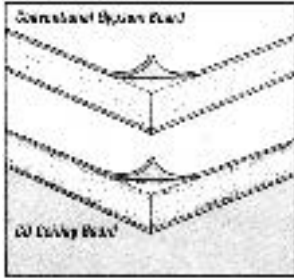


Special Issue Focus: Innovative Materials

by Clayton DeKorne

The
Journal's
pick of
curious,
interesting
and useful
products.

No-Sag Ceiling



A new type of 1/2-inch drywall promises to eliminate ceiling sags on 24-inch on-center framing. Domtar's CD Ceiling Board has a three-layer, "controlled density" gypsum core. The outermost layers on each side are denser than a conventional gypsum board core. The inner layer is lighter. The overall reported effect of this "controlled density" core is a more rigid board that is only slightly heavier than standard drywall and snaps cleaner when cut. With the increased density, the new board may have better sound ratings, but at press time the product was still being tested. There is no increase in the fire rating of the CD Board, though Domtar reports that a 1/2-inch fire-rated product will be available soon. CD Board comes in standard 4x8, 4x10, and 4x12 sheets. For more information, contact Domtar Gypsum, P.O. Box 543, Ann Arbor, MI 48106; 800/366-8274.

Cement Siding



Fibre Cem recently introduced a new line of fiber-cement siding. Handi-board, that doesn't rot or need painting and is resistant to moisture (including salt water), pests, chemicals, and impact. Handi-board is a straight board siding (no bevel or shiplap) so it can be used for everything from the fascia to the skirt board. It comes in 12-foot lengths and is 9 inches wide and 3/8 inch thick. For clapboards, a 2-inch lap is recommended. But don't worry about cupping and splitting. This stuff is as dimensionally stable as...well, as concrete, and carries a 50-year transferable warranty. It can be cut with a standard carbide saw blade (although a diamond blade is recommended) and nailed without predrilling. Joints

are handled just like wood; caulk is recommended at butts and miters. As you might expect, Handi-board is a bit heavier than most siding. A 12-foot length weighs 16 pounds, adding up to 294 pounds per square. Should you want to paint it, use an alkaline-resistant paint (most latex paints are) and wet the material down so that as it dries, it sucks the paint in. A paint job done this way reportedly lasts for 15 years. For more information, contact FibreCem Corporation, 7 Woodlawn Green, Suite 212, Charlotte, NC 28217; 800/346-6147.

Sprayable, Stretchable Stucco

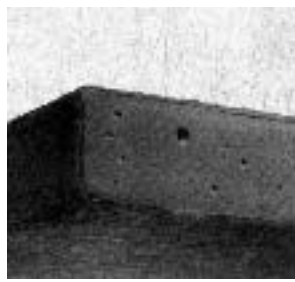


Perma Chink has developed a new synthetic stucco that combines the flexibility of elastomeric paint with the texture of a stucco finish. Like other exterior insulation finish systems (EIFS), Stuc-O-Flex is just that—a system: it requires a base coat, a fiberglass mesh, and a finish coat. The manufacturer recommends that the entire wall surface be treated with the base coat and mesh, not just the joints. And if applied directly to sheathing, the wall should be primed. Unlike other EIFS systems currently available, the base and finish coats of the Stuc-O-Flex system can be sprayed on using a conventional hopper set-up. The base coat can be sprayed over the mesh, too, as opposed to bedding the mesh in a wet, troweled-on base coat. While the material is more expensive than comparable synthetic stuccoes, this spray installation should reduce labor costs. The manufacturer estimates an average of \$4.40/sq.ft. when sprayed on compared to \$6/sq.ft. for trowel-on application.

Stuc-O-Flex is truly elastic when cured. A sample we examined felt like EPDM rubber and could be stretched to twice its size without breaking. This should help eliminate cracking caused by movement of the substrate. Moreover, this stucco is warranted for 5 years, compared to one year for most competitors. For more information, contact Perma-Chink Systems, 17455 NE 67th Court, Suite A, Redmond, WA 98052; 206/885-6050.

Water-Resistant Exterior Gypsum

Gypsum sheathing isn't very popular in rainy weather. But DensGlass



Gold Sheathing has a silicon-treated core and a fiberglass-matte face covering. The combination of these materials makes this material stronger and more resistant to moisture penetration than other gypsum sheathings. It's warranted for six months of exposure (which should get anyone through the winter) and five years otherwise. According to the manufacturer, DensGlass does not expand, sag, or buckle in humid weather. We soaked a sample for three days in water. It softened only slightly but maintained its integrity enough to hold a screw. The alkaline-resistant fiberglass-matte is embedded in the core, which seemed much less prone to delamination, even after soaking. These properties should improve its performance with stucco finishes. DensGlass weighs only slightly more than ordinary gypsum sheathing. The dense core makes it snap well. But due to the fibers in the covering, long sleeves, dust masks and goggles are recommended when handling it. Sheets are available in 4x8, 4x9, and 4x10-foot lengths and in 1/2-inch and 3/8-inch widths. The 3/8-inch panels have a one-hour fire rating. For more information, contact Georgia-Pacific Corporation, P.O. Box 105605, Atlanta, GA 30348-5605; 800/225-6119.

Lightweight Roof Tiles



An epoxy and granular-finished, galvanized steel roof tile, DecraBond, looks like Spanish tile but weighs about 75% less. And based on a sample we examined, it's still strong enough to walk on. The granular finish gives the "tile" a ceramic look from a distance, deadens the din of pouring rain, and reportedly reduces the capillary action that could wick and hold water at the laps. The granules seem to wear off like those on asphalt shingles. But the material is ASTM-approved for weathering and carries a 25-year transferable warranty. For reroofing, tearoffs are reportedly unnecessary. The old roof is strapped and the tiles are nailed on. The old roof is hidden by extending the new tile over the eaves, and an edge tile is used along the rake lines. Each tile is about 4 feet long and 1 foot wide, and has 7 "pans" (the scallops that look like individual clay

tiles). The top edge of each course interlocks with the course above it to prevent wind and rain penetration. DecraBond, a New Zealand product, has passed independent hurricane testing in both Florida and Australia on a 3/12 slope and steeper. And (for you island folks) the run-off reportedly complies with the World Health Organization's standards for drinking water. For more information, contact DecraBond Roofing System: Carter, Holt, Harvey USA, Inc., 6666 Mykawa Road, Houston, TX 77033; 713/645-6074.

LVL Trim



Fascias may be straighter and easier to install with Tec Board, a 3/4 (finish) laminated-veneer-lumber (LVL) product. This trim board comes preprimed in 4-, 6-, 8-, 10-, and 12-inch widths and in 8-, 12-, and 16-foot lengths. The material is reportedly more stable, straighter, and stronger than solid-sawn 5/4 lumber, so subfascias are not necessary. For more information, contact Tecton Laminates Corp., 2700 Pine Grove Ave., Suite 43, Port Huron, MI 48060; 800/825-8120.

Ersatz Stone



I've never been too fond of fake stone facades before I saw Cultured Stone. But this stuff looks pretty convincing, possibly because its origins are not too far from the earth. Cultured Stone is made from lightweight concrete in molds taken off true rock. A variety of types—from field-stone to split-face, brick, and "Sequoia Stones" (fake redwood rounds)—are available. The stone weighs about 8 pounds per square foot and ranges in thickness between 1/2 inch to 2 inches. A new line, Pro-Fit looks a lot like quarried ledge-stone, can be applied without grout, and on the interior can be laid up with mastic. For more information, contact Stucco Stone Products, Inc., P.O. Box 270, Napa Valley, CA 94559; 800/255-1727. ■