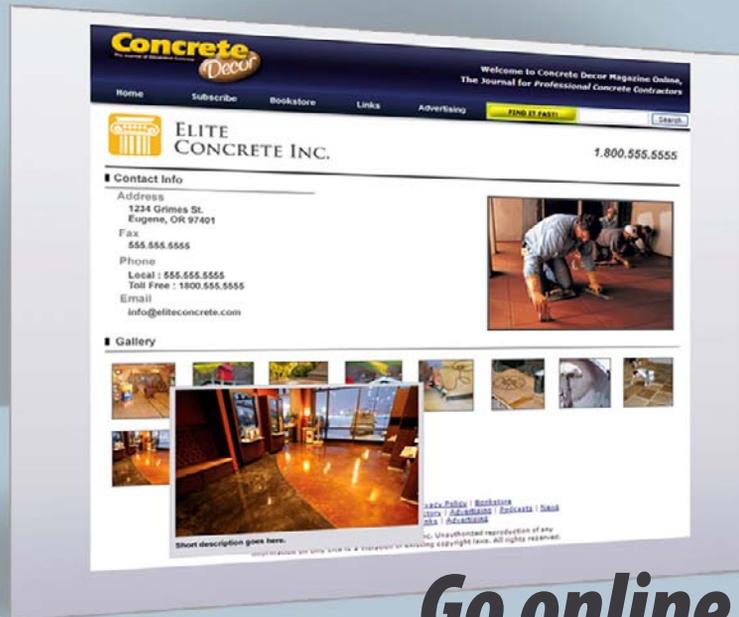


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gain immediate access to the online Registration Page. Enter your contact information and attach your company logo, a picture of yourself or staff, and up to 20 project images. We make it easy for prospective customers to find you, as the images are also added to *Concrete Decor's* new online Photo Gallery that highlights the best in decorative concrete. All images in our Gallery are linked to the respective contractors' Business Cards.

Important notice: To ensure that the images you upload to *Concrete Decor* magazine's Web site are protected, we encourage you to watermark your images. Call us if you need assistance.

If you want to use this free service but don't currently have a subscription to *Concrete Decor*, please call us at (877) 935-8906. We look forward to hearing from you soon.



Special notice: This service is designed for contractors only. Inappropriate use of this online service will result in immediate termination of these services.

Lafarge invests in Illinois factory

Lafarge has launched a project to modernize its Joppa, Ill., cement plant. When the \$415 million project is completed in 2010, the plant will be able to annually produce 2 million tons of cement.

The construction effort is part of the company's major emphasis on cost reductions. The changes will enhance the plant's environmental performance significantly in terms of alternative fuel use and emission control. The modernization includes a new kiln that will use up-to-date processes and allow Lafarge to maintain highly competitive positions in terms of safety, product quality and production costs.

Jean-Marc Lechêne, president of cement in North America, said in a news release that this investment will reduce Lafarge's need to import cement to meet demand.

www.lafarge-na.com

ProSpec educates

ProSpec has registered with the American Institute of Architects as a Continuing Education Systems provider for architects and construction specifiers.

The program, titled "Cement-based Flooring Systems - New and Rehabilitation," covers a range of floor resurfacers, including toppings, underlayments, skim-coats and screeds. The program explains why floor resurfacers are used and when to use them. It also offers instruction on how to use resurfacers, including proper surface preparation and installation methods.

[\(800\) 738-1621](tel:8007381621)

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ProSpec expands

ProSpec has expanded its presence in the western United States with the addition of increased manufacturing capacity and several new territory managers.

Recent additions to ProSpec sales and manufacturing facilities mean extra coverage in the Northwest, Southwest, Midwest, California, Texas and Oklahoma regions. Several new

distributors have also been established in these regions for increased availability of ProSpec products.

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CIM names interim director

The Concrete Industry Management program, a business-intensive program that awards students with a four-year Bachelor of Science degree, has named David L. Vickers as the interim executive director of the CIM National Steering Committee.

Vickers, an advisor to the cement and concrete industry, replaces Earl Keese, the first executive director of the committee.

As executive director, Vickers will work closely with the long-term planning and executive committees in quantifying the National Steering Committee's long-term needs for executive leadership.

[\(410\) 850-7000](tel:4108507000)

www.concretedegree.com



L&M names marketing director

Peter Wagner is the new director of marketing and sales support for L&M Construction Chemicals.

Wagner's focus will be on L&M's Performance Flooring Systems, which include the FGS PermaShine Polished Concrete System along with L&M's Vivid Dyes, dry-shake toppings and joint fillers.

Besides his marketing responsibilities, Wagner will research and test new products and help train L&M's North American Certified Applicator Network. His key focus for 2008 is to promote color applications and sustainability education for polished concrete to contractors, architects, designers and owners.

[\(800\) 362-3331](tel:8003623331)

www.lmcc.com



ProBuild names supply chain VP

ProBuild Holdings Inc., a leading professional building materials supplier,



appointed Paul J. Dodge to the newly created position of senior vice president of supply chain.

Dodge will report to Bill Myrick, president of strategic initiatives for ProBuild. Dodge joins ProBuild from Centex Homes, where he served for nine years, most recently as senior vice president of purchasing and supply management.

www.probuild.com

Branum moves to Scofield

Clark Branum has accepted a position with L. M. Scofield Co. as Western Division Manager — Training and Technical Support.

Branum has more than 26 years' experience in the concrete industry. He spent the last five years as the director of technical services for Brickform, where he was responsible for developing and conducting their contractor and distributor training programs and demonstrations, including those in the international markets. He was also involved in new products, development of technical specifications and technical support. Currently on the Board of Directors for the American Society of Concrete Contractor's Decorative Concrete Council, Branum helps in developing position statements. He also currently serves on two ACI committees, 601-D New Certification for Decorative Concrete Finishers and C-310 Design & Construction Practices: Decorative Concrete.

[\(323\) 720-3000](tel:3237203000)

www.scofield.com





Cheng Concrete Awards announced at World of Concrete 2008

Cheng Concrete announced the winners of its fourth annual Members' Circle of Distinction Design Challenge at the 2008 World of Concrete show in Las Vegas last January. More than 100 entries were received for the contest from 25 states as well as Canada, Mexico, and England.

This year's competition featured eight categories — Best of Show, Best Kitchen, Best Bath, Best Integral Sink, Best Decorative Finish, Best Functional Feature, Best 3-D and a new category, Best Fireplace. The Best Fireplace category was added while judging was taking place because of the number of fireplace entries submitted for the 3-D category. More importantly, the judges thought the entries were of such high quality and good design work that they warranted their own category. Sixteen Merit Awards were also given to the runners-up.

The contest was open exclusively to members of Cheng Concrete Exchange, an online resource for designers, homeowners, contractors and do-it-yourselfers interested in training,

products, creative ideas and business opportunities in concrete design.

When asked about design trends or recurring themes in the project entries, Fu-Tung Cheng notes that many of this year's entries used a complete palette of materials rather than concrete as a stand-alone material, demonstrating what he called a more sophisticated approach to designing with concrete. "In several projects, the peripherals were as important as the concrete itself, as in the case of a steel superstructure holding up a water feature or the fusion of a sculptural brushed stainless steel countertop integrated into a concrete countertop island."

Cheng says the Best of Show winning project, submitted by Chris Jarman of Concrete Connexion in Silver Spring, Md., was an eye-opener.

"The surprise for me was the Best of Show project, which was not a countertop, but instead a fireplace project," he says. "During the judging process, the jury and I found that the more we looked at the project, the more

we discovered a sense of classic elegance and simplicity. The line work, ceramic tile and natural stone inlays were perfectly balanced."

Cheng also says that he saw a high level of technical proficiency in many of the projects. "Entrants were pushing the parameters of what they could do with concrete and technology, using fiber optics, intricate color blending and large cantilevers. Overall, it was a privilege to see such high levels of work coming from our members."

At the awards ceremony, held at the Concrete Decor magazine booth, Cheng started the show by presenting a digital slide show of the entries. The event drew a crowd, and many winners came from across the country to collect their awards in person.

Project entries were judged on the basis of overall design, surface interest, and the inclusion of innovative edges, details, knockouts, and well-crafted and functional accessories, such as trivets, cutting boards or drain boards.

www.concreteexchange.com

www.chengdesign.com





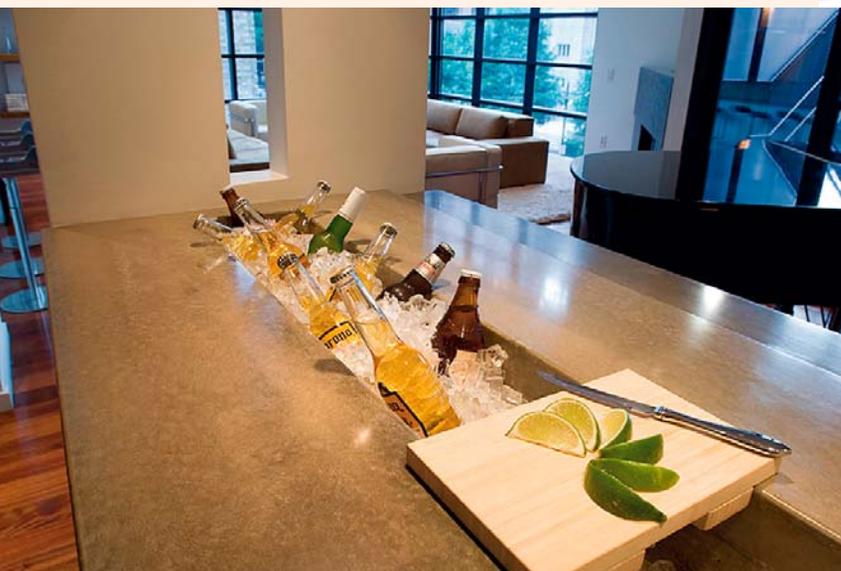
Best Kitchen

DC Custom Concrete
San Diego, Calif.



Best Integral Sink

Advanced Concrete Enhancement
Sun Valley, Calif.



Best Functional Feature

Reaching Quiet
Charlotte, N.C.



Best Fireplace

Surfaces LLC
Des Moines, Iowa



Best Bath

Cutting Edge Decorative Concrete
Richfield, Ohio



Best Decorative Finish

J & M Lifestyles
Randolph, N.J.



Best 3-D

Coulee Concrete Design LLC
Lake Oswego, Ore.

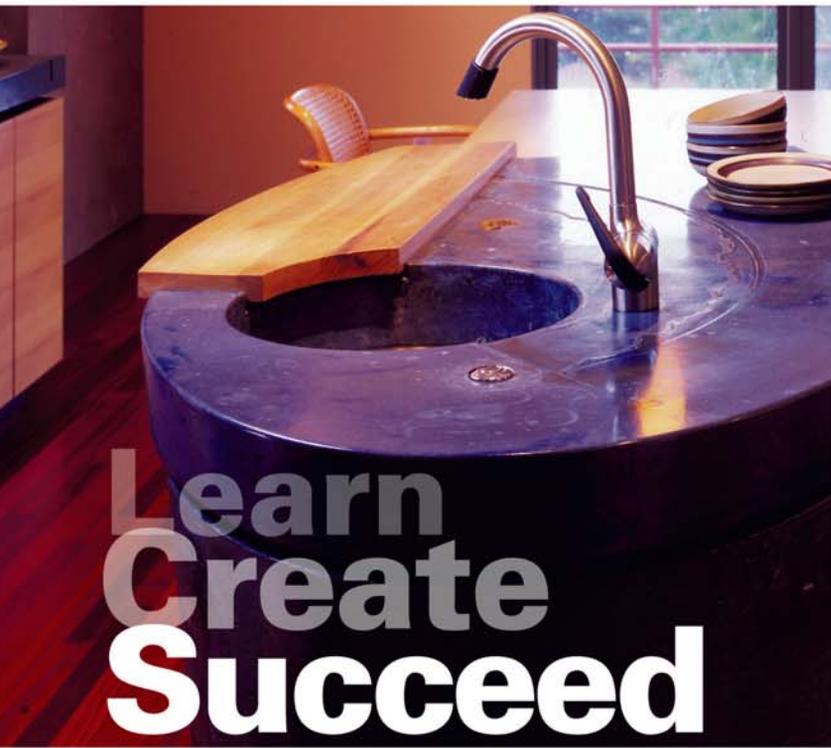


Best of Show

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Decorative Questions and Functional Answers

by Doug Carlton

There is nothing more stressful than deciding on the best path for your business. Making the right decision at the right time is very important in growing and in perfecting the decorative craft. I had to answer each of the questions below at some point in my decorative journey and I'm guessing so will you.

Why can't I find and keep good help?

We all know the secret to good work is good help. Your team will make your life heaven or completely frustrating depending on who shows up and when. Finding good help may be easier than you think, but let's get one thing straight — good help most likely will not be your brother, brother-in-law, nephew or cousin. These guys may be the most accessible but may not necessarily be the most qualified. The best type of decorative worker is the same person that works hard in general — he or she just hasn't been trained in decorative concrete yet. Not one of my employees had ever worked in concrete before I hired them. Look for hard workers wherever and whenever possible. They are all around you, and the key is to find the ones that are looking for improvements in their careers. It may be money-motivated, but not always. Some people love the challenge and reward that comes with the artistic side of what we do. It never hurts to ask, so always be on the lookout for hard workers.

The next step is very important in keeping and motivating good help. Be sure to establish what is expected from your new help concerning how they represent your company. I'm not talking about showing up on time because that is a given. We are talking about things like procedure and expectations of when

you leave the job for an hour or two. Discuss quality and how this always comes first. It's your company and they work for you, your way. Establish this and hold everyone accountable from the start.

Why do my lead men end up starting their own businesses, and what do I do about it?

This is nearly impossible to completely stop, but here is how I feel about it. Your business should always be out in front of the competition regardless of who it is. If you establish a loyal and happy client base, this will make it difficult for a lead man to take clients away. Most lead men split only when they feel they have the work to sustain their new venture. It is bad enough to lose a lead man, but to lose clients as well is certainly taking a step back. My opinion is to be sure to hire honorable lead men and make them aware of how hard you have worked to build your business. It is much more likely that this type of person will stay with a company that is respectful and doesn't mind sharing the profits.

Why can't I make a profit in decorative concrete?

This one is easy to answer. You are either too low on pricing or not efficient. Price is easy enough to establish by finding out how much it costs you to be in business. This should include all overhead, labor, benefits and material costs. My bet is that the problem is efficiency or the lack of it. Efficiency in this case is basically a constant and consistent organization of time, crew and materials, things like making sure all materials and tools are loaded the evening before, completing a job layout prior to the workforce stepping onto the

job, or dividing your crew at the right time as one project finishes and another starts.

I have noticed that most contractors are good at what they do but short on the business side. Do it or delegate it.

Please don't fall into the price trap. Someone will always be cheaper. This type of business is not built on volume. Seek out value-driven clients that realize quality is the key to long-term improvements. For what it is worth, about 80 percent to 90 percent of my clients are self-employed and seem to realize we get what we pay for.

Why can't I take good pictures of my work?

Taking good pictures of top-notch decorative jobs can be challenging. It can be a little unnerving to see pictures that don't justify your work. I have hired pilots, climbed ladders, and even gotten onto the neighbor's roof and still not have been happy with an outcome. My answer is to hire a photographer. Line up four projects and have your photographer shoot them the same day if possible. Let them know which way the house faces so they can decide on which light (morning or evening) will show the work best. Money well spent.

Why do I have problems with my sealer?

Boy, is this a tough question. With so many sealer types and manufacturers, it's nearly impossible to say why your particular sealer gets squirrely. My opinion is that all of them get a little sideways from time to time. The best answer may be to make sure we disclose this to our clients and let them understand that adverse reactions to the sealer are sometimes out of our control. Let them know, up front, that they are dealing with a contractor that is willing to make every effort possible to correct the issue. We highlight this part of our contract and let all parties know the value and risk of sealing concrete. The bottom line is that sealing concrete comes with some risk and you most likely have no control of this.

What is the best way to enter into the decorative business?

I get asked this quite often and it is a good question. In fact, I thought long and hard about how and when to get started — things like how to find the right training and which products to use. My advice is to transition into the type of decorative concrete that is closest to your area of expertise. If you are currently in the floor coverings business, it makes perfect sense to enter the stain and overlay business. If you have a crew and pour concrete, entering the stamping side makes sense. If it is all new to you, enter the type of decorative concrete business that requires the least manpower and startup cost. Types like outside staining or interior staining are a consideration. They also may be the most competitive. Your local market should also be a consideration and how weather plays into it.

How much should I charge?

Your market will clearly define your pricing, but if you can justify your price, you should be able to get your price. Let me ask you this — if you are using the best products and providing the best service, then why not charge the most? I personally float my pricing 100 percent according to my workload. When we are carrying 40 or 50 jobs on our waiting list, it will be highly unlikely we will discount pricing. Compare this to the off-season or holes in our schedule when we are more likely to be competitive.

When should I hire a salesperson?

Yesterday. The only question is full-time or part-time. It is impossible to be selling and running your business at the same time. You are most needed on the job or running the business, so

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I recommend hiring someone qualified to sell your work. You may be asking yourself how you will be able to afford this new salesperson. The fact is, this position will be self-sustaining if set up right. I recommend a salary plus commission. This person must be respectful, friendly, outgoing and willing to work. Decorative experience is not mandatory. Remember, you are hiring a salesperson, not another installer.

How do you pick the best manufacturers and products?

There are so many products to choose from that it can be difficult to know if you are picking the right one. Many will provide training (for a price). This may be a good thing, but should not be the only reason for picking a manufacturer. I will say that after years of being in the decorative trade it is very important to create a working relationship with a local

distributor. This distributor should stock plenty of product in order to keep jobs flowing. Remember, clients like to add square footage, and this will be profitable as long as your supplier is close by. Don't get caught up in cross-country distribution if at all possible. Your material savings will quickly vanish by way of shipping costs. Pick a manufacturer and become familiar with the products that fit your business. Learn them inside and out to simplify complications that are sure to arise from time to time. Confidence comes with experience.

The chosen manufacturer should be generous with samples, color charts and other sales aids. You would be surprised at how many aren't, and this has always concerned me. Move to another supplier if charts and samples become difficult to generate.

What is the future of decorative concrete?

Let me start by saying that decorative concrete is all my company does. I believe in this industry and have complete faith it will continue to be in demand. I also know that housing in general is in a slump like never before. The best way to survive this slump is to track the types of clients calling for decorative work and put marketing efforts into this market. It will most likely be commercial or homeowner projects. Try to focus on timeless looks and steer clear of trendy styles and colors. Good luck and let me know how it goes. 📞

Doug Carlton operates Carlton Concrete Inc. in Visalia, Calif. He can be reached at carltondoug@sbcglobal.net.

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Ten Years After, Part Two Will Better Understanding of Polishing Help Us Reach Our Full Potential?



Photo courtesy of Peter Wagner

by Peter Wagner, CSI

We've grown up, and now we have to act accordingly, and in unison, for our industry to reach its true potential. We all need to truly understand the process.

Let's start with understanding densification and hardening for polished concrete.

Hardening and densifying are the chemical reactions that occur when the silicate or silicate (whether lithium, potassium or sodium) interacts with the calcium hydroxide that is formed during cement hydration in the concrete-curing process. This chemical reaction produces a crystalline growth that not only hardens the concrete, but also tightens up the interior of the concrete floor. By hardening, we are referring to an increase in abrasion and impact resistance of the concrete. This process begins immediately upon product application, whereas the second component, densification, occurs more slowly as the internal crystallization is created. It is the internal densification that provides the increased repellency.

While this process does provide a stronger product, some will also point out that the grinding process that removes the cream, which has been highly consolidated during the hard-steel troweling process, lessens the tightness of the floor, thus lowering the natural repellency. Also, it can take four to six months to reach full repellency in densified concrete. This

is one reason for applying an oil- and water-based stain repellent.

Potential stumbling blocks in polishing concrete: a list

Scratch patterns — Scratch patterns are the result of the diamonds passing over the concrete surface to remove material. Diamonds come in different grit sizes (similar to sandpaper) and different matrixes (metal, hybrids, resin and phenolic-based). The role of each successive diamond is to remove the scratch pattern left by the previous diamond. The ultimate clarity of the floor's polish is determined by how well you remove laitance and irregularities with your first two diamond steps.

Also, a general rule is that you use soft matrix diamonds on hard concrete and hard matrix diamonds on soft concrete. This provides a more controlled release of the diamonds for cutting and polishing. Remember that no two slabs are identical.

Appearance — Your ability to provide a particular appearance in the final floor is influenced by the condition of the floor that you receive up front, along with the type of equipment and diamonds you are using. Make sure that you understand your capabilities and the customer's expectations before committing to a project. For instance: edges and footings tend to be hand-troweled, not hard-steel-troweled, resulting in a softer, more porous surface, which generally results in a different surface appearance than the main floor. Additionally, if you are applying dyes or acid stains, they will generally absorb the colors differently.

Chemical barriers — Curing compounds and tilt-wall release agents, along with old mastics, can create barriers to the penetration of densifiers, dyes and acid stains. UV-dissipative curing agents and tilt-wall releases penetrate into the floor, thus blocking penetration of your product. In the past, a specifier only had to be concerned with the contractor's ability to remove these barriers for surface coverings and

coatings, and although chemical removal of these barriers may be successful if they are not too deep, often you will be required to grind the product out, often to a 40-grit metal level. Not only do these added steps increase the cost of the project, but they will also change the appearance by exposing more aggregate.

Pre-test requirements/specification knowledge — Polishing concrete is not as simple as baking cookies. Each batch of concrete can be different, even when the same mix is used on the same job and on the same day — there are too many factors to guarantee 100 percent consistency.

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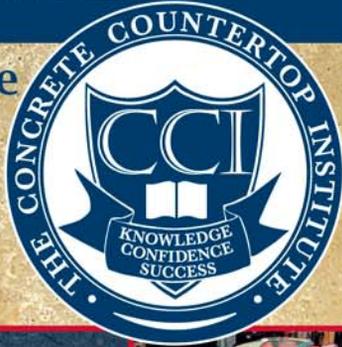
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Variations in mix design, water-cement ratios, temperature, admixtures, curing methods, humidity or finishing, or a change in personnel or equipment, can all make this a crapshoot. You need to be aware of what went into your slab before you begin your job on a full scale. The cost of "tuition" can be very high if you do not verify your work parameters on a test area first.

Construction protection/maintenance —

Always discuss protection and maintenance with the owner, architect or general contractor. If they do not know your needs, then you have failed in your role as the expert, and you have opened up the opportunity for damage to occur to the floor that may be irreparable. Remember: No cutting oils; use nonmarking tires; diaper the equipment; keep the floor free from spills and dropped tools; keep the other trades off your work area. Recommend protection following completion with a product such as Easy Cover. Not only should you provide the end user with a recommended cleaner, you should also invest the time to help establish a maintenance program. You might even consider providing the maintenance. Polished concrete is not maintenance-free, but it should be a very high-performance floor with the proper maintenance.

Polished concrete started out as a functional product to fix spalling and dusting concrete, primarily on industrial floors. Expectations, along with choices, were limited, whereas today the sky is the limit. With polished concrete's change from being purely functional to becoming design- and performance-oriented, a standard and preferred flooring option, comes the responsibility for the industry to grow in knowledge and professionalism. Move ahead into 2008 with the knowledge that you can be successful and profitable, but only if you invest the time, interest and money into education, and with that building a strong foundation for growth. Be proud of your work, let it reflect positively on you, your employee and your industry, and don't forget to reinvest as you move forward. 🚧

Peter Wagner is director of marketing and sales support for L&M Construction Chemicals. He has more than 20 years of experience in the flooring industry and is in his eighth year in the polished concrete industry. He can be reached at pbwagner@lmcc.com.



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Silica dust control: Stop breathing sand

by Kelly O'Brien

As an ingredient in most concrete mixtures, crystalline silica is virtually guaranteed to be present on any decorative concrete job site. When concrete is ground, cut, chipped or otherwise broken, tiny particles of that silica are released into the air as respirable silica dust — one of the most dangerous job-site hazards facing decorative-concrete contractors today.

Silica dust has been classified as a human carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer. Prolonged exposure can cause severe lung disease, most specifically silicosis, a disease in which the walls of the lungs scar and stiffen, causing permanently decreased lung capacity.

Aside from silicosis, long-term exposure to silica dust, even in relatively low concentrations, can cause lung cancer, as well as make the lungs more susceptible to other respiratory conditions such as bronchitis and even tuberculosis.

Due both to the virulence and ubiquity of crystalline silica dust, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration enacted a new National Emphasis Program this January to protect workers from the dangers of respirable silica dust. The new standard outlines how to calculate the Permissible Exposure Limits (PEL) for respirable crystalline silica, and also calls for educational outreach programs.

Tom Longanbach, product manager for Dustcontrol Inc., says the most significant change that comes with the

new OSHA standard is that it stipulates random job-site inspections. Previously, says Longanbach, OSHA would only appear on a job site if a complaint had been lodged, but now inspections are to be more regular and more widespread, not to mention more costly.

“For the first time this year,” says Longanbach, “contractors have approached us with stories of fines [they received] for exceeding the PEL.” One occurrence cost a New York City tuck-pointing contractor \$10,000, he says.

There are three main approaches to controlling silica dust exposure: point-of-origin dust control, i.e. dust shrouds and vacuums attached directly to the tools; local exhaust ventilation (LEV) systems that act as hoods, carrying dust away from the workers; and personal protection afforded by filtered respirators.

Though all three approaches serve to reduce exposure, point-of-origin control, also called source extraction, is widely regarded as the most effective and necessary.

“[Contractors] have to get the dust at the point of origin,” says Darren Diess, vice president of Dustless Technologies. “They can’t just wait until the shop’s filled with it and then clean up.”

Longanbach agrees. “With LEV systems, all the dust still gets to the workers’ breathing zone. Source extraction is really the only method that picks it up before it reaches the workers.”

There are two options for point-of-origin control: wet and dry. Wet dust-control systems produce a slurry-like mud in place of dust, which is great protection at the time of the job. But that slurry needs to be contained and disposed of — before it has a chance to dry out and become respirable again.

Dry point-of-origin systems are perhaps the more common choice, and certainly very effective, but there are a lot of considerations to be aware of when choosing a system.

“One misconception people have is: ‘OK, I have a shroud, therefore I’m not generating any dust,’” says Diess. “But if you’re using an \$80 ‘shop-vac’ you may just be moving the dust around the shop.”

This is a huge concern in dust control, according to Chris McCutchen, vice president of marketing for CDC LaRue Industries Inc.

“Shop vacuums are not designed for dust control!” he says. “Don’t use shop-vacs! They don’t work!”

McCutchen’s vehemence on the issue stems from the fact that, in order to contain crystalline silica, your vacuum must meet High Efficiency Particulate Air standards and be capable of catching particulates down to 0.3 microns in size. Shop vacuums can’t do that.

Contractors need to look at vacuums just as carefully as they look at which grinder to buy, says McCutchen.

Longanbach points out that it’s also not enough to just put a HEPA filter on any old vacuum. “You need both a HEPA filter and a HEPA-rated vacuum,” he says, because other vacuums won’t be as tightly sealed as HEPA vacuums, thus running the risk of dust escaping.

“Always ask about filtration,” says McCutchen about shopping for a vacuum system. “Really understand what your filtration capabilities are before you go on a job.”

Making an informed decision on your dust-control system will not only bring you in line with OSHA and protect your crew from life-threatening diseases, but it will also, McCutchen points out, help your business.

Once you’re dust-free, he says, “you can start advertising dust-free and charge more.” 📞



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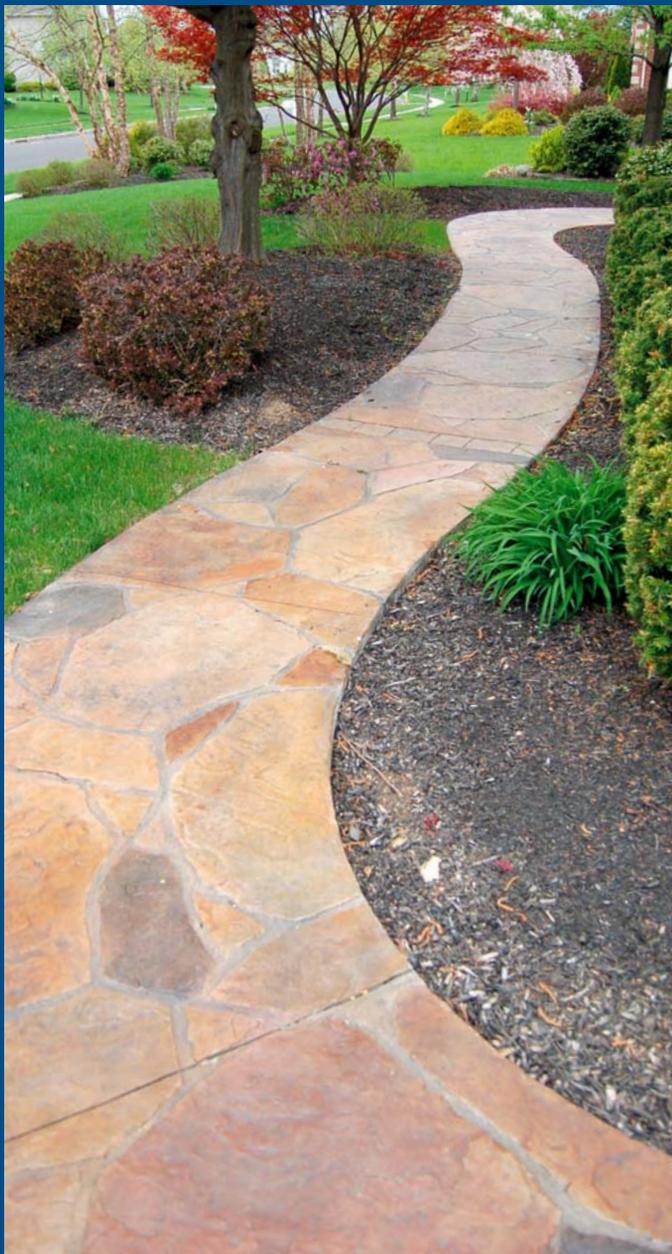
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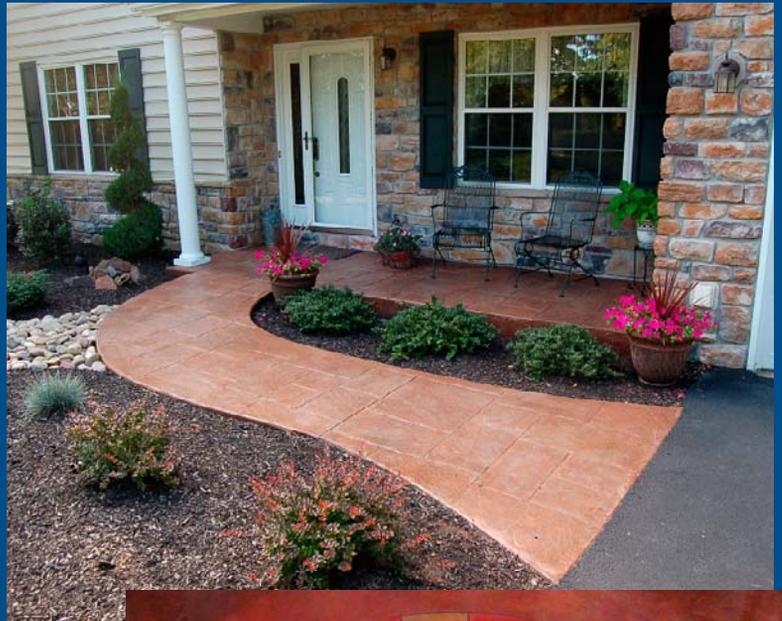
Photos courtesy of Liquid Stone Concrete Design

by Stacey Enesey Klemenc

Gerry Maurer of Liquid Stone Concrete Designs has a fancy for ferns. Instead of signing his outdoor works, he likes to leave his mark with an imprint of a fresh fern. He had considered making a stamp, he says, but he just couldn't capture the beauty and crispness of the real thing. "A lot of times, I don't even tell them about it. I let them find it on their own. It's like a thank you."

Maurer, who has been doing masonry work in Pennsylvania for close to 25 years, specialized in stone patios until rising prices for materials forced him to explore other avenues. About 10 years ago, when he was in his 30s, he discovered the world of decorative concrete. "I fell in love with what you could do with it," he says. The work wasn't nearly as labor intensive as using real stone, and the process was much more affordable for homeowners.

At about that same time, he returned to school to pursue a degree in architecture at Philadelphia College of Textiles & Science, now known as Philadelphia University. It was there he



met and fell in love with his now-partner and wife, Elizabeth. Also a returning student, she was studying interior design.

“When I graduated, we decided Gerry would stop working for other contractors,” Elizabeth says. So in 1997, they founded GEM Enterprize, which subsequently morphed into Liquid Stone Concrete Designs in 2006.

“We’ve found a lot of decorative stamped-concrete people have no concrete background, and some have a concrete background but no artistic training,” Elizabeth says. “But with our experience,

we’ve brought it all together to evolve this company and take it forward.”

Besides husband and wife, there are three full-time employees, including Arron Schopfer, who also holds a degree in architecture from Philadelphia University. Schopfer met the couple at college and has been with them since the beginning.

“Our training helps us understand the overall design of a project,” Gerry says. “We better understand clients and the direction they want to move in.”

Elizabeth deals with the clients on a one-on-one basis, personally meeting with

them, estimating costs and scheduling jobs. She also handles the books, advertising and marketing, leaving Gerry the time to focus on art and “technical stuff,” she says.

In the beginning, the company concentrated on flatwork and foundations, but soon began dabbling in decorative concrete. More recently, stamping has been the bread and butter of the business, but that started to change about a year ago, Elizabeth says. “I’d say about 99 percent of our work involved stamping, staining and foundations, but now we’re getting more and more requests for concrete countertops.”



In the area of Pennsylvania they live in, just north of Philadelphia, people want countertops that are as polished and refined as granite, Elizabeth says. “The types of countertops that are popular in California and New York City don’t fly here. For the most part, our clients want a very traditional look.”

Recently, Gerry Maurer and his crew poured a countertop that was not so traditional — one laden with fiber optics for a local bar — which garnered a lot of attention. In fact, he was one of six people invited to talk at the Concrete Countertop Industry Conference held in Charlotte, N.C.,

last October, where he addressed how to sell and place fiber optics.

And last spring, he and his crew made a countertop embedded with recycled glass as part of the 2007 Bucks County Designer House, a house that featured sustainable building products.

Currently, he’s working on an interesting project that involves coloring and stamping a concrete floor in an old barn — “There are a lot of old barns up this way that people want to redo” — and then adding grout and polishing it. “Doing a 2-by-2 foot sample was one thing, but surfacing a 1,200-square-foot floor is another animal,” he

says. “The whole trick is keeping the colors consistent.”

Maurer notes that he often blends different colors of color hardener to match existing brick and stonework in these old structures. “I would never dream of painting a color on,” he says, adding that a lot of contractors in his area do just that.

The contractor’s degree in fine woodworking, which he earned right out of high school, has proven to be very beneficial in creating intricate forms for countertops, he says. “Plus I make my own forms for edge details.”

On the flip side, Maurer also relishes



the challenge of free-form concrete placement. Although he hasn't done a complete free-form patio yet, he has formed stepping stones off patios. "I set some grade pins for elevations and sculpted the concrete to form what I wanted it to look like," he says about one of the jobs. "I stamped and colored the stones and used leaves to make it look like a large fossil."

This coming year, he says, his company is going to explore more artistic applications of concrete with furniture and fixtures for both interior and exterior uses.

But for now, Elizabeth and Gerry's latest venture is a showroom that opened

Oct. 1, 2007, in an old Victorian-style building in Peddler's Village in Lahaska, Pa. There, browsers and potential clients can see samples of the company's handiwork, from sinks and countertops to acid-stained floors and overlays. The location is perfect, Elizabeth says, as the village is one of the state's busiest tourist destinations.

Gerry's advice to others in the decorative concrete business? "Sample, sample, sample and practice, practice, practice — and not on your client," he says. "Show your clients samples and not just pictures. And, above all, know your product."

For that, Elizabeth advises, go to school and learn all you can about concrete. "You need to understand the basic material to really work the medium," she says. And take a class or two in design to give your work some "pizzazz and pop" instead of slapping down the same old squares and rectangles.

Also, stand firm and insist on being paid for your time and effort. "So many times contractors and artisans don't get paid for their knowledge," Gerry says. "I know I've invested a lot of money on training and continue to train and go to shows. All that adds up. I think you should be paid what you're worth." 📱

Project Profile



Above: The concrete walkway joins the treehouse to the main residence.

Photos courtesy of Arro Design

Below: Arro Design lined the lintel beam forms joining the tops of the four concrete columns with uncoated fabric.

Concrete Treehouse, Warren, Vt.



by David Searls

Chuck and Wendy Black of Warren, Vt., could have taken advantage of their backyard views of the Green Mountains by building a deck, like most people. But the Blacks didn't like the way deck lines would have obscured the breathtaking sunset views from some of their windows.

When they asked architect Alexander "Sandy" Lawton if there was another way, they didn't know what to think of his response.

"I said he was nuts," Chuck Black chuckles as he recalls his conversation with Lawton, president of Arro Design.

That was after the architect and Nashville, Tenn., transplant suggested that the Blacks let him and Ben Allred, his design partner for the project, bedeck their sloping backyard with a treehouse. More specifically, a fabric-formed

concrete “treehouse.”

Today, you exit the Blacks’ dining room onto a sweeping 60-foot walkway that flows into an elevated two-story glass, steel, timber — and mostly concrete — structure with a fireplace and banks of windows overlooking the mountains.

No, the Black treehouse isn’t actually nestled in a tree. This thing’s nothing like your granddaddy’s treehouse. Or your granddaddy’s concrete.

“When she first heard about the plan, Wendy referred to it as The Bunker or Chuck’s Folly,” says Black with a laugh. “She was worried about the aesthetics and the safety — it was all a concern to her.”

Lawton partially credits the couple’s eventual go-ahead to the fact that, if worse came to worst, at least they wouldn’t have to actually live in Chuck’s Folly. “People tend to be a lot more flexible if you’re not doing their house,” he says.

He admitted to having had a few privately held misgivings of his own. “Vermont is absolutely the worst place to do this.”

It gets cold, and it gets wet. And it stays that way for a while. That’s why it took better than a year to complete the structure.

Then there were those nearly 30-foot columns, each of which Lawton was determined to pour in a single form, a challenge that even he calls “a little dicey.”

In retrospect, he offers this admission: “Most contractors won’t pour over eight-foot heights. The bottom might blow out or bend in the middle. My supervisor, Frank Finnerty, wasn’t real happy over it.”

Even so, Lawton has no problem explaining his Fast-Tube and fabric-formed structure from a design standpoint. “It’s like you hold together a silo,” he says. “Small sections joined together and then banded.”

With fabric-formed concrete, flexible textile membranes take the place of rigid formwork panels. This





more-permeable framework lets excess moisture drain, creating a richer cement at the surface of the form, not to mention an absence of air bubbles. The result is a fine-grained, beautiful finish with interesting, sculpted contours that you just don't get with concrete poured the conventional way. And there's no need for sand-blasting or acid etching to improve the visual appeal.

Fabric forms are up to 300 times lighter than conventional forms, making for all kinds of cost and time savings in storage, transportation and setup. Lawton ended up using the material for the columns, walls, suspended slabs and lintels.

It's a process that evolved over time from Lawton's early days working with a house-mover, Winfield Manning, who used silo-type cables for transporting barns. The architect got serious about concrete for residential application in the early 1980s, when he helped design a solar underground home.



Why concrete for this project? "It feels like a more durable structure," says Lawton. "You don't feel like you're so suspended."

That's an important consideration when working on a slope. Another advantage of concrete was that he could support the entire span of the 60-foot walkway with a single crossbeam.

Then there was the aesthetic value of concrete. "Sandy got unbelievable lines and colors out of it," says Black. "The project redefined the concept of concrete for us."

Music to the ears of Lawton, whose ongoing challenge is getting clients to see that the rugged construction material is good for a lot more than driveways, parking lots and bunkers.

A true believer in fabric-formed concrete, Lawton has co-taught a course on the subject in the Dominican Republic on behalf of the Yestermorrow Design/Build School in Warren, Vt., and his group has built a fabric-formed gathering place for locals and eco-tourists in El Rincon. Lawton has also been invited by Mark West, who has been innovating with the concrete technique for 15 years, to address an international audience when the Fabric Formwork Conference is held at the University of Manitoba in May.

For the Blacks' part, they're staying exactly where they are, watching Green Mountain sunsets from one of the most striking concrete structures in Vermont. And it's not Chuck's Folly. Not even close. 📷

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Great Countertops

by Rob Spiegel

What type of hard surface can give off a mixture of colors, patterns and sheens? Not marble or slate. Nope, it's concrete, one of the trendiest materials used for decorative countertops. In this feature, several manufacturers showcase just a few of the effects that have been achieved with their materials.

Concrete countertops are gaining attention as an inexpensive way to bring elegance and beauty into homes and commercial settings. "Homeowners and architects are starting to recognize that concrete countertops can fit into and elevate any style from modern to rustic," says Jeffrey Girard, president of the Concrete Countertop Institute in Raleigh, N.C.

Girard notes that concrete has become a key element to consider when building new kitchens and bathrooms. "Concrete-countertop makers are starting to recognize they are part of a larger community that overlaps with the kitchen and bath industry as well as the decorative concrete industry," he says.

One of the biggest challenges in using concrete as a countertop is protecting it from stains. Moisture is the enemy of concrete, and there is plenty of moisture in kitchens and bathrooms.

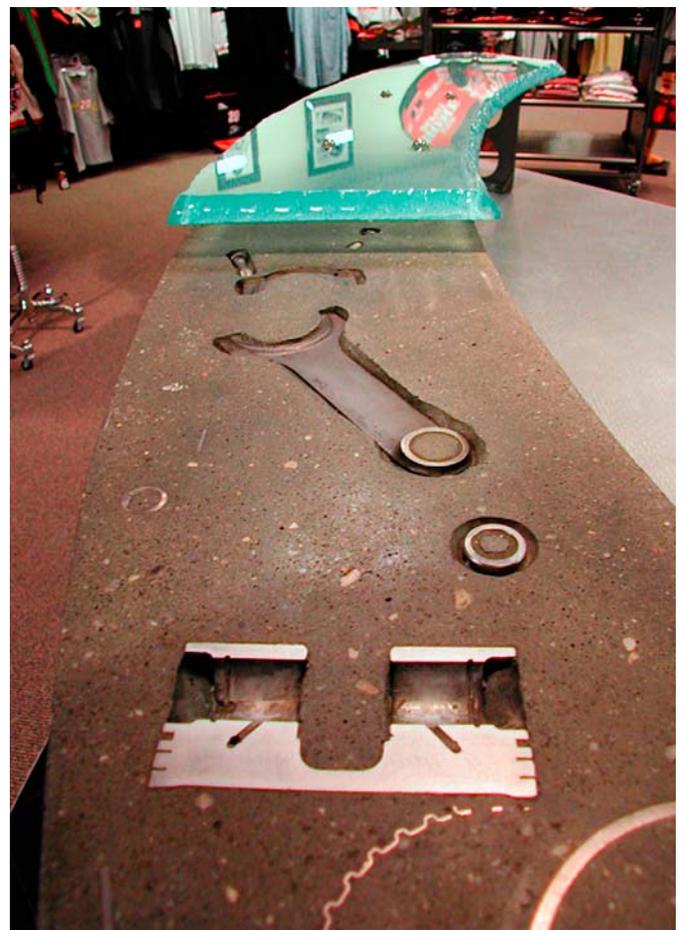
Concrete's natural tendency to crack is another concern for customers. "Homeowners like the look of decorative concrete, but they're concerned about stains and cracks," says Steve Rosenblatt, president of Sonoma Cast Stone in Petaluma, Calif. "In recent years (our company has) developed a new surface that is virtually unstainable. And it gives the concrete the high-end look people want."

Tony Leff of SureCrete Design Products in Dade City, Fla., points to customization and environmental concerns as strong selling points for concrete countertops. "Consumers' expectations have caused kitchens and bathrooms to become more elaborate and customized," he says. "Add to that the continuing design of going green, and now a concrete countertop has a larger appeal." 🗑️



Concrete Countertop Institute

One of the advantages of decorative concrete is the ability to customize for a home or commercial setting. "People are beginning to understand that by using concrete in their homes and environments, they gain the ability to make that environment unique, even if it's as simple as glass tiles arranged in just the right way in a plain white countertop," says Jeffrey Girard, president of the Concrete Countertop Institute.





Specialty Concrete Products

The designers at Specialty Concrete Products note that decorative concrete is changing the way people design their kitchens and bathrooms because of the versatility and color range that concrete can provide. SCP's Dura-Top Concrete Countertop Mix is designed for both precast and cast-in-place countertops.





SureCrete Design Products

New decorative concrete applications have shortened the time it takes to produce countertops while adding strength to the finished product. "Engineers and contractors can now have a product at 1/2-inch thickness that has a flexural strength of 1,455 pounds per square inch with no steel reinforcement needed," says Tony Leff of SureCrete Design Products. "And the product can cure in four hours and the polishing, staining and any secondary coloring system only takes eight hours."



Advanced Concrete Designs

One of the biggest challenges for decorative concrete countertops is resisting stains and other water damage. Advanced Concrete Designs offers a coating designed to last the life of the countertop.





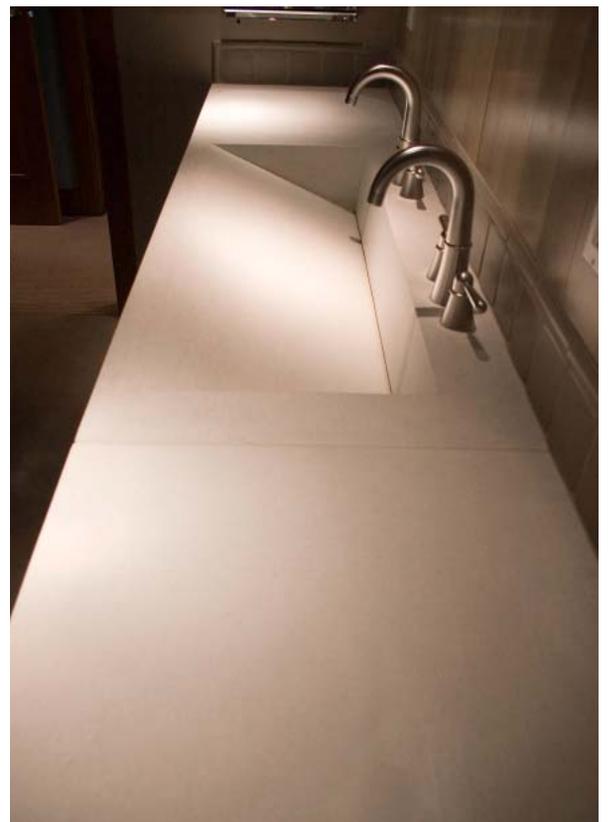
Buddy Rhodes Artisan Concrete

Buddy Rhodes Artisan Concrete manufactures decorative concrete countertop products for a wide variety of applications, including kitchen counters, islands, sinks, furniture, baths, fireplaces, storefronts, tiles and planters.



Sonoma Cast Stone

Decorative concrete countertops have become a versatile alternative to stone in homes. "Designers see concrete as having much more feeling for residential use," says Steve Rosenblatt, president of Sonoma Cast Stone. "You can use it in almost any application. Plus, you can select any color. Unlike with marble."



Proper insulation, underlayments
and techniques can provide

Help For Radiant Heat Floors

by Amy Johnson

We know that interior concrete floors can be elegant, artistic, stylish and sophisticated, but warm? Yes, thanks to radiant heat technology. “Radiant heat is the only way to make concrete a warm, comfortable surface,” according to John Sweaney, Western regional sales manager for Watts Radiant, Springfield, Mo.

Valerie Wells, president and CEO of Artscapes Inc., Albuquerque, N.M., says more people these days are willing to use concrete as a final floor product. This increases demand for radiant heat. “Concrete is the most efficient way to use radiant heat — hands down, absolutely,” Wells says. “There is nothing like being



Designed to accept a wide range of floor coverings, Levelrock RH floor underlayment can be applied quickly and provides a compressive strength of up to 3,500 psi.

Photo courtesy of USG

about to move around the house in bare feet, toasty as can be. My clients love it.”

Mark Eatherton, operating partner of Advanced Hydronics, Denver, Colo., believes people should not be distracted by a heating system or by uncomfortable temperatures. “When you walk into a house with a radiant floor, you walk into a blanket of comfort,” he says.

The basics of radiant heat systems have been covered in this magazine and can be found on the Web site of the Radiant Panel Association. The purpose of this article is to cover some new developments in codes, materials and applications.

Insulation — the difference between comfort and failure

One of the most important facts to understand about radiant heat is that it is omnidirectional. This means that the heat is uneven and uncontrollable without careful planning. In a concrete floor, the tubing in an on-grade slab will heat the ground beneath it as well as the floor above unless it is properly insulated. Charles Krupka, president of FloorHeat Co. in Lansing, Mich., recommends using insulation with an R-value of 10 down to the footing and 4 feet into the building. “It is critical to insulate the sides of a concrete floor,” he says. “Do whatever you can to make the heat go up.”

The most common insulation for pours on or below grade is extruded polystyrene installed under the slab and around its vertical perimeter, according to John Sweaney. “Insulation thickness and R-value depend on the location and climate of the project, but an inch to 2 inches is typical,” he says. He adds that tubing should be spaced 6 inches on center where it passes close to exterior walls and 12 inches on center four feet or farther into the room. Finally, he recommends following local best practices for moisture or vapor barriers.

“You absolutely have to insulate,” Mark Eatherton emphasizes. In fact, he was instrumental in creating local codes that require proper insulation. This requirement has since been included in the International Mechanical Code. The result is improvement in radiant heat’s reputation for efficiency and comfort.

A new insulation product solves several problems at one time, according to Bob Rohr of Show Me Radiant Heat and Solar, Rogersville, Mo. The Crete-Heat Insulated Floor Panel System is a modular EPS foam board insulation supplied in interlocking panels. A polystyrene film on the backside acts as a vapor barrier. A three-dimensional grid on the top allows installers to snap in hydronic tubing at accurately spaced

intervals. The spacers extend above the tubing so the panels can be walked on without dislodging the tubing.

Concrete considerations

With the insulation and tubing in place, the next critical step is the concrete pour. “The biggest problem that could occur is that the tubing is too close to the surface of the concrete,” says John Sweaney. “We specify that

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Photo courtesy of Watts Radiant

a conventional concrete must be at least two inches above the top of the tubing. This prevents the concrete from cracking. Sometimes lack of planning results in pouring too thin because there isn't room to go two inches over the tubing."

Wells also emphasizes correct concrete thickness. "Remember that

saw cuts are one-quarter the depth of the slab, so the tubing has to be set deeply enough to prevent damage," she cautions. John Sweaney points out that the creation of expansion joints allows the two masses of concrete to move separately. If a lot of movement is anticipated, he recommends sleeving the tubing with PVC or other rigid materials for 6 inches on either side of the joint.

This removes the stress of movement from the tubing and transfers it to the sleeve.

A key installation step is pressure-testing the tubing. Charles Krupka always conducts an air pressure test at 60 psi to 100 psi for 24 hours so he can identify and repair any leaks before the concrete is poured. Sweaney recommends keeping the tubing under pressure even while the concrete is



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Bio: Gold winner of the Design Excellence Awards, author of *Complete Guide to Stained Concrete*, various articles for industry and national publications and multiple industry DVDs. Shellie is known for artistry, award-winning design, and advanced techniques including innovative crossover techniques from other trades. Shellie is sought after for design as well as remedial consultation for architects. She offers advanced classes for the experienced only.



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being poured. That way if a tube is damaged and a leak occurs, it can be repaired before the concrete sets. "This is the one and only chance to see if the tubing has been damaged during the pour," he says. "If you see bubbles, there's an area where you've got a problem. You can make a repair coupling right there or block out the space for repair later. Today's PEX tubing is so resilient that damage rarely occurs, but it only makes sense not to take chances."

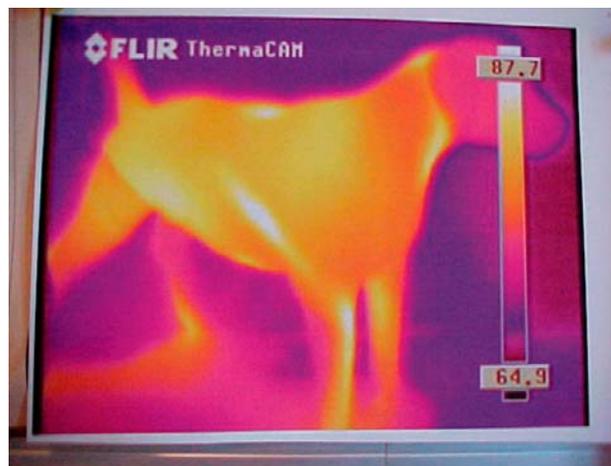
Concrete is moving into new decorative applications and radiant heat is not far behind. Bob Rohr has installed tubing in concrete sculptures, making them essentially radiant space heaters. Rohr also had tubing installed in a bathroom counter. The countertop was shop-fabricated with tubes for connecting to the boiler coming out the back. Installed, this connection just looks like an additional plumbing shut-off valve. "The counter is like a 400-pound cast iron radiator," Rohr says. "It keeps the bathroom warm. It's on a separate thermostat so we can enjoy a warm floor and counter year-round, even when we're not heating the rest of the house."

Poured gypsum underlayments

While concrete is considered by many to be the first choice for radiant heat in slabs on or below grade, gypsum cement is more often used above grade. Now a new product has been developed specifically for radiant heat that overcomes some drawbacks of this material. Levelrock Floor Underlayment RH from United States Gypsum Co. (a subsidiary of USG Corp.) offers a smooth, crack-resistant surface that can be topped with a decorative microtopping as well as traditional tile or wood flooring. High compressive strength and resistance to shrinkage set it apart from other underlayments as being especially well-suited for radiant heat.



Above: This concrete dog statue is wired for radiant heat. Below: An infrared picture of the dog statue showing radiant heat at work. Seemingly, the dog has no heat in its head.



Photos courtesy of Bob Rohr



Photo courtesy of Watts Radiant

Above: A radiant heating installation for a home in Santa Fe, N.M. The radiant tubing is Watts Radiant Onix.

Below: Levelrock RH floor underlayment is formulated specifically for use with residential electrical and hot water radiant heat systems.

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Levelrock is pumped through a hose in two stages. Dennis Socha, Levelrock business manager, recommends mixing the first lift at the lower limit of the slump range to make it stronger and hold the tubes in place. The second lift is typically poured at a slump toward the higher end of the range for a smoother finish. Slump tests are conducted on the job site to determine the flowability of the material. The second lift should be applied within an hour or two of the first lift or as soon as the first lift can be walked on to create a strong bond. A typical installation crew consists of four to six people. At the application end, there is one to handle the

hose and one with a gauge rake to set the appropriate thickness and finish the material. A larger job may require an additional person to help handle the hose. At the mixing end, down by the pump, there are two more crew members — one person running the pump and one who is a material handler feeding the sand and cement. Again, larger jobs may require an additional material handler. A crew like this can install upwards of 10,000 square feet to 15,000 square feet in a day. The quick setting process of the Levelrock underlayment allows for trade traffic on the floor the next day.

This product is usually more consistent than lightweight concrete that might be used over plywood on upper floors. That's because it is formulated under controlled conditions. No additives or ingredients besides sand and water are added on-site.

Partnering with other trades

USG sells Levelrock RH only to authorized applicators, according to market manager John Mandel. The authorized applicators can also install the microtopping, which can then receive a decorative stain or coating if desired. Some concrete contractors have added installing Levelrock or other floor underlayments to the services they offer. Other applicators may be drywall, insulation or flooring contractors.

Most successful radiant-floor installations involve a team of experts. Charles Krupka says a business like FloorHeat Co. is typically called in for design work. "We do a heat-load analysis based on the ASHRAE Design Temperature standard to see how many BTUs will be needed for the planned structure in the designated location. Then we work up a quote for materials, tube layout, manifolds for supply and return, the distribution panel and the boiler."

Mark Eatherton recommends that the tubing be installed by a fully trained, qualified hydronic-heating contractor. While some concrete contractors add this expertise to their repertoire, it is more common for them to partner with a plumbing or heating contractor.

Bob Rohr works closely with three or four different contractors, including a decorative concrete expert, on a regular basis. "They know the deal," he says. "We all refer jobs to each other. Align yourself with superstars." 📞

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Levelrock Floor Underlayment RH from United States Gypsum Co. (a subsidiary of USG Corp.):

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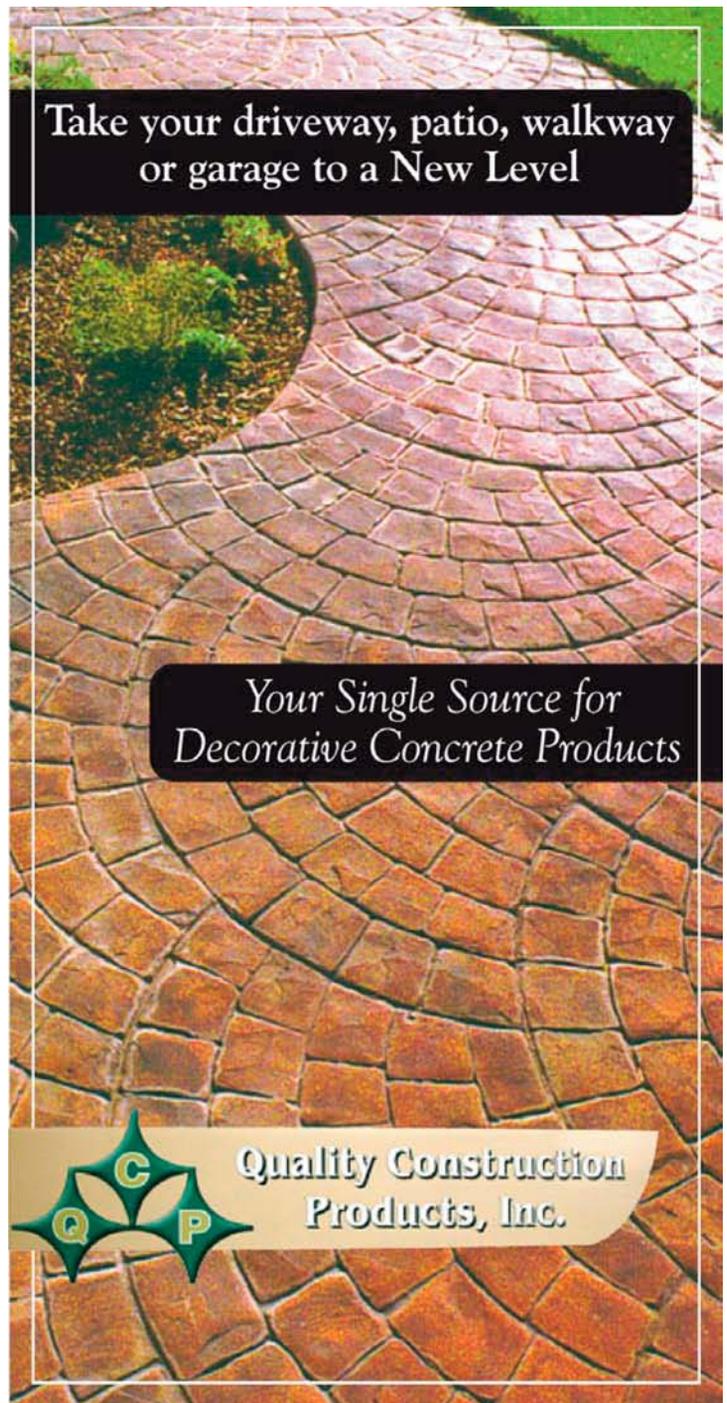
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Putting a New Stamp on Concrete



Advances give artisans more choices

Butterfield Color's Roman Rope Border Stamping Tool.

by Matt Robinson

For years, residential and industrial designers have been using concrete stamps to decorate and add style to their projects. While the basic concept is not new, recent advances in technology have allowed stamp manufacturers to offer more diverse choices for their clients.

"We are constantly innovating and improving on stamps and materials," says Harry Freis of **Brickform**, mentioning a recent upgrade of the polyurethane used for his company's stamps that allowed the tools to be tougher yet more flexible. "New patterns, new applications, and new materials comprise the reality and reputation of our stamping products."

Brickform offers a light stone texture with well-placed fractures, making it appealing for indoor and outdoor applications.



To further diversify their offerings, many concrete companies have been stamping their work with decorative designs that depict sunbursts or even animals.

“Our new stamp design is our new Seamless Texture design tools,” says Larry Freeman, vice president of sales and marketing for **Proline Concrete Tools**. In 2008, Proline began offering a full line of “style” stamps, including such designs as a spiral sun and a jumping marlin. Each stamp will have what Freeman calls a hand-carved appearance.



Proline’s new Seamless Texture design stamps have designs actually built into the seamless texture mats to make a beautiful appearance quick and easy.



Matcrete’s new wood-grain stamp set includes details such as knots and cracks that would occur in natural timber.

Speaking of hand-carved, **Matcrete** is now offering concrete stamps that look like wood.

“We have a four-piece wood-grain stamp set we are making with Wayne Sellon of Tajmawall,” says Matcrete’s Kris Kaitanjian, noting that the details even include knots and cracks.





Above: L.M. Scofield Co.'s Lithotex Pavecrafters Pennsylvania Slate single-stone pattern.
Left: The Lithotex Pavecrafters Vermont Slate random interlocking pattern.
Below: Lithotex Pavecrafters concrete imprinting tools.

Another set of fabricated “natural” surfaces are the slates offered by **L.M. Scofield Co.** “The unique thing about our new Pennsylvania Slate pattern is that it is a single-stone pattern that is made up of 16 different sizes of tool,” says Scofield’s Cam Villar, “and each size is available in (two textures) ... so there are 32 tools available that can be arranged in a random and unique fashion for every project.”



Some companies are growing their line to simplify the process for contractors. “The main changes I have seen are the addition of more colors and larger stamps to save on labor,” says Steve Cook of **Kraft Tool Co.**

Kraft’s decorative texture mats leave a three-dimensional impression that includes details of the shape and texture of natural stone or brick.



Another means of simplification is offered through **Butterfield Color’s** new lines of stamp tools that allow contractors to install decorative borders without spending time and energy carving them by hand.

“Butterfield Color’s real-life experience as installers allows us to produce tools that simplify the stamping process for contractors and respond to specific design requirements of the architect and landscape architect,” says Butterfield owner Joe Garceau. 🖱️

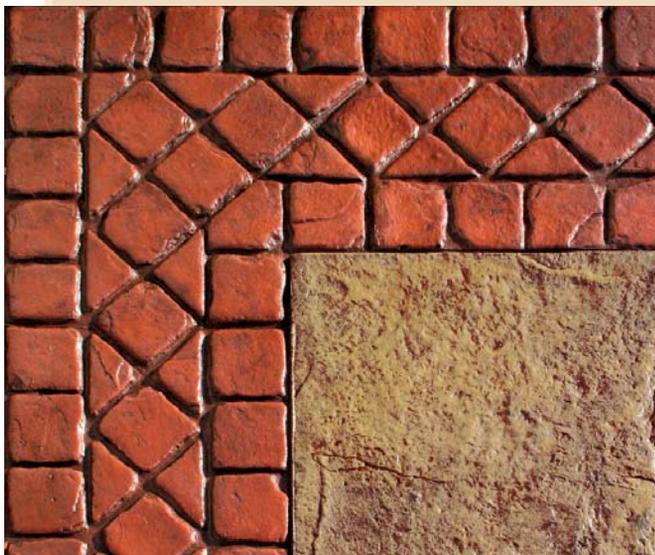


Above right: A 4-inch Tumbled Edge Stone Border Stamping Tool.

Right: A 4-inch Tumbled Edge Cross, 4-inch Tumbled Edge “T” and 4-inch Tumbled Edge Finishing Corner.

Below right: Close-up of Roman Rope border pattern installed at St. Clements Church, Chicago

Below : A 4-inch Tumbled Edge Stone stamped border.



Want to learn more? Search online at www.concretedecor.net





Photo courtesy of Euclid Chemical

Filler Up!

Above: Joints practically disappear when they are filled with a sealant that is colored to match the concrete.

The importance of control-joint fillers

by Loretta Hall

You've put a lot of time and effort into creating a beautiful concrete surface. You've even been realistic enough to include a pattern of joints to control cracking. Now, what can you do to make the joints as attractive and useful as possible?

The good news is that there are several options for filling or sealing the joints. However, you have to decide which type of product is most appropriate for your project.

Protecting joints from traffic

The first thing to consider is the environment your slab is in. If joints in industrial floors are not filled properly, they can be damaged by forklifts and other vehicles. "The primary function of all of our (joint-filler) products is to protect the joint edges and provide load transfer from one slab to another," says Alana Mallat, inside sales director for Metzger/McGuire. "It prevents the concrete from breaking off under the hard wheels and heavy loads that would typically be traveling across the floor in a warehouse or distribution center."

Metzger/McGuire makes two lines of industrial floor joint-fillers: semirigid epoxies and semirigid polyureas. They can be tinted to any desired color. The difference between them,



Photo courtesy of BASF Construction Chemicals — Building Systems

Mallat says, is a matter of convenience. “MM-80, which is an epoxy, usually takes about eight to 12 hours in an ambient floor, whereas our polyureas typically set up in anywhere from 30 minutes to two hours.”

To protect the slab edges effectively, it is important for the joint filler to be flush with the floor surface. This is accomplished by overfilling the joint and then, after the filler has become solid but not hardened, using a scraping tool to shave off the excess material. Because overfilling the joint can stain adjacent concrete surfaces, Metzger/McGuire makes a companion product, SPF. Treating surfaces with this stain-preventing film before filling the joint protects the concrete’s appearance.

Euclid Chemical Co. formulates its Euco 700 two-component semirigid epoxy joint filler in 11 standard colors to match dry-shake color hardeners. Custom colors can be formulated, and a water-based stain prevention film is also available. However, like other epoxy products, Euco 700 can discolor when exposed to ultraviolet light. “Euco 700 cannot be used outdoors,” cautions Jennifer Crisman, Euclid’s technical marketing manager.

Sealing out contaminants

“It’s very important to use a joint sealant,” says Mike Murphy, technical service rep for Pecora Corp. “You want to keep water out, because water can have detrimental effects on the concrete itself and any other substrates the water can come in contact with.”

For vertical joints, Murphy recommends Pecora’s 890NST, a single-component silicone sealant that will not stain porous materials such as concrete or marble. Dynatred, a two-component polyurethane sealant, is his choice for floor joints. “The Dynatred is stiffer,” he says, “and it’s more resilient to taking a lot of foot traffic.” Both products are available in an array of standard colors, with custom matching also available.

“You’ve got to give the concrete 30 days to cure, and make sure all of the moisture has evaporated out of the concrete,” Murphy says. Then apply either type of sealant with standard

caulking equipment, and tool it to a slightly concave finish. “Give it seven days to cure, and that’s about it,” he concludes.

Water is not the only intruder that can accumulate in control joints, and other debris can be downright ugly. “The main reason you seal joints in decorative concrete is you don’t want to have dirt accumulate in joints of countertops or decorative floors,” says

Norm Lambert, president and technical support director of Epoxy Systems.

Besides an epoxy sealer for industrial applications, Epoxy Systems makes a single-component polyurethane sealant and a dual-component polyurea product. “Formed joints tend to be bigger than saw-cut, so you tend to go to the two-component materials,” Lambert says. He recommends using the single-component product only on joints less

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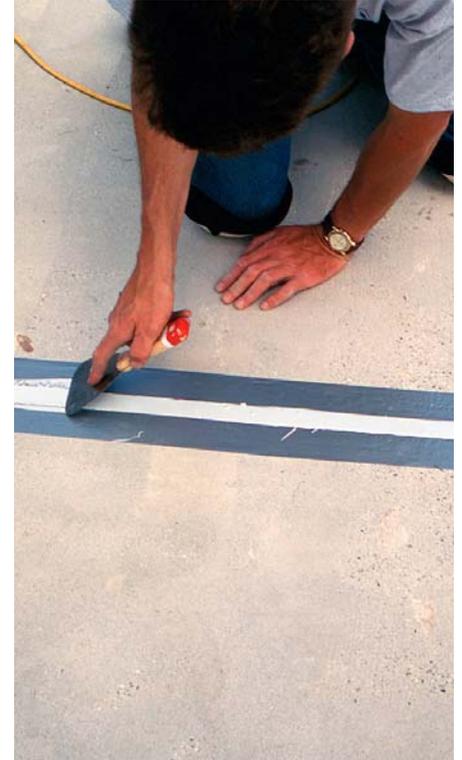
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Left: Some joint sealants are designed to be applied in two layers. Using a pneumatic applicator reduces fatigue when working on a large project.

Below: Some products require masking of joints and light tooling to smooth out ripples or create a desired surface shape.



Photos courtesy of BASF Construction Chemicals — Building Systems

than about 3/8 inch wide. “The dual-component product cures at depth just as quickly as it does at the surface because it’s a chemical reaction between the two components,” he explains. Curing quickly can avoid potential problems with water — for example, near a swimming pool or if rain is on the radar. “The dual-component product is available in a lot more colors,” Lambert adds. “Besides, it costs less.”

Other considerations

Obviously, you want to select a joint sealant that will protect the concrete and look good doing it. Some products are well suited to specific environments. For example, Epoxy Systems’ Product No. 916, a two-component polyurea joint sealant, exceeds ASTM test requirements for sealants exposed to continuous immersion in liquids.

Another product to consider for swimming pool decks is Deck-O-Seal, a two-part polysulfide-based joint sealant. “It’s going to be resistant to the chlorine and the chemicals in the swimming pool,” says Jim Dill, division manager for the Deck-O-Seal Division of W. R. Meadows. After mixing, the sealant is applied with a squeeze bottle or caulking gun. “It self-levels,” Dill says.

“It sets up and becomes like rubber.”

When comparing products, read the installation instructions. Check to see whether a primer is required or recommended for a particular product. Find out whether a stain-preventing film will be needed, or if the joint should be masked with tape before applying the sealant. Consider whether the product is self-leveling, or if tooling or scraping will be needed.

Most control joint sealants are applied with standard caulking equipment, but other options are available. For instance, Speed-E-Joint, by W. R. Meadows, is a rigid, preformed joint available in 10-foot lengths and several depths. The installer simply presses the joint down into the wet concrete after creating a clean, vertical seam with a straightedge cutting tool. A top segment that ensures insertion to the proper depth is then peeled off, and the concrete is floated to fill the voids alongside the joint filler.

Making choices

Making a selection among filler and sealant products depends on many factors. “It would depend on the amount of movement taking place, the kind of abuse the material would have to

accept, whether it’s point loads or rolling wheels, things like that,” explains Bill McCann, industry relations manager for the Building Systems unit of BASF Construction Chemicals. “If there’s a specific project involved, normally what I’ll do is refer people to our local rep, let them come out and take a look at it and say in this case, it might be SL 1 or SL 2 polyurethane or it might be an epoxy or a polyurea joint filler. It’s not going to be one size fits all.” 🛠️

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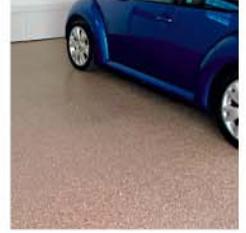


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The Concrete Tub

Photo courtesy of Jon Whitney Studios

Stone Soup Concrete created this black tub from five tongue and groove pieces. It weighs 1,750 pounds and has a 120-gallon capacity.

*I've heard it described
as ... a piece of sculpture
and 'maybe I'll bathe in it
once in a while.'*

— Steve Rosenblatt, president
Sonoma Cast Stone

by Christina Camara

It was just a matter of time. An upstart player in the decorative concrete market is making a grand entrance into high-end bathrooms: concrete soaking tubs.

They're big, they're fragile, they weigh nearly a ton, and choosing a design is not unlike picking a sculpture. "It takes a genuine commitment," says Stone Soup Concrete owner Michael Karmody in Florence, Mass.

Concrete tubs are just a small piece of the decorative concrete market. Not everyone can pay \$8,000 to \$20,000 for a concrete tub that needs to be installed before walls go up because it won't fit through most doorways. But those who do choose these concrete tubs find them appealing, not only aesthetically, but for the comfort and deep indulgence they provide.

These concrete tubs can be found in upscale spas seeking the meditative quality of a Japanese bathhouse, but residential homeowners can replicate that feeling at home with the right planning for the tub's size and bulk.

Karmody says concrete tubs present a number of engineering challenges. His company installs its box-shaped tubs on site in five pieces. The side elements

must feel smooth and comfortable against the skin, obviously, and joining and sealing the pieces together properly is critical so the tubs don't leak. "In the middle of installation, I'm tearing my hair out, but in the end they look beautiful," he says.

In addition to the technical considerations, a stand-alone concrete tub must look like a piece of art since it dominates the bathroom environment, Karmody says. "Some people think of tubs as just a large sink, but there's nothing farther from the truth."

The Stone Soup tubs can hold 120 gallons of water, so Karmody says he has to caution clients that most hot-water heaters don't have that capacity. Keeping the water warm in a concrete vessel is another challenge, which is where radiant systems come in. Heating coils embedded in the concrete keep water at the proper temperature.

Sonoma Cast Stone offers Ofuro, its own version of a Japanese soaking tub.



Photo courtesy of Sonoma Cast Stone

A construction worker wearing a hard hat, safety glasses, and work clothes is using a Husqvarna Soff-Cut 150 D saw to cut a concrete slab. The saw is orange and black, and the worker is holding the handle. The background shows a construction site with rebar and concrete forms.

Decorative cutting has never been easier.

The Husqvarna Soff-Cut 150 D saw was designed especially for the contractor who wants a no-hassle way to make decorative cuts. It was also designed to be economical and durable. The 150 D has a low noise, low vibration 4-1/2 horsepower engine and is ideal for large and small jobs alike.

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Photos courtesy of Stone Soup Concrete

Above: Creating a concrete tub that is sculptural and practical is a technical challenge. Left: This tub, created by Stone Soup Concrete, was assembled in their shop in western Massachusetts.

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Steve Rosenblatt, president of Sonoma Cast Stone of Petaluma, Calif., says people who encounter the concrete tubs at trade shows are often surprised to find them warm to the touch. They can be ordered with a programmable timer.

He says the company has 10 concrete tubs on order: four for residences and six for hotels and spas. Some have been placed outdoors at hotels, while others are installed near windows overlooking vineyards. Sonoma Cast Stone tubs are manufactured on-site. They are about three inches thick and come in one piece — it takes eight men on a vibrating table to cast just one, says Rosenblatt.

Sonoma Cast Stone offers two kinds of tubs: the Ofuro, a Japanese-style, 24-inch-deep, one-person tub weighing in at 865 pounds (not counting the water and the bather), and the 1,800-pound double WaveTub, which is contoured and has room for two people. “It’s a look of elegance,” says Rosenblatt. They are



Photo courtesy of Sonoma Cast Stone

This contoured WaveTub by Sonoma Cast Stone is roomy enough to seat two. The tub comes with an optional heating feature to keep the water temperature constant.

made of NuCrete, which Sonoma Cast Stone calls “the world’s only stainless concrete” and is available in dozens of colors.

The main selling point of decorative concrete is the infinite number of options available for customization. Color, shape, texture ... it’s all up for

grabs. Concrete tubs are no different, and they give homeowners’ bathrooms distinctive looks.

“I’ve heard it described as buying a piece of sculpture and ‘maybe I’ll bathe in it once in a while,’” says Rosenblatt. 📱

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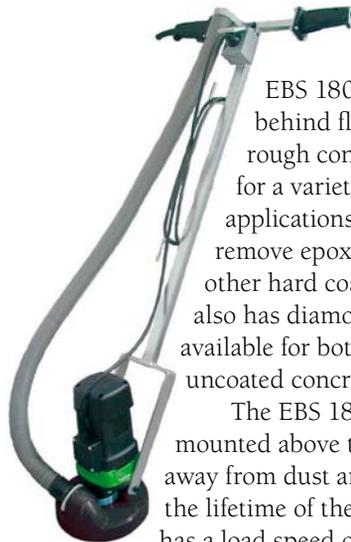
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Floor Grinders

CS Unitec Inc. — EBS 180 Floor Grinder



CS Unitec's EBS 180 7-inch walk-behind floor grinder prepares rough concrete and floors for a variety of resurfacing applications. It can be used to remove epoxy, glue, paint and other hard coatings. CS Unitec also has diamond grinding wheels available for both coated and uncoated concrete.

The EBS 180's 22-amp motor is mounted above the diamond wheel, away from dust and debris, to extend the lifetime of the grinder. The unit has a load speed of 6,000 rpm and weighs only 21 pounds. The EBS 180 also includes features for soft start, temperature control, overcurrent cut-off and constant speed. A dust extraction port allows connection to industrial wet/dry vacuums to maintain a clean working environment.

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Diteq Corp. — TEQ-Edge Grinder



With the DITEQ TEQ-Edge Grinder contractors can grind right up to the edge of a wall, eliminating the need for difficult, labor-intensive hand grinding. The side of the head cover comes off for edge grinding, and the adjustable axle enables the grinder to easily hug the wall. This machine is ideal for removing paint, epoxy, thin-set, urethane coatings and cutback adhesives. It can also be used to repair worn, damaged or spalled concrete and to level uneven or curling slabs.

The TEQ-Edge Grinder features a full floating head that can take an 8-inch diamond disc. It comes with

either a 5.5-horsepower Honda engine or a 2-horsepower electric motor and has a vacuum connection and central water feed. Its fold-down handles can be raised or lowered for operator comfort.

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Draygon Enterprises Inc. — X4 and X6 Electric Planetary Grinders

The Draygon X4 and X6 Wet/Dry Electric Planetary Grinders combine the benefits of electric grinders with planetary head technology and a full range of diamond tools for grinding and polishing concrete, terrazzo and stone floors. The X4 and X6 are also suitable for removing glue and other coatings.

New drive mechanisms and antivibration/buffering systems deliver balance and power to the diamond discs in the X4 and X6 for steady operation and maximum performance.

The X4 is powered by a 5.5-horsepower, 220-volt single-phase motor and delivers speeds of 800-1,100 rpm with each of its three 6.3-inch grinding discs. For tougher grinding applications, the X6 runs on a 10-horsepower, 480-volt three-phase motor, and its three 8.7-inch discs grind at speeds of 300-1,400 rpm. The X6 comes standard with a 40-liter water tank, while the X4 has a tank attachment. Both machines come with vacuum ports as well as soft-start and emergency stop features.



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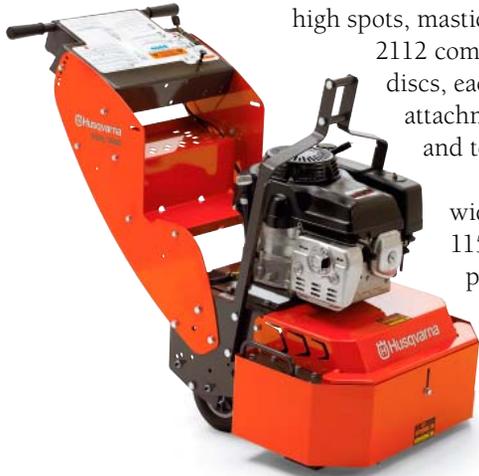
Husqvarna Group — Dual Trac RG 2112

The Husqvarna Dual Trac RG 2112 floor grinder is suitable for a wide variety of applications, including grinding or cleaning concrete surfaces, leveling uneven joints and removing epoxies, high spots, mastics, thin-set and urethanes. The Dual Trac RG 2112 comes equipped with two multipurpose grinding discs, each available with an array of job-specific attachments, for grinding brick, concrete, tile, stone and terrazzo.

The Dual Trac RG 2112 has a 22-inch working width and is available in either the 1.5-horsepower, 115-volt model, or the 8.9-horsepower gas-powered model. Both models come standard with a 3-inch vacuum port and have the optional additions of a water tank (for increased dust control) and weights and a weight tray (for improved grinding).

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Kut-Rite — KR34GR Rotary Polisher

Kut-Rite's KR34GR rotary polisher is equipped with three independently driven high-speed polishing pads that cover a 34-inch surface. The overlapping 12-inch pad drivers are capable of producing more than 4,000 square feet per hour per grit of extreme high-gloss polished floor.

The KR34GR is powered by three 5-horsepower, 480-volt industrial motors that deliver 1,800 rpm at maximum torque. Adding to efficiency are the quick-release pad drivers and the flip-up head that allow users to change diamond grits quickly and easily. The flip-up head feature, coupled with the oversized handle, makes the KR34GR easy to move, even while powered down. The KR34GR is ideal for repolishing floors from 400-1,500 grit as well as finishing floors that, for example, have already been ground to the equivalent of 100 grit with a planetary machine.

The KR34GR can be equipped with an optional tow-behind vacuum system that contains a dust filter and three 277-volt vacuum motors.

☎ (877) 786-5067

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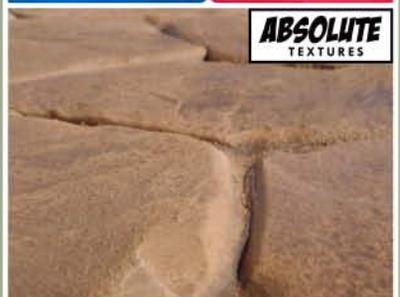
Latta Inc. — Concrete Floor Grinder

Latta's Concrete Floor Grinder combines advanced technology with a patented grinder design for preparing or polishing any old or new concrete surface. The Concrete Floor Grinder uses a three-head planetary design for an even finish when doing anything from rough grinding to high-gloss polishing. The grinder is available in three different models, all of them suitable for both wet and dry grinding applications — the 16-inch grinder is available with either a 110-volt or a 220-volt motor, while the 20-inch model has a 220-volt motor. All models can be equipped with any of Latta's specialty

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Levetec Surface Preparation and Machinery LLC — Extrema Edging Machine

Levetec's Extrema Edging machine uses a 220-volt, 2-horsepower mono-phase motor to power an edger suitable for professional applications.

Two counter-rotating grinding elements operate at 1,200-2,300 rpm, while a 360-degree steering handle allows the operator to grind edges right up to the wall. The incorporated vacuum port allows for virtually dust-free operation. The Extrema can also work wet with the addition of an optional 2-gallon water tank.

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MK Diamond Products Inc. — MK-SDG & MK-DDG

MK Diamond grinders are designed for concrete work, including smoothing rough areas and surface irregularities, feathering patches and cleaning industrial floors.

MK Diamond manufactures a single-disc grinder, the MK-SDG, and a dual-disc grinder, the MK-DDG. The MK-SDG features a front-tapered nose to provide enhanced visibility, and the removable handles and nose weight make for easy transportation and storage. The dual-disc MK-DDG has been designed with two counter-rotating heads that prevent pulling. The MK-DDG comes standard with a vacuum port for dust control as well as a water control valve for wet grinding.

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Werkmaster (B A Werk Industries Ltd.) — SuperColossos Planetary Machine

The SuperColossos Planetary machine uses Werkmaster's Octi-Disc technology to grind, edge, polish and buff concrete surfaces to within 1/8 inch of a wall. With eight heads spinning at up to 4,000 rpm, the SuperColossos provides fast, powerful grinding in a maneuverable machine.

The SuperColossos, along with the rest of the Werkmaster family, is suitable for grinding concrete (spalled, rained out or otherwise), thin-set, vinyl-composition tile or vinyl-asbestos tile glue, rubber-back carpet residue, mastic, epoxy, paint, and virtually any other concrete surface material. For even higher rates of removal, Werkmaster's Ganging System allows users to lock two Werkmaster machines together, doubling production time and reducing labor costs.

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Our **WerkMaster's** are fast, tough and agile, voraciously tearing into concrete, thin set, spalled or rained out concrete, VCT glue, VAT glue, rubber back carpet residue, mastic, epoxy, paint and virtually any surface you can throw at them – while all the time delivering superior results and Rates of Removal that most competitors only dream of achieving! Tradesmen are constantly amazed and delighted with the ease of use and total customer satisfaction. When it comes to 'Polished' nothing out shines a **WerkMaster™**.



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Arcus Contoured Masonry Blade from Arcus Inc.

While Barbara Cotton Robinson, owner of Arcus Inc., was working on a stained-glass project with her husband, it occurred to her that there must be an easier way to make contoured cuts than with a router. A few hours later, she was rolling a rimless, contoured salad plate on its edge, watching as it traced a perfectly smooth, contoured path.

Thus, the Arcus Contoured Blade was born.

The second generation of the blade was the Contoured Wood Blade. And now Robinson has applied the same technology to developing a premium turbo diamond blade for concrete, stone, masonry, backer board and tile applications.

The Arcus Contoured Masonry Blade is a 7-inch blade that can be used to cut arcs, curves and circles — all useful shapes when designing decorative concrete surfaces. With a turbo diamond rim 1/8 inch wide and 10 millimeters high, the blade delivers a smooth, consistent edge. It can be used dry or wet, though wet use does extend the life of the blade considerably.

When cutting a circle with a 15-inch radius (the minimum radius

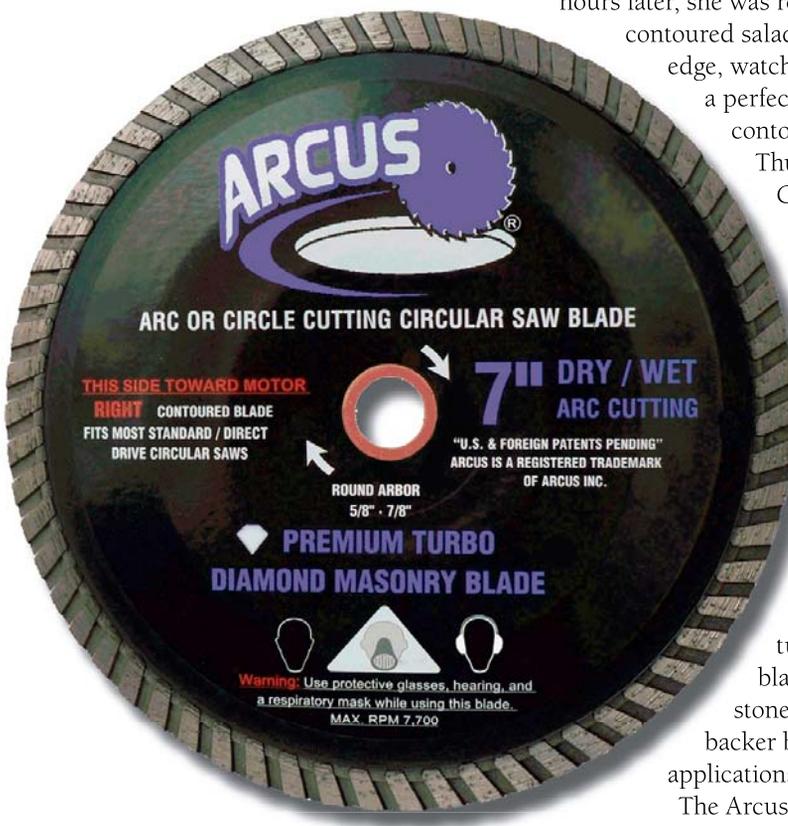
possible with the Contoured Masonry Blade) the maximum depth of cut is 1 1/2 inches. For circles with a 24-inch radius or more, maximum depth is 2 inches.

Due to its shape, the Contoured Masonry Blade is 1/4-inch high lying flat. Be sure to check the clearance before mounting it, as some saws, especially compact or lightweight models, do not have enough clearance. The blade is, however, designed for use with most standard saws, and it is available for direct-drive saws, as well as hypoid and worm-drive saws.

In her efforts to simplify the precise, challenging job of cutting a perfect circle, Robinson also created the Arcus Compass Saw Guide and Pivot Point to accompany her contoured blades. First, the Pivot Point, engineered to leave no marks on the concrete, is mounted at the center point of the circle to be cut. Then, the Compass Saw Guide is attached to the Pivot Point, and a saw is attached to the Guide's other end. The saw follows the arc of the Compass Saw Guide for a perfect plunge-cut circle.

The Compass Saw Guide is made from durable, 14-gauge square tubular steel and will not bend or flex. The standard guide is for circles of 30 inches to 54 inches in diameter, but the tool is also available in large (6 feet to 12 feet) and extra-large (8 feet to 16 feet).

The Contoured Masonry Blade, Compass Saw Guide and Pivot Point — together referred to as the Arcus Cutting System — provide decorative concrete artisans with a wide range of circular design options, hassle-free. 🛠️



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Product Profile



Photos courtesy of Pacific Palette Concrete Products Inc.

Pacific Palette Saw-Cut Joint Tool from Pacific Palette Concrete Products

Decorative concrete contractor Tom Ralston has probably never met you, but even so, he suspects you're waiting too long before cutting your control joints. "Saw-cutting concrete is usually done long after the concrete has been poured or has set up," he says. "It's kind of like locking the gate after the horse has left."

If you saw-cut the way most contractors do it, you do it at the end of the day, Ralston says. That can be a problem, because concrete can start to crack about six to eight hours after it's poured. "There are likely microscopic cracks by

the time you can walk out with a saw," he says.

The decorative concrete veteran has invented a solution: a set of two hand-carvers he calls the Saw-Cut Joint Tool.

Sold by Pacific Palette Concrete Products Inc., a company of which Ralston is president, the set is comprised of a 30-inch two-handled chisel and a 6-inch jointer tool. The chisel goes into the concrete first and is slid back and forth by a worker who keeps the side of the tool aligned against a screed and the groove flush with a string line. The chisel cuts 1 1/4 inch into a slab.



The jointer tool follows with its 3/8-inch blade, cleaning up the cut and resmoothing the surface of the concrete. When used together, the two tools leave behind a line that is "perfectly clean," Ralston says. "Saw cuts tend to fray."

Saw cuts can also make a mess. They can throw dust all over a job site, and even if water is used to control the dust, cleanup can be messy. Even the wheels of a cutting machine can leave marks on a fresh slab. Neither problem occurs when someone on kneeboards uses Ralston's tools to hand-carve a straight line into wet concrete. Workers may be able to get onto the concrete to cut joints three hours, even two hours after pouring, Ralston says.

Ralston is manufacturing the Saw-Cut Joint Tool system himself. As of World of Concrete 2008, he had stocked about 50 prototypes, all made from brass. The next batch will be stainless steel, he says. 🛠️

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🌐 www.pacificpalette.com



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"I like that the chisel cuts deep enough to make the jointer tool run through easily. It helps control random cracking better than any saw cutter. The system saves time and money and it does a better job."

—Tom Ralston
Tom Ralston Concrete
Santa Cruz, CA

"This tool system saves time, eliminates messy saw cutting clean up, and it makes clean lines. My finishers love it!"

—John Biasotti of Lewis Merlo, Inc., San Francisco, CA

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Scofield debuts sealers, densifier

New Scofield Revive and Revive VOC-colored sealers are solvent-borne, color-matched sealers and curing compounds developed to improve the color uniformity of concrete surfaces.

Scofield Revive colored sealer improves the appearance of interior or exterior colored concrete flatwork, as well as flatwork with imperfections due to application or wear and tear. It can also be used as a curing compound for freshly-placed colored concrete. Revive comes packaged as a 4-gallon base unit with tint cups that may be used depending on opacity requirements. It is available in 24 standard Chromix Admixture colors, concrete grey, black and white.

Also, new Scofield Formula One Lithium Densifier and Finish Coat System offers a high-quality lithium-silicate formulation capable of providing longer life and higher gloss for ground and polished concrete surfaces of all types. The premium formulation offers increased abrasion and water resistance, higher surface compressive strength and reduced dusting. It will not contribute to alkali-silicate reactivity. Formula One Lithium Densifier stimulates a chemical reaction that penetrates and densifies the upper layer of the concrete surface. A true architectural densifier, it will not run the risk of discoloration associated with other densifiers. The treated surface requires only periodic cleaning with a neutral or alkaline cleaner and water.

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🌐 www.scofield.com

Sakrete offers paving sand, strong mix

Sakrete has introduced 5000 Plus concrete mix, formulated to offer high-performance construction and repairs after water is added.

The 5000 Plus mix achieves more than 5,000 psi, ideal for high-strength applications in slabs, walkways and repairs, and exceeds strength requirements of ASTM C-387. This high-strength mix is also good for concrete countertops in kitchens and baths, and it is endorsed by countertop artisan Fu-Tung Cheng.

Sakrete has also introduced Paver Set Polymeric Sand, a mixture of sand and special additives for paving stone joints. The only materials needed for product use are water and a broom. Paver Set is applied by sweeping the sand

into paver joints and misting it with a fine spray of water to solidify. The material contains special polymers that adhere specifically to the substrate as the material cures. Once curing is complete, Paver Set will resist erosion. It is engineered to resist wind, rain, and freezing conditions better than regular sand, and it resists substrate movement without washing away.

☎ (800) 738-1621

🌐 www.sakrete.com



MK Diamond uses new Cyclone technology

The new MK Diamond IXL Vacuum Shroud, for 7-inch concrete and surface grinding, has been designed to incorporate a new technology called "Cyclone Dust Extraction." CDE uses velocity combined with negative pressure to directionally flow materials away from the grinding wheel.

CDE technology controls dust during grinding with the IXL Shroud's unique snail-shape design. It uses the velocity of air created by the rotating grinding wheel to force the air, in cyclone fashion, to create a higher centrifugal force that expels the dust particles away from the grinding cup wheel into the vacuum hookup port. This technology improves removal of particles, which further enhances the grinding process.

The highly efficient CDE system has been developed for heavy-duty use by contractors for grinding concrete, masonry and mortar. The injection-molded shroud is made from an abrasive-resistant plastic to prevent wear from the grinding process. The IXL Shroud can be used with any traditional shop vacuum or with an approved bag if a vacuum is not available, saving time during cleanup.

The IXL Shroud is designed to fit the Dewalt, Milwaukee, Metabo, Hitachi, Bosch and Makita 7-inch, 15-amp grinders.

☎ (800) 421-5830

🌐 www.mkdiamond.com

New self-levelers include decorative-friendly option

Bonsal American Inc. has introduced a full line of ProSpec Level Set underlayments and toppings designed to correct uneven, rough areas in interior floor applications before finishing.

ProSpec Level Set 100, 200 and 300 are cement-based self-leveling underlayments that can be poured or pumped. They require no troweling and minimal finishing. Each product is polymer-modified to ensure a superior bond to the substrate and provide a smooth, even finish. These underlayments can be applied from feather-edge up to 5 inches thick. The underlayments are designed for use over a variety of substrates, including concrete or wood.

Level Set G is a gypsum-based, self-leveling underlayment that can be poured or pumped. Level Set G is designed for installation for use over concrete, wood and gypsum subfloors from 1/8 inch to 5 inches thick.

Level Set LW-60 is a lightweight self-leveling underlayment ideal for applications where load-bearing restrictions apply. LW-60 is 50 percent lighter than conventional gypsum or cement-based underlayments and can be installed from feather-edge up to 2 inches thick.

Level Set Wear Topping is a decorative option. The high-strength, self-leveling wear surface, complete with abrasion and crack resistance, provides a perfect base for decorative concrete due to its workability and acceptance of pigments, stains and colored penetrating sealers. Level Set Wear topping can be installed from 1/4 inch to 5 inches thick and will accept foot traffic in three hours.

☎ (800) 738-1621

🌐 www.prospec.com

Epoxy, dyes and chips go West

This year, Westcoat Specialty Coating Systems launches three new product lines: Liquid Dazzle, Acetone Dyes and Pool Chip.

Westcoat Liquid Dazzle is a 100-percent solids epoxy floor-coating system. Engineered with proprietary metallic additives that flow uniquely when applied, Liquid Dazzle produces

a dynamic color-changing floor that is decorative and highly durable. Perfect for hotels, casinos, high-end showrooms, restaurants and recreation rooms, Liquid Dazzle is designed for use when a wear-resistant and truly unique floor is desired.

The new line of Acetone Dyes provides a wide-range color palette and is easy to install. Drying almost

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1141 NW 50th Street Seattle, WA 98107 800.444.7833 www.SkimStone.com

instantly, the dyes require little downtime, are cost-effective and can easily be applied with a solvent sprayer. Westcoat Acetone Dyes are also compatible with a variety of sealers.

The Westcoat Pool Chip system gives pools and spas a decorative surface with the look of granite. Pool Chip comes in 16 color combinations to achieve particular looks such as a deep lagoon or bright soothing blues.

Westcoat products are available through specialty coating distributors throughout the Western and Central region of the United States.

☎ (800) 250-4519
🌐 www.westcoat.com

Acrylic stain from Dur-A-Flex

Dur-A-Flex Inc.'s new acrylic stain not only offers great color and design options, it also contains a built-in advanced top coat that protects and seals in the stain.

When compared to traditional acrylic and water-based sealers that are used to protect competitive stain products, Dur-A-Flex MMA stain claims better wear characteristics. The new acrylic stain also promises reduced install time.

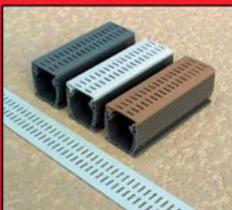
☎ (800) 253-3539
🌐 www.dur-a-flex.com

Insulation protects below

Insulfoam has introduced R-Tech BG (Below Grade), a rigid foundation insulation designed to provide superior strength and lasting performance in foundations and below-grade applications.

R-Tech BG provides compressive strength, job-site impact resistance and point-load forgiveness, and protects against insects and water infiltration. Enhanced strength ensures resistance to both short-term and long-term compressive loads. R-Tech BG offers a minimum compressive strength of 1,872 pounds per square foot. The insulation also offers advanced moisture resistance and it insulates against air leaks.

The brilliant white of R-Tech BG insulating protection board not only



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🌐 www.insulfoam.com

A bucket clamp for mixing

Lidie's Specialty Tools of Redding, Calif., is selling the SR Bucket Clamp, a new tool for holding a 5-gallon bucket safely in place while mixing resistant materials with an electric drill.



The SR Bucket Clamp helps mix two-part epoxies, stucco and pre-cast concrete. Giving the worker full control of the bucket reduces injury and spills. The SR bucket clamp also saves labor costs.

☎ (530) 722-5525

🌐 www.srbucketclamp.com

A straightedge from Kraft

Kraft Tool Co. offers the new Buckeye Straightedge.

This one-man straightedge is made for striking off or leveling concrete, sand and other building materials. It is available in six sizes, ranging from 4 feet to 12 feet. A top-reading spring-loaded level vial allows easy on-the-job adjustments. It is made of a lightweight, high-grade aluminum alloy with a wood handle tapered for a smooth, comfortable grip.

🌐 www.krafttool.com



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A new surface prep machine

Superabrasive Inc. has released the Lavina 32 20-horsepower Surface Preparation System.

Like other Lavina machines, Lavina 32 is a planetary movement machine manufactured for both dry and wet applications. It has a working width of 32 inches and uses 20 horsepower to turn out 300 rpm to 1,100 rpm.

☎ (800) 987-8403

🌐 www.superabrasive.us

A big finish from Kemiko

Easy Shine from Kemiko Concrete Products Inc. is a new water-based acrylic polymer floor finish.

The polish gives a high-gloss finish without buffing. It is easy to apply, easy to clean, and offers high durability against water and scuffing. It may be mopped or sprayed onto sealed decorative floor projects in any setting, and it is very easy to remove or recoat. Easy Shine was formulated by Epmar Corp. to enhance Kemiko and Sta-Crete sealers applied over Kemiko and Rembrandt concrete projects.

☎ (903) 587-3708

🌐 www.kemiko.com

Laser-engraving in color

Vytek has begun offering Color Laser Engraving, a patent-pending process that uses a Vytek laser system to permanently bond special laser inks in full or partial color. Materials that can be color-engraved include ceramics, porcelain, marble, granite, travertines, glass and engineered stone. Color Laser Engraving can be used in indoor and

outdoor applications, and in most cases, both horizontally and vertically.

The color process is offered in addition to Vytek's Deep Stone Carving system. Available since 2006, Deep Stone Carving is a patented way to laser-etch stone. Vytek's laser system can carve designer patterns up to 1/8 inch deep in limestone, marble and travertine surfaces. Designs are incorporated into a software package that is loaded on a Vytek laser machine.

☎ (978) 342-9800

🌐 www.graniteart.com



VIC expands into vacuums

The Optima, the first in a planned series of quiet, high-performance industrial vacuums, has been introduced by VIC International.

Besides its 11.5-horsepower, three-phase motor, the Optima includes a unique filter system consisting of numerous dust socks, each of which can be quickly and easily changed if punctured. With the Longopac collection system, the operator merely pulls down another dust bag when a full bag is taken off the machine and sealed for disposal. Simple bumping and movement of the vacuum system during its operation causes the dust clinging to the external sides of the socks to fall into the Longopac collection system.

The Optima vacuum's muffler system adds to the quiet performance of the machine. Ease of operation is enhanced through oversized wheels and a wide stance for stability.

☎ (800) 396-0324

🌐 www.vicintl.com

VIC delivers new machines, pads

VIC International is trying to attract polishers with new machines and pads, plus a new polishing system.

The VIC 24-inch prep and polishing grinder offers what might be the most down-head pressure available in the midrange category. It combines strategic head plate and tool placements with precise shroud design for minimizing distances to the wall. Despite being only a midrange machine, the grinder delivers a production rate of about 500 square feet per hour and features a robust 10-horsepower, variable-speed motor with reverse.

VIC International's new 20-inch, high-performance burnishing machine is designed exclusively for polishing and maintaining floor sheen. The burnisher features a two-speed, 1.5-horsepower motor and a dual-trigger negative pressure switch for running the machine with either hand. Its motor offers superior cooling, added torque and longer life.

A new line of Extended Life Diamond Burnishing Maintenance Pads designed for nearly all auto-scrubbers and commercial burnishers are available in 7-inch, 20-inch, 24-inch and 27-inch diameters. The diamond burnishing maintenance pads are available in grades of 500 grit, 1,000 grit, 1,500 grit and 3,000 grit.





On DVD

Bilingual education on DVD

LunaCrete has introduced four instructional decorative concrete DVDs with two soundtracks, English and Spanish.

The titles are “Stamped Fresh Concrete,” “Stamped Concrete Overlay,” “Acid Stain Concrete” and “Spray Coat For Concrete.” Each DVD shows five or six projects and stays focused on universal use by not featuring specific brands.

LunaCrete recently changed its name from ArtCrete Media.

www.lunacrete.com

In Print

Artisans' books published

Schiffer Publishing Ltd. has released several new books pertaining to decorative concrete. The books were authored by decorative concrete experts whose names and work will be familiar to many Concrete Decor readers.

New titles include “Casting Concrete Countertops” by Tina Skinner and Doug Bannister, “The Complete Guide to Stained Concrete” by Shellie Rigsby, “Sand Casting Concrete: Five Easy Projects” by Tina Skinner, Bo Atkinson and Jeffrey B. Snyder, and “Cast-in-place Concrete Countertops” by Tom Ralston.

www.schifferbooks.com

Advice for contractors

FMI's third edition of “Strategic Planning for Contractors: The Guide to Superior Management Performance” is now available.

Written by Hank Harris, president and managing director of FMI, the book offers advice and tips on applying strategy and strategic thinking to the management of a construction organization. Covering a variety of business management topics, the book offers examples of strategic planning models, real case summaries and a Sample Situational Analysis Checklist.

www.fminet.com

On the Web

USGBC publishes catalog of LEED points

Building project teams pursuing certification under the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED Building Rating System can now peruse the Innovation & Design Credit Catalog, a listing of proven green building strategies that have been utilized by LEED Certified projects.

The LEED Rating System is the USGBC's voluntary building certification program that rewards environmentally responsible, healthier, and more profitable

structures. Points, or credits, are awarded to projects that develop innovative solutions, employ new technologies, educate, or demonstrate commendable performance.

www.usgbc.org

Reward offers more online

Reward Wall System's Web site has a new look. The site guides visitors through an introduction to working with insulating concrete forms and leads seasoned professionals directly to the information they need.

The site features a building professionals' section for contractors, distributors and architects that provides quick links to installation procedures, code evaluations, product specifications and Reward's in-depth Product Manual for both the iForm and eForm product lines. A new project gallery guides visitors through ICF building applications. Top projects from each category will be featured and constantly updated to provide a snapshot of the work being accomplished with ICFs. News items and trade show information are displayed so visitors can find updated items quickly and easily.

www.rewardwalls.com

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The new VIC ShaveMaster can remove a slurry cap and expose aggregate at the rate of up to 800 square feet per hour. It can be used in correcting concrete joints, coatings removal, and other repair and correction jobs. The number of diamond blades under the machine may be reduced for grooving ramps to create nonslip walkways. The 15-horsepower, three-phase motor allows for a 13-inch pass. The cutting disc diameter is 10 inches. The cutting heads consist of 50 diamond blades, allowing for an adjustable 1/8-inch depth of cut per pass with the width of the cut at 1/16 inch.



VIC has also introduced an economical concrete polishing floor system designed specifically for concrete contractors and general maintenance departments where cost is a serious concern. Named the Extended Life Floor Polishing Program, the system incorporates such products as diamond burnishing pads, Meadow's Liqui-Hard concrete densifier and chemical hardener, and Meadow's concrete enhancer.

☎ (800) 396-0324
 🌐 www.vicintl.com

A conditioner for polished floors

VIC International has introduced Extended Life Floor Cleaner and Conditioner, which uses a unique combination of natural ingredients to form a water-soluble and dirt-repellent barrier on polished concrete.

In wet applications, the product utilizes special fatty acids to lubricate the polishing friction, thus providing longer life to diamond elements and polishers. The easy-to-apply cleaner and conditioner is highly concentrated, amber in color, offers a pleasant scent and is maintenance-friendly. It provides water and dirt protection, eliminates rinsing and buffing, and provides an additional brightener to the polished

concrete. In addition, it helps with cleanup of the grinding slurry produced by the polishing process. The product acts as a binder by chemically attracting the loose minerals and debris for more manageable removal.

☎ (800) 396-0324
 🌐 www.vicintl.com

Flexible forms reach new heights

The award-winning Xtra Flex forming system from Metal Forms Corp. is now available for forming concrete 12 inches high. The original system was introduced in heights of 4 inches and 6 inches for forming the tight curves often encountered in constructing concrete walks, patios, curbs and decorative flatwork. The forms are manufactured from high-density polyethylene to form tight radii from 36 inches to as small as 9 inches.

🌐 www.metalforms.com

Easy-to-use epoxy breaks out of the showroom

A commercial-grade, easy-to-apply epoxy floor coating used in more than 8,000 automotive dealerships is now being marketed by UCoat It America LLC to the construction industry overall.

The UCoat It water-based epoxy coating system is a proprietary formula that does not require application by specialized contractors. All UCoat It floor systems begin with two coats of UCoat, a water-based, commercial-grade epoxy floor coating. The first coat of UCoat floor coating is a bonding coat and is applied directly to a freshly prepared damp floor. A co-plastimer additive in the first coat allows UCoat to flow and dry at the proper rate, penetrating the damp, porous concrete or wood floor and permanently bonding to the substrate. After application of the second coat, the surface can be further modified with UFlek decorative flakes and UGloss high-gloss topcoats. The floor of a typical two-car garage can be coated in about six hours, including drying time, and ready for cars to be driven on it after 24 hours. The UCoat It floor coating system features seven color

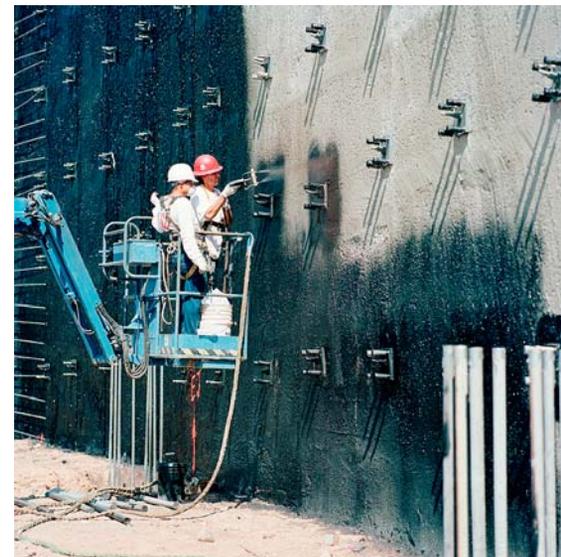
options: black, white, tile red, medium blue, beige, light gray and medium gray. UTex antislip additive is included in every kit.

☎ (800) 826-2848
 🌐 www.ucoatit.com

Carlisle creates waterproofing coating system

Carlisle Coatings & Waterproofing has introduced a new waterproofing coating product: Barricoat.

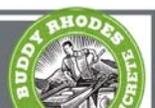
Barricoat is a water-based asphalt emulsion modified with a blend of synthetic rubbers and special additives. When sprayed on, it forms a monolithic, highly flexible membrane that cures fast.



Designed as a waterproofing and vapor retardant membrane, it can be applied to concrete, CMU, wood or metal.

Barricoat's flexible nature and strong waterproofing elements allow it to be used for a variety of applications, including on decks, foundations and retaining walls. Its excellent elongation and recovery qualities, along with its solid tensile strength and exceptional bonding, make it a product that performs well over concrete. The Barricoat system enables concrete contractors to create a seamless, fast-curing membrane without the use of primers.

Barricoat is available in two different systems. Barricoat-S offers a single-coat spray application, while



Barricoat-R offers a double-reinforced-roller applied system.

☎ (800) 527-7092

🌐 www.carlisle-ccw.com

Carpenter pencil makes mark with innovative lead

The new Husky Mechanical Carpenter Pencil is equipped with Dura Lead, which requires no sharpening. Dura Lead can be quickly shaped by rubbing it on a piece of sandpaper, concrete floor or any abrasive material. This allows the user to get closer to a speed square than with any other pencil.

The Husky pencil makes crisp, sharp lines right out of the packaging. The refillable pencil has a thick-bodied, high-impact ABS body to withstand job-site use. It is designed with as few parts as necessary to eliminate jamming due to sawdust, dirt and grime. The Dura Lead material, a mixture of clay and graphite, has medium density for smooth, dark lines on a wide variety of materials, including concrete. It is 18 percent thicker than the traditional



carpenter pencil lead and lasts two to three times longer.

The Husky Mechanical Carpenter Pencil is available exclusively at Home Depot stores.

🌐 www.huskytools.com

🌐 www.homedepot.com

Resin eliminates efflorescence

Elotex, a business unit of National Starch and Chemical Co., has introduced Elotex ERA100, a redispersible powder additive designed to eliminate primary efflorescence in stuccos, tile grouts, skim coats, cement powder paints and other cement-based mortar systems.

A highly active, resin-based anti-efflorescence compound, Elotex ERA100 exhibits good mixing properties, is compatible with other additives, and has no detrimental effects on working properties. When cured, Elotex ERA100

eliminates or drastically reduces the occurrence of primary efflorescence and increases water repellency.

☎ (888) 435-6839

🌐 www.elotex.com

Propane grinders get starring roles

Amano Pioneer Eclipse Corp. announces the formation of its PowerStar Division, a line that includes high-performance propane grinding and polishing equipment.

Focused on the complete care of concrete and stone surfaces, PowerStar offers affordable, fully integrated system solutions that work without electrical cords or generators. The company also offers chemicals, including EnviroStar Green environmentally friendly solutions, plus diamonds and other support accessories. 🛠️

☎ (800) 367-3550

🌐 www.pioneer-eclipse.com

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American Concrete Institute SCI convention set for spring

The American Concrete Institute will hold its upcoming Spring 2008 Convention in Los Angeles at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza, March 30-April 3.

This spring's convention, which has the theme "Design and Construction Compatibility," offers all kinds of opportunities to view exhibits, attend meetings and sessions, network with concrete professionals from all over the world, and participate in competitions. A Contractors' Day will offer a "Know Before You Build" session, a Student Concrete Competition in which students will construct an Egg Protection Device and FRC Bowling Ball, and a Concrete Mixer with a "Tommy Bahama" theme. In addition, a new session, "Landmark Papers in Concrete Materials Research," will be added to the agenda. A special publication based on this session will be published.

For the first time, ACI will sponsor a book drive at the convention to support education and literacy in local schools. All attendees are invited to bring any new or gently used children's books to the convention.

 (248) 848-3800

 www.aciconvention.org

A new code for structural concrete

The American Concrete Institute has released ACI 318-08, "Building Code Requirements for Structural Concrete and Commentary."

ACI 318 is intended to be a must-have standard for concrete design, construction, inspection, repair and research professionals. It contains the latest code requirements for concrete building design and construction, plus corresponding commentary, and it includes several improvements and changes from ACI 318-05, the 2005 edition. This fall, the American

Concrete Institute and the Portland Cement Association will offer in-depth seminars to highlight and explain the changes in the new code.

 www.concrete.org

Concrete Sawing & Drilling Association

Alliance's recommendations can help reduce silica exposure

In an attempt to educate workers and help prevent silicosis, the Concrete Sawing & Drilling Association and the Occupational Safety & Health Administration have developed and released a fact sheet entitled "Reducing Silica Exposure Fact Sheet."

Concrete cutting, coring, drilling and quarrying are among the jobs that can involve airborne exposure to silica, potentially causing silicosis. Cutting wet is the preferred method of reducing employee exposure to silica dust, while using engineering controls such as ventilation is also effective.

The new Alliance Best Practice on silica outlines a best practice for employers and employees of concrete cutting companies.

 (727) 577-5004

 www.csda.org

Read more about safety precautions for silica dust exposure in the Business Strategies column in this issue of Concrete Decor.

CSDA adds courses to Web site

The Concrete Sawing and Drilling Association has added 21 new training courses to its training Web site.

The new courses, covering health and safety and business subjects, were made available through CSDA's partnership with ProTraining.com. The courses include 11 that cover topics such as walking and working surfaces, job-site safety, driver safety and hearing protection. Ten business courses cover topics such as dealing with difficult people, sexual harassment in the workplace, communication, sales and

marketing and negotiating. Each of these new courses can be taken at home, at any time.

These courses supplement five very popular courses that cover flat sawing, wall sawing, core drilling, hand sawing and wire sawing.

☎ (727) 577-5004

🌐 www.csda.org

🌐 www.csdatraining.com

International Concrete Repair Institute

ICRI praises Matcor for corrosion mitigation work

Matcor Inc. has been presented with two Awards of Merit from the International Concrete Repair Institute for the company's corrosion mitigation work in central Florida.

ICRI's Industrial Award of Merit was presented for Matcor's work with the NASA Vehicle Assembly Building's concrete roof, in Cape Canaveral, Fla. The organization's Low-Rise Restoration Award of Merit was presented for Matcor's work on a four-story concrete condominium in St. Petersburg's Point Pass-A-Grille community. Both awards recognize the technical excellence and cutting-edge corrosion prevention guaranteed by Matcor.

NASA's Vehicle Assembly Building renovation required corrosion protection engineering on a massive scale. The building, about the size of four Empire State Buildings, needed Matcor's cathodic protection to preserve the integrity of its 215,000-square-foot concrete roof.

The 10,950-square-foot Point Pass-A-Grille, an oceanfront condominium building in St. Petersburg, Fla., needed rehabilitation of its conventionally reinforced concrete balconies, walkways and stairwells. Removing and replacing the contaminated concrete was determined to be a costly, short-term solution. The condominium board opted to integrate Matcor's CPBD System-III impressed current with conductive coating system on three levels.

🌐 www.icri.org

🌐 www.matcor.com

Portland Cement Association

PCA updates the classics

The Portland Cement Association's newly revised "Concrete Floors on Ground" is a comprehensive guide that provides the latest information on the design and construction process. This expanded fourth edition describes the planning, construction, and repair of concrete floors on ground for a variety of floor classifications, including high-tech industrial floors. A result of years of designing and troubleshooting



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concrete slabs on ground, the bestseller serves as design guide, construction manual, and authoritative reference for contractors, designers and suppliers.

Also, the PCA's sixth edition of "Concrete Masonry Handbook for Architects, Engineers and Builders" highlights recent advancements in concrete masonry, enabling the design and construction of state-of-the-art residential, commercial, and industrial structures.

(800) 868-6733

www.cement.org

Sustainability awards planned

The Portland Cement Association has announced an initiative to recognize public officials who take the lead in green building. The annual PCA Sustainable Leadership Awards will honor government leaders who advance sustainable development in their communities through the use of concrete and cement-based products.

PCA encourages all members of the concrete industry to submit nominations. Four categories will be recognized. The Leadership in Sustainability Policy Award honors public officials who advance policies that promote the concept of sustainable development. Three other award categories honor public officials who utilize cement or cement-based products to achieve sustainable benefits for projects in three categories: Homes and Residential Building, Nonresidential Building, and Infrastructure. The deadline to submit final entries is May 30, 2008.

www.cement.org/SustainableLeadership

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U.S. Green Building Council

Convention plans for 2008 announced

The U.S. Green Building Council today announced Archbishop Desmond Tutu as the opening keynote speaker for its 2008 Greenbuild Conference & Expo, to be held Nov. 17-19 in Boston.

Bishop Tutu, a Nobel Peace Laureate, lead a crusade for social justice and racial conciliation in South Africa as then-General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches. His many accomplishments include receiving the Nobel Peace Prize. He is committed to stopping global AIDS and has served as the honorary chairman for the Global AIDS Alliance.

USGBC's annual Greenbuild International Conference & Expo brings the latest building products and systems and more than 25,000 green building professionals together to share insights and information. The expo's 2008 theme is "Revolutionary Green: Innovations for Global Sustainability."

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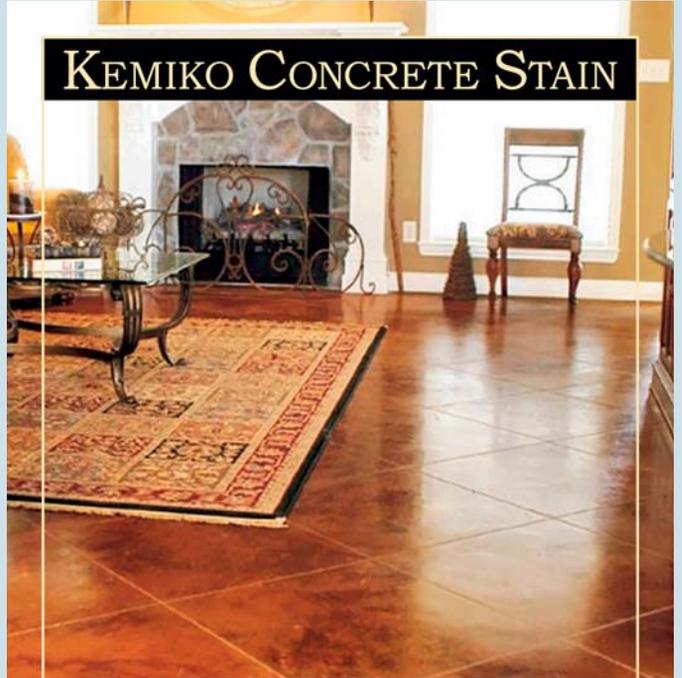


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Catering to his client's passion for fine wine, Scott Cohen, owner of The Green Scene in Canoga Park, Calif., crafted this striking outdoor serving counter, which incorporates more than 200 recycled wine bottles.

Most of the bottles were stacked into the base of the counter and lit with more than 400 fiber-optic cables. But the bar surface is what really makes this project top-shelf. Cast in place using Styrofoam forms, the countertop showcases 14 wine and Scotch bottles that have been melted — Cohen used his 1,500-degree Fahrenheit kiln — and flattened for use as custom tiles. The melted bottles were wired with an additional 700 fiber-optic cables while casting.

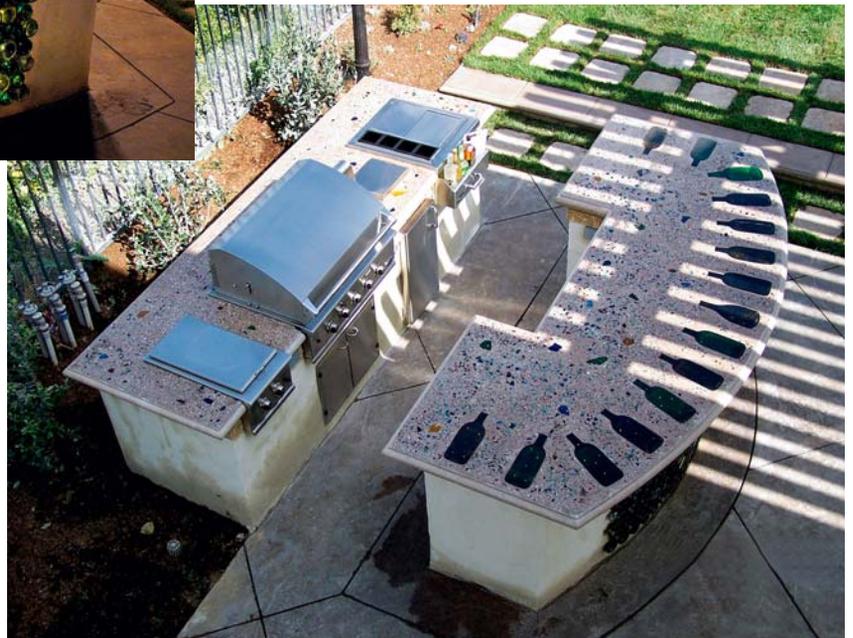


The concrete itself was integrally colored with Davis Color's Sandstone and hand-seeded with smaller pieces of recycled glass bottles. After the concrete had cured for 28 days, Cohen used granite polishing tools to finish the surface and a double-coat of sealer to protect the artfully constructed countertop.

Though this piece was Cohen's first using flattened-wine-bottle tiles, it didn't take long for the technique to attract attention — especially since this countertop, along with many other Green Scene projects, has been featured on the HGTV network.

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