

Products | by Tom O'Brien

Rainscreen Lite. Drainable housewraps offer some of the benefits of a rainscreen installation without its cost or complexity. Benjamin Obdyke says its new *HydroGap* is more effective at removing moisture from wall assemblies than any other drainable product. The membrane features unidirectional spacers that create a 1-millimeter gap between the sheathing and cladding; installers can roll out the material in any direction without affecting performance. It's sold in 500-square-foot rolls and costs about 20 cents per square foot.



Benjamin Obdyke,
877/647-8368, benjaminobdyke.com.

Bugless Panels. In most parts of the country, rigid insulation installed below grade is susceptible to termite damage. *Bora-Foam* is different, says its maker. The polystyrene panel is infused with the same nontoxic insecticide used in the company's flagship product, *Bora-Care*. Layers of 3-mil poly on both sides of the panel reduce vapor permeance and prevent the preservative from leaching out. *Bora-Foam* comes in 2.5-inch (R-11) and 3.75-inch (R-16) thicknesses. A 4-foot-by-8-foot-by-2.5-inch panel costs about \$30.

Nisus Corp., 800/264-0870, nisuscorp.com.



Long-Term Fall Protection. The key to the *HitchClip Fall Arrest System* is a 4.4-ounce anchoring clip that attaches to the roof framing with just four 16d (or equivalent) fasteners. Its compact size — 2 inches by 11 inches — means a worker can carry several in a toolbox and install them as needed, says the maker. To make future roof access safer and

easier, the low-profile clips can be overlapped with shingles and left in place after the job. Individual clips cost \$10 each, compatible roof jacks \$75 each.

Safety Anchor Fall Equipment Corp., 888/780-2845, hitchclip.com.



Efficient Hot Water. Rinnai has unveiled a new line of highly efficient tankless products. Maximum Btu for the two indoor and two outdoor *Ultra Series Condensing Tankless Water Heaters* range from 157,000 to 199,000; energy factors (EF) run from .93 to .96. The company attributes the units' efficiency to a unique condensing

design that preheats the water using heat captured from flue gases. Prices start at \$2,000.

Rinnai America, 800/621-9419, rinnai.us.

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Felt Substitute.

Most synthetic roofing underlayments are designed to replace 30-pound felt. *RhinoRoof* is intended for applications where the 15-pound variety would be called for. Its maker says that the product is many times stronger than oil-saturated 15-pound felt yet provides twice the coverage, lies flatter on the roof, and costs about the same. It has a slip-resistant texture and is easily chalked, says the company. It's suitable for use only with asphalt shingles. The manufacturer declined to provide pricing.

InterWrap, 888/713-7663, interwrap.com.



Distinctive Hardware.

Fusion Hardware Group's decorative locksets, door handles, and deadbolts come in a range of designs and finishes to fit almost any architectural style. The *Weston Handleset* shown is made of solid brass and retails for \$220. The company also makes hinges, stops, cabinet hardware, and bath accessories.

Fusion Hardware Group, 877/215-4683, fusionhardware.com.



Almost Tankless. A. O. Smith claims its new water heater offers the advantages of on-demand and traditional heating appliances without the disadvantages. The *Next Hybrid* gas water heater is powered by a tankless engine that supposedly can deliver 189 gallons of hot water in the first hour. A 25-gallon buffer tank ensures a constant flow rate during periods of peak demand.

Though smaller than a conventional 50-gallon model, the Next Hybrid delivers twice as much hot water, the maker says. It sells for \$1,800.

A. O. Smith Water Products, 800/527-1953, hotwater.com.



Foolproof Shutoff. Prefab washer and dryer boxes take the hassle out of roughing in those appliances. The *Pull Stop Box* aims to do the same for toilets. Instead of assembling an angle-stop, stub-out, mounting bracket, and valve, you simply crimp or solder the water supply to a rough-in unit that has an integral brass valve, then screw the box to a stud.

After the drywall is painted, you snap on a trim kit (which includes the shutoff knob). The rough-in unit costs about \$12, the trim kit \$1.50.

LSP Products Group, 800/854-3215, lspproducts.com.



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Alarmed Lock. Schlage's *Keyed Entry Lock With Built-in Alarm* offers a lower-cost alternative to hard-wired security systems. The alarm can be set to detect not only forced entries but any kind of activity at the door — a useful feature for homeowners trying to keep tabs on children or elderly parents. The product comes in the company's Camelot and Century styles with a brass or nickel finish and is powered by two AA batteries. It costs \$100.



Schlage Lock Co.: 888/805-9837, schlage.com.

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Fireproof Foam. *GacoFireStop* is the first open-cell foam approved for use in attics and crawlspaces with no additional ignition barrier. According to the maker, the insulation has passed the AC 377 Appendix X test for flammability twice: shaved, and with the skin on. It's NFPA-approved for 12-inch-maximum wall thicknesses and 16-inch-maximum ceilings. Installation costs for an R-19 wall assembly average \$3 per square foot, and for an R-38 ceiling about \$6 per square foot.

Gaco Western, 877/699-4226, gacowallfoam.com.



Solar Roofing. *Apollo* is a low-profile photovoltaic array that can be installed along with the shingles by a certified roofing contractor. It can also be set up on existing roofs. According to the manufacturer, the high-efficiency polycrystalline cells can produce 12 watts per square foot. The array is designed to be incorporated into asphalt shingle roofs with a minimum 4/12 pitch. Contractor's costs range from \$0.75 to \$1.50 per watt.

CertainTeed, 800/233-8990, certainteed.com.

Heat and Hot Water. The *Prestige Excellence Combination Boiler* features a stainless steel condensing boiler that provides 110,000 Btu per hour for space heating and a 14-gallon indirect water heater that delivers up to 180



gallons per hour of domestic hot water. Its control panel can operate as many as four circulators in a two-zone building. The unit is rated at 96 percent AFU efficiency and can be fueled by natural gas or propane. It costs \$4,500.

Triangle Tube, 856/228-8881, triangeltube.com.