

## Structural Screws

*A screw that won't splinter wood*

**T**he new 1/4-inch-diameter **Strong-Drive Screw (SDS)** was developed by Simpson Strong-Tie for securing framing connectors and for wood-to-wood structural applications. According to Simpson, the screw requires no predrilling: its "4CUT" tip reportedly eliminates wood from splitting during installation, and the serrated threads help reduce torque to make driving easier. The screws also come with a double-barrier coating that the manufacturer claims is more corrosion-resistant than a hot-dip galvanized coating, making them a good choice for any exterior application but especially with pressure-treated woods. For more information, contact Simpson Strong-Tie, 800-999-5099, [www.strongtie.com](http://www.strongtie.com).



SIMPSON STRONG-TIE SDS

## Stainless Steel Air Nails

*Available in all sizes and types*

**I**n a coastal climate, stainless steel fasteners are, without a doubt, the best choice for exterior work, especially in the new formulations of pressure-treated lumber. Swan Secure Products offers a full line of **stainless steel nails and staples** in plastic, paper, and wire collations for 20- to 22-degree and 31-degree magazines. Smooth-, ring-, and spiral-shank framing nails are available in 2- to 3 1/2-inch lengths and .134-inch diameters. Also available are .120-inch-diameter metal connector nails in both 22- and 31-degree plastic and paper collations. As of this writing, 3 1/2- by .134-inch nails are running about \$190 per 1,000. Current prices are available on the company's website. For more information, contact Swan Secure Products, 800-966-2801, [www.swansecure.com](http://www.swansecure.com).

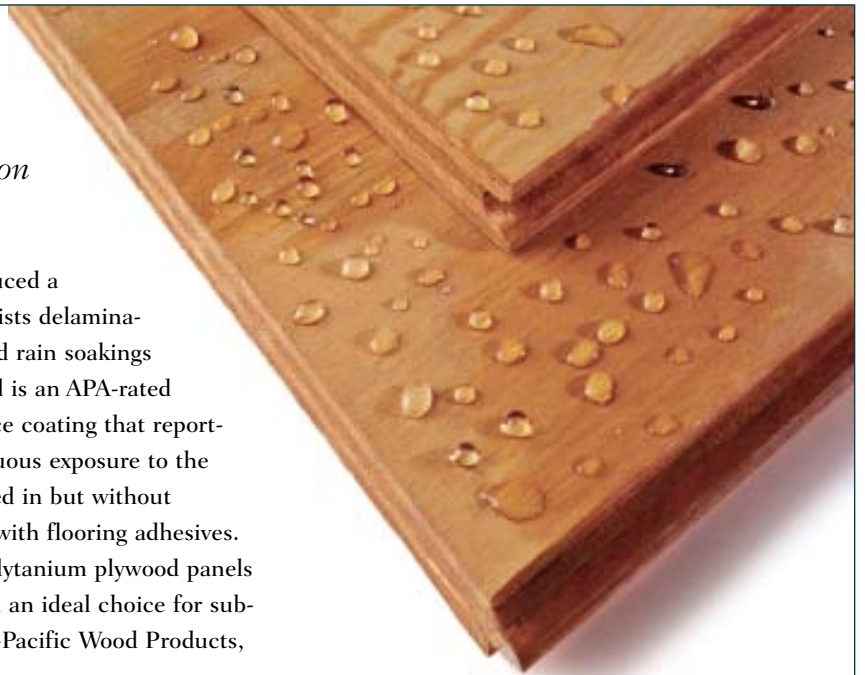


SWAN SECURE COLLATED NAILS

## Dry Ply

*Subfloor resists rain during construction*

Georgia-Pacific Wood Products has introduced a treated subfloor panel that reportedly resists delamination and edge swelling caused by repeated rain soakings during construction. **Plytanium DryPly** plywood is an APA-rated Sturd-I-Floor panel with a water-repellent surface coating that reportedly resists water for up to four weeks of continuous exposure to the elements — long enough to get the building dried in but without putting a heavy, waxy coating that will interfere with flooring adhesives. Georgia-Pacific Wood Products also claims its Plytanium plywood panels are 10% stiffer than ordinary OSB, making them an ideal choice for subflooring. For more information, contact Georgia-Pacific Wood Products, 800-284-5347, [www.gp.com/build](http://www.gp.com/build).



PLYTANIUM DRYPLY

## Humidity Control

*Dehumidifying for comfort in a coastal climate*

Coastal climates are generally humid climates. Air conditioning can help reduce indoor humidity when the weather's also hot, but that's not always the case. On those rainy days when it's 65°F or less, or in the evening after the sun has set but humidity levels remain high, dehumidifying the home still remains an important part of providing maximum comfort. That's where a whole-house dehumidifier like the Lennox **Humiditrol** comes into play. Consider it a dehumidification system optimizer, says Lennox product manager Jennifer Shelby. It's designed to tie into the existing comfort system (air conditioner, furnace, or heat pump) for precision humidity control. For more information, contact Lennox Industries, 800-953-6669, [www.lennox.com/residential](http://www.lennox.com/residential).



LENNOX HUMIDITROL

# Termite-Tough Insulation

*Subslab, crawlspace, and basement solution*

**W**hile it's not intended as a barrier system, **Styrofoam BlueGuard** promises to stop termites from tunneling through foundation insulation. The rigid-foam panels contain Preventol HS100 — an insecticide that repels termites and other wood-destroying insects. According to Dow, the insecticide is confined within the foam matrix: it is not applied as a surface treatment and will not wash off or leach away but reportedly remains in the panel for the life of the insulation. The product meets the performance requirements set forth by the U.S. EPA and the International Code Council for termite-resistant foam plastics, which enables code approval for use in below-grade applications in very heavy termite-infestation areas. For more information, contact Dow Chemical Co., 800-232-2436, [www.dow.com](http://www.dow.com).



STYROFOAM BLUEGUARD



TJ-SHEAR PANEL

## Trus Joist Shear Panels

*Prefab panels simplify narrow shear walls*

**T**rus Joist recently introduced a line of prefab shear-wall panels that promise to simplify the installation of engineered shear walls and allow for placement of narrow panels for greater design flexibility. The **TJ-Shear Panel** is framed up using TimberStrand LSL (a material similar to Parallam with the wood fiber oriented in multiple ways, not aligned parallel to the length of the member) with an OSB web that's notched into the framing. Each panel can be installed in one piece over foundation anchors. The panels feature integral hold-down brackets in the lower corners that have slotted bolt holes, allowing for some adjustment if the foundation crew didn't get the anchor bolts placed perfectly. Predrilled, angled lag screw holes simplify the process of securing the panels to the framing above, and predrilled electrical access holes and notched rails allow easy fishing of wiring through the walls. For more information, contact Weyerhaeuser Co., 888-453-8358, [www.iLevel.com](http://www.iLevel.com).

## Sliding-Glass Security

*Vinyl-framed, impact-resistant sliding doors*



STORMBREAKER PLUS

**S**imonton Windows offers impact-resistant vinyl sliding doors in what might be the largest array of opening sizes for vinyl-framed, impact-resistant sliding doors on the market. **StormBreaker Plus** doors come in two- and three-panel configurations in sizes ranging from 5 feet by 6 feet 8 inches to 12 feet by 8 feet, with tan or white vinyl frames. The doors are made with one pane of tempered glass and one pane of impact-resistant laminated glass. Various glass package options are available to meet Energy Star guidelines, including Solar E low-E glazing and greylite (turtle glass) — a tinted glass that cuts down on radiant heat gain with minimal reductions in visible light transmission for a tinted glass. Fiberglass hideaway screens and stainless steel hardware are standard. For more information, contact Simonton Windows, 800-746-6686, [www.simonton.com](http://www.simonton.com).

## Impact-Resistant Skylights

*Only a few models available for the highest-velocity wind zones*

**E**vidence of how stringent the Miami-Dade regulations are can be found in the number of skylights with insulated glass that qualify for use in high-velocity wind zones. In the residential market, only a handful of fixed skylights, most of them domed or tube models, fit the bill. The two notable exceptions we've found are **Velux-America's FCM** (fixed curb model) and **Wasco's E- and G-Class fixed units**. The Velux FCM is designed to work with all types of site-built curbs, whether they're slightly out of square, pre-existing, or surrounded by unusually thick flashing and roofing material. The FCM unit comes with a laminated, low-E2, argon gas-filled glass that passes the large- and small-missile tests required for openings located within 30 feet of the ground, as required by Miami-Dade. Wasco's E-Class units also pass both tests and feature a one-piece flexible flashing that makes sealants and step flashing unnecessary. For more information, contact Velux-America, 800-888-3589, [www.veluxusa.com](http://www.veluxusa.com), and Wasco, 800-388-0293, [www.wasco1.com](http://www.wasco1.com).



VELUX-AMERICA FCM

# Soft, Hard Flooring

*Not your average resilient flooring*

**A**rmstrong flooring offers a new line of flooring floor called **CushionStep** that defies categorization. It's dubbed a hard-surface flooring that looks like wood, slate, or stone, making it something closer to a floating laminate hardwood than your average sheet flooring. But like a resilient floor material, it's a complex sandwich of synthetic materials that's impervious to water, making it suitable for kitchens, baths, and basements. The CushionStep sandwich starts with about a 1/8-inch-thick high-density foam backing overlaid with a glass-fiber web for strength. This is topped with a "design layer" coated with a thick, clear wear layer, which is itself coated with a urethane surface layer that protects against staining, fading, and scratching. This assembly is stiff enough to be installed using either a "modified loose lay" installation method that uses an acrylic double-face tape or a

"full spread" method that uses an adhesive. The modified loose lay method requires that the flooring be cut about 1/4 inch away from any vertical surfaces such as walls and cabinets. This gap will then be covered by a molding. For more information, contact Armstrong, 800-233-3823, [www.armstrong.com](http://www.armstrong.com).



ARMSTRONG CUSHIONSTEP

# Rubber Soil

*Recycled rubber provides ground cover*

**G**roundScape — a shredded rubber ground cover — provides a nontoxic, natural-looking alternative to sand, stones, and pavers, and it reportedly won't mold, rot, attract insects, or get as dusty as wood chips, bark, and other mulches. Because of its greater density and interlocking characteristics, the manufacturer claims GroundScape won't blow or wash away like ordinary mulch. The shredded rubber is designed to look like and replace fine triple-shred landscape mulch or to be used as a rubber safety surface under a child's play structure. You can also place it around decks, gazebos, pools, and gardens and in areas where grass will not grow. For more information, contact GroundScape Technologies, 877-922-7529, [www.groundscapecandscape.com](http://www.groundscapecandscape.com).



GROUNDSCAPE



MILWAUKEE ICE EDGE

## Metal Munchers

*Improved recip-saw blades*

**M**ilwaukee introduced the **Ice Edge** reciprocating saw blade, an improved metal cutting blade targeted at the HVAC and plumbing trades. Featuring a bi-metal construction with 8% cobalt, the new blades employ an innovative heat-treating process that the manufacturer says improves the hardness, wear resistance, and dimensional stability of the new blades. The steel in these blades is reportedly more flexible and less prone to shattering. In addition, a radiused back face on each tooth that increases tooth strength, combined with a positive rake and deeper gullets that removes chips faster, helps the blade cut faster and last longer. Ice Edge blades are available with a universal shank to fit in any recip saw, not just Sawzalls. For more information, contact Milwaukee Electric Tool Corp., 800-729-3878, [www.milwaukeetool.com](http://www.milwaukeetool.com).