

## Lightweight Insulating Block

by Charles Wardell



Most insulated concrete block systems consist of lightweight concrete blocks whose voids are filled with rigid foam. But one of the most intriguing new systems uses no foam at all. The *Hebel Wall System* consists of solid aerated-concrete blocks (made from sand, cement, lime, and an expanding agent) that are as strong as concrete at one-fifth the weight. And an 8-inch Hebel wall has an overall insulating value of R-30. Hebel blocks are laid up with thinset mortar and require no surface bonding. The lightweight blocks can be sawed, nailed, and routed with normal woodworking tools.

Hebel built more than 70 homes in the Southeast last year at an average cost that was 2% higher than a comparable wood-frame house with brick veneer. But the manufacturer points out that the higher cost is offset by lower insurance premiums and maintenance costs, and savings from not having to protect against termites.

Contact: Hebel Southeast, 3800 Camp Creek Pkwy., Building 2600, Suite 120, Atlanta, GA 30331; 404-344-2897.

### Spray Foam Adhesive

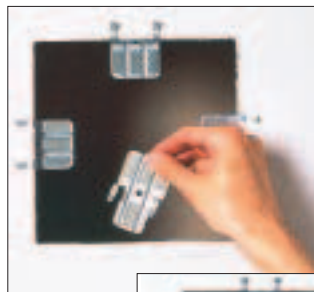
The people who make *Poly Stix* polystyrene spray adhesive say that it can permanently bond rigid polystyrene foam to nearly any surface. Poly Stix



uses the latest in polymer technology to embed the adhesive in the polystyrene beads, creating a strong bond that requires only firm pressure for less than four minutes to set up. Poly Stix is available in 1- and 5-gallon containers for about \$18 per gallon, and in convenient aerosol cans priced from \$2.05 to \$7.40.

Contact: Poly-Forms Inc., P.O. Box 158, Taftville, CT 06380; 800/537-3676.

### Drywall Patching Aid



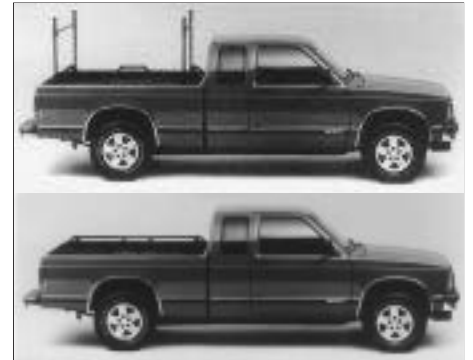
If you do much wall patching, you'll want to keep a supply of USG's new *Drywall Repair Clips* on hand. The clips make it easy to patch holes in drywall where there is no framing to fasten the

patch to. After cutting out the damaged section with a utility knife or drywall saw, slide the clips onto the edge of the cutout and screw them in place through the drywall. Then cut a patch to fit into the cutout, and screw through the patch to the clips. The Repair Clips are suitable for 1/2- and 5/8-inch-thick drywall panels, and come in packages of six (screws included).

Contact: United States Gypsum Company, P.O. Box 806278, Chicago, IL 60680; 800/874-4968.

### Removable Lumber Rack

Lumber racks are great for hauling lumber on your pickup, but they get in the way when you have to move a large appliance or take a load of debris to the dump. The *Rail-N-Rack* solves this problem with two hinged side-rail assemblies that bolt to the truck rails, and that are connected to one another by a pair of telescoping cross bars. To assemble the rack, lock the side rails into the vertical position, then slip the cross bars over



the ends. To take the rack down, remove the cross bars from the uprights (they come with a storage box that fits behind the seat), and fold down the upright rails. Assembly and disassembly each takes less than a minute.

Rated for up to 500 pounds (the manufacturer says that a typical fixed rack carries a 750- to 1,000-pound rating), the rack is wide enough to carry 4x8 sheets of plywood or drywall. Rail pads are available to protect cargo from scratches. The Rail-N-Rack sells for around \$300, plus shipping. The manufacturer says that it makes sizes to fit virtually every pickup built since 1973.

Contact: Technic Tool Corporation, 725 29th St. North, Lewiston, ID 83501; 800/243-9592.

## Precut Wainscot



If you have a job that calls for simple, V-groove wainscot, then check out *Wainscot Panels*, a line of precut and prefinished veneer panels. The panels are 32 inches high (typical for wainscoting), and are finished with an acrylic topcoat. They come in wood veneer and simulated wood-grain styles. A small groove pattern is available in birch, cherry, oak, and pine; a wider groove pattern comes in birch, kaudamu, oak, and pine.

Contact: Georgia-Pacific, 133 Peachtree St. N.E., Atlanta, GA 30303; 800/284-5347.

## Quick Fix For Squeaky Floors

John O'Berry was getting annoyed with the squeak in his home's second-floor hallway. But he had no access to the subfloor from below,



and if he pulled up the carpet to screw the floor down, he could have a nightmare getting the carpet to lay down right again.

After much trial and error, O'Berry invented the *Squeeeeeek No More*, a tool that let him screw through the carpet without pulling it up. The kit uses a die-cast alignment- and depth-control device to help drive specially designed screws through the carpet. The screws stop biting when a scored section 1 inch from the head reaches the surface of the underlayment. A gripper on the alignment tool is then used to snap off the screw shank, leaving the threaded portion of the screw embedded in the floor members. No part of the screw protrudes above the underlayment; when used in a hardwood floor, the embedded screw shank looks like a countersunk finish nail. The screws are wrapped with cellophane tape to prevent them from unravelling the carpet. The kit retails for \$25 to \$29.

Contact: O'Berry Enterprises Inc., 664 Exmoor Court, Crystal Lake, IL 60014; 800/459-8428.

## Versatile Casements



Most combination windows are either fixed or hinged. But Pella's *Designer and Architect Series* double casement has one venting and one fixed sash. The windows also include a positive sash lock placed 12 inches from the sill, making it easier to reach the lock when the window is installed over a kitchen counter. Forty-five standard sizes are available.

Contact: Pella Corporation, 102 Main St., Pella, IA 50219; 515/628-1000. ■