

Products | Pneumatic Fasteners | by Patrick McCombe

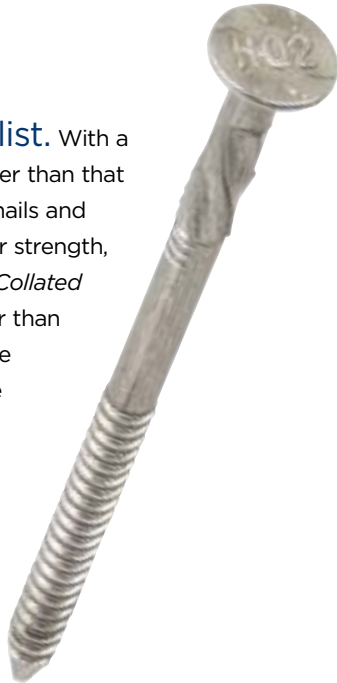
Full-Head Cordless Framer. Paslode's cordless framing nailers have always been popular with professionals. However, some tasks require full-head nails, which means that clipped-head framers like Paslode's need proprietary nails with an offset head; these special nails can be tough to find and can be a problem with picky inspectors. A new full-head gas-powered framing nailer from Powers can help. Like the Paslode, the *Trak-It W3-21FRH* contains a linear-combustion engine powered by a disposable gas cylinder; unlike the Paslode, it accepts shear-wall-friendly 22-degree Hitachi-style plastic-collated nails from 2³/₈ to 3¹/₄ inches. It sells for \$399.

Powers, 800/524-3244, www.powers.com.



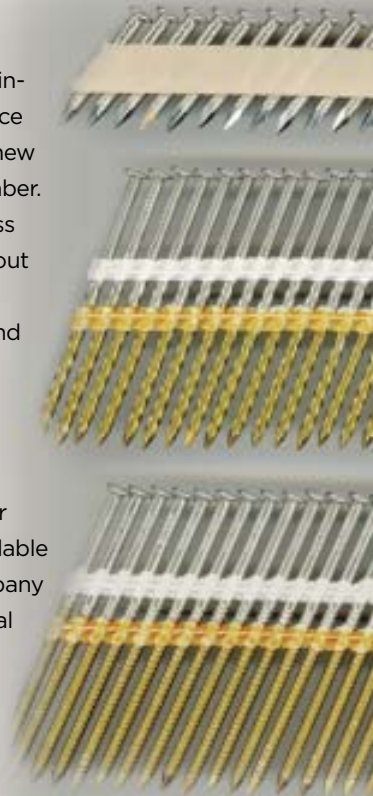
Sheathing Specialist. With a head that's 30 percent larger than that of conventional sheathing nails and with 20 percent more shear strength, Bostitch's new *Hurricane Collated Nail* weathers storms better than other collated nails, says the company. An update of the Sheather Plus, the new nail lacks the older version's purple coating because lab tests showed better performance in high-wind and seismic events without it. Other upgrades include stiffer plastic collation, an aggressive ringed shank, and deformation under the head (to prevent racking). Using the new nail on a 2,000-square-foot house costs about \$15 more than using conventional nails, estimates Bostitch. Hurricane nails come in .113- and .131-inch versions — in 21-degree collation only — to fit most popular full-head nailers.

Bostitch, 800/556-6696, www.bostitch.com.



Worry-Free Collated Fasteners. By now, quality-conscious contractors know that stainless-steel fasteners are the best choice for exterior work, especially for the new formulations of pressure-treated lumber. Swan Secure Products offers stainless collated nails and staples for just about any application, including *Stainless-Steel Metal Connector Nails* in 20- and 31-degree collations and .120-inch-diameter stainless-steel *Spiral Shank* and *Ring-Shank Nails*; the latter, I have found, resist bending and penetrate dense materials better than thinner — but more widely available — stainless siding nails do. The company also makes stainless finish nails, metal connectors, lag screws, and carriage bolts. See its Web site for prices.

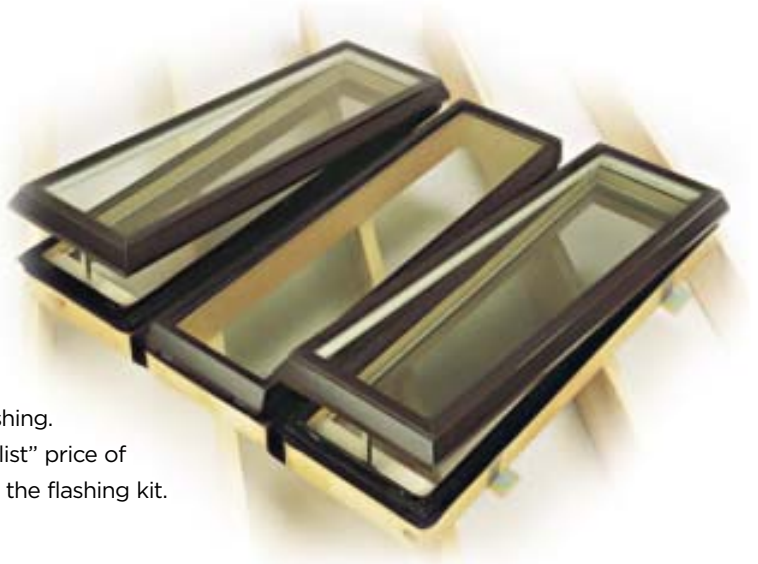
Swan Secure Products, 800/966-2801, www.swansecure.com.



Products | Skylights

Thin Is In. Designed for easy installation in roofs with 16-inch-o.c. framing, *Insula-Dome* 14-inch-wide skylights come in six standard sizes from 22 inches to 8 feet long. These narrow units speed installation by eliminating any need for extensive reframing and the associated drywall or plaster repair. Available for sloped and flat roofs, all units feature energy-efficient glazing, double-seal EDPM gaskets, and built-in condensation channels. Customers can choose from one-piece soldered copper flashing or aluminum step flashing. Without options, a 14x46-inch fixed skylight has a “trade list” price of \$150 (\$308 for the same-size vented model) plus \$53 for the flashing kit.

Insula-Dome, 800/551-4786, www.insula-dome.com.



Premium-Grade Shade. Skylights are a great way to add a little ventilation or brightness to a living space, but blinding light from an overhead opening can be a real nuisance to folks trying to watch TV or to sleep — or to homeowners trying to keep summer temperatures below boiling. Thanks to layers of ceramic film, the *SageGlass* found in Velux skylights changes from clear to deeply tinted with just the flip of a switch. Not surprisingly, the cutting-edge technology doesn't come cheap; expect to pay \$1,800 for a VS104 with *SageGlass* compared with \$644 for the same unit without the feature.

Velux, 800/283-2831, www.veluxusa.com.



Step-Saver.

Offered in nine standard sizes and featuring a one-piece curb, Wasco's *E-Class SkyWindow* boasts the largest glass area available and installs faster than any other major brand of skylight, says the company. Key to its speedy installation is a one-piece flexible flashing that makes sealants and step flashing unnecessary. List prices range from \$172 for a 22x22-inch fixed window with clear glass to \$945 for a 46¹/₂x45¹/₂-inch motorized venting unit.

Wasco, 800/388-0293, www.skylighting.biz.

Products | Instantaneous Water Heaters

Safety in Mind. Like many other manufacturers, Rheem has installed several safety features on its tankless water heaters that aren't commonly found on conventional heaters. Case in point: A safety film covering the heat exchanger in the *RTG-74* shuts the unit down if things get too hot. Should the opposite



problem occur — a heating-system failure or an unusual freeze in a typically warm climate — a built-in heater protects internal components down to -30°F . The *RTG-74* has an oxygen-depletion safety device, too, which monitors oxygen, carbon monoxide, and carbon dioxide and shuts off the gas supply if there's a problem. I found the *RTG-74* on the Web for about \$900.

Rheem, 800/432-8373, www.rheem.com.

Spot Hot. It can take forever for hot water to get to a half-bath or sink located far from the water tank. But there's an easy fix: an electric point-of-use heater like Stiebel-Eltron's *DHC*. Electric point-of-use models don't need a flue, and since they make hot water right where it's needed, there's no waiting or wasted water, either. The *DHC* comes in eight models from 3,000 to 9,600 watts; all units feature scald-guard thermostats and compact cabinets. According to the manufacturer, the *DHC* uses 50 percent less energy than a comparable tank-type electric water heater. Prices start at \$170 to \$200.



Stiebel-Eltron, 800/582-8423, www.stiebel-eltron-usa.com.

Steady as She Goes. Modulating burners like those found in Bradford White's *EverHot* tankless gas water heaters save fuel and provide a more consistent water temperature than nonmodulating burners



do. Available in two indoor and two outdoor models, the *EverHot* units can deliver about 4 gallons per minute at a 77°F temperature rise and sport an easy-to-use digital control panel for temperature adjustment. I found it on the Web for about \$1,300.

Bradford White, 800/523-2931, www.bradfordwhite.com.