

Products

Rain Screen for Basements. A finished basement is a great use of space — as long as it's bone dry. The *Control Cavity* interior drainage plane for basement walls is designed to work the way an exterior rain screen does: It keeps wall assemblies dry by channeling intrusive moisture to a perimeter drain. According to the manufacturer, the corrugated material is made from 100 percent recycled high-impact polystyrene and is easily trimmed with a utility knife. It's sold in 35-pound rolls that are 50 feet long and 31½ inches wide and costs about 80 cents per square foot.

Masonry Technology, 800/879-3348, mtidry.com.



Advanced Underlayment. DuPont claims that its *RoofLiner* synthetic roofing underlayment offers a number of advantages over conventional felt. For starters, a single 48-inch by 250-foot roll weighs about the same as a roll of 30-pound felt but covers five times the surface area. In addition, it repels water and resists mold growth better than typical roofing felt, the company says, and offers superior tear and UV resistance. The membrane is approved for slopes of 2/12 or greater and can be used in high-wind zones as long as the proper fastening schedule is followed. It costs about \$155 per roll.

DuPont, 800/448-9835, dupont.com.

Always Available Dust Pan. Some cleanups really need a broom — but wouldn't it be nice not to have to mess with the dust pan? According to its maker, the *VacuSweep Sweep Inlet Valve* fits easily in a 2x4 wall or a cabinet kickplate and attaches to a central vac system using standard fittings. You activate the suction by opening the spring-loaded door with a toe, then sweep the debris in front of the opening and watch it disappear. The VacuSweep comes in several colors and costs about \$30 (not including pipe and adaptors).

Canplas Industries, 800/461-5300, vaculine.com.



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Blind-Side Waterproofing Membrane.

If you're building on a tight lot where the soil retention system serves as the back of the foundation forms, the waterproofing must go on before the concrete is poured. *MiraPly* self-adhering blind-side waterproofing can make a difficult job just a bit easier. According to the maker, the thermoplastic polyolefin membrane is coated with a butyl adhesive that forms a permanent bond with the poured concrete. It comes in two formulations: one for vertical applications and another for horizontal (underslab) applications. The manufacturer declined to provide pricing.

Carlisle, 888/229-0199, carlisle-ccw.com.



Self-Cleaning Tile. StonePeak Ceramics recently unveiled a line of tile that the company says repels dirt, kills surface bacteria, and even cleans the air. Baked into the surface of *Active Clean Air & Antibacterial Ceramic Tiles* is a coating of titanium dioxide that purportedly reacts with light to repel dirt and transform harmful substances — like air pollution — into harmless compounds. The tiles come in nine shades and various dimensions and cost about \$1.50 per square foot more than the company's standard offerings.

StonePeak Ceramics, 312/506-2800, stonepeakceramics.com.

Soft-Sided Dumpster.

Steep rental fees often make it impractical to keep a dumpster on site for the duration of a job, so some builders create an unsightly junk pile. The *Bagster Dumpster in a Bag* looks to be a better solution. Available at building supply centers and online (\$30 on Amazon), the bag unfolds to become a 3-cubic-yard container (4 feet by 8 feet by 2½ feet) that, according to the maker, holds as much as 3,300 pounds of debris. Pickup service — for \$100 — is available in most major metropolitan areas.

Waste Management, 877/789-2247, thebagster.com.



Easier Tile Cleaning. The *Bucket Ape* cleaning kit can save you the enormous hassle of carrying heavy buckets of water around the job site. It consists of a shallow tray that fits on a standard 5-gallon bucket and a drain fitting that you place near the bottom of the pail. Add two garden hoses and you have a makeshift sink that can be set up wherever it's needed. The kit can be purchased directly from the manufacturer for \$13.

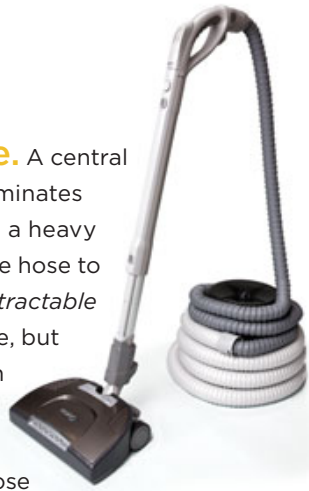
Pragmatic Products, 877/884-5332, bucketape.com.



Products

Hose Within a Hose.

A central vacuum-cleaning system eliminates the hassle of lugging around a heavy machine — but there's still the hose to deal with. The *EasyReach Retractable Hose* is 13 feet long in storage, but a twist of the cuff releases an inner hose that telescopes to 30 feet in length. When the dirty work is done, the hose retracts with the push of a button. The entire assembly weighs only 9 pounds, according to the maker. It's sold as part of a \$620 package that includes an electric power brush and cleaning tools.



Beam Central Vacuum Systems, 800/369-2326, beamvac.com.

Dimmer for CFLs.

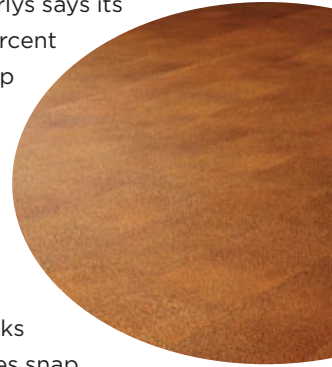
A lot of energy-conscious consumers are disappointed with the range and performance of dimmable CFLs. Leviton says its new *Decora CFL Slide Dimmer* can help. It's able to detect the high- and low-end dimming capability of a CFL, and it adjusts power output to improve the bulb's performance and dimming range. The device works with a wide range of dimmable CFLs (as well as incandescents). It costs about \$20.



Leviton, 800/323-8920, leviton.com.

Leather Floors.

The idea of walking on cowhide may sound decadent, but Torlys says its leather flooring is made of 100 percent recycled material — primarily scrap from shoemakers and upholsterers that would otherwise end up in a landfill. The $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch-thick engineered product features a 2.7 mm layer of leather over a softwood core and cork backing; it comes in 8-inch by 45-inch planks and 15-inch-square tiles. The pieces snap together to form a floating floor that's easy to dismantle and reinstall, says the maker. The flooring costs \$11 per square foot.



Torlys, 800/461-2573, torlys.com.

Attractive Waterproofing.

Since most dampproofing coatings are covered up by backfill or studwalls, it doesn't matter what they look like. Sometimes, though, the foundation walls must remain visible, and in those cases you might want to try *Sure-Coat*. Part of the ProSpec line from Bonsal American, this portland cement-based coating is suitable for interior or exterior surfaces. It's applied by brush, spray, or trowel and cures to form a durable fine-sand finish that can serve as a decorative coating, says the maker. Sure-Coat comes in gray and white, but it's also paintable. A 50-pound bag costs about \$28.



Bonsal American, 800/738-1621, prospec.com.