

Hot Roof

Hot wired, that is. **Sunslates** — a combination of synthetic roofing slates with an ultra-thin glass laminate and photovoltaic cell — can be used for an “energy roof.” Sunslates can generate up to 1 kilowatt per square (100 square feet); a typical energy roof uses about 300 square feet (or 3 squares) of Sunslates, which are integrated with another roofing. Sunslates are secured with stainless steel storm anchor hooks and are anchored to 1x4 nailers resting on 2x2 sleepers — providing a system that can withstand a

125-mph wind load test with Miami-Dade County product acceptance. A proprietary gas-tight connector wires each tile to the adjacent tile, and at the end of each course, a “homerun” cable joins in a splice box on the underside of the roof deck and runs to an inverter located near the main breaker. A roofer and electrician can handle the installation, but they’ll need training provided by the manufacturer. For more information, contact Atlantis Energy Systems, Inc., 916/438-2930 or 916/869-6784, www.atlantisenergy.org.



SUNSLATES



PRESIDENTIAL TL ULTIMATE

Heavyweight Contender

CertainTeed’s **Presidential TL Ultimate** “shakes” may be the thickest asphalt shingle available, providing an ultra-durable roof when installed correctly. The “TL” stands for triple layer. Each shingle is composed of three layers of heavy-duty fiberglass shingle mat laminated together. When installed, this product is actually thicker than cedar shingles, providing authentic shadow and texture as well as a Class A fire rating and 110-mph wind resistance. Each square weighs in at 480 pounds —

not as much as slate or concrete tile (which weigh in at 750 to 900 pounds per square) — but it will be more durable and more fire resistant than a wood shake roof. CertainTeed offers a limited lifetime warranty on the shingles and a 15-year warranty against streaking (the granules include 15% copper flake that protects against the streaking and discoloration caused by airborne algae). For more information, contact CertainTeed, 800/345-1145, www.certainteed.com.

Job-Site Desktop

Finley Products offers a portable workstation made of durable ballistic nylon that can be hung on a wall. It unfolds quickly, creating a 2- x 4-foot work surface for blueprints and laptop computers. Dubbed the **Plan Station**, this workstation offers professional contractors, architects, and engineers the ability to take their desks to the job site. Multiple storage pockets can hold documents, office supplies, cell phone, coffee cup, and other needed goods for organizing a project. For more information, contact Finley Products Inc., 888/626-5301, www.planstation.biz.



PLAN STATION

Strong-Wall Resource

Simpson's **Strong-Wall Shearwalls** aren't a new product. The engineered prefab shear-wall panels have been around for over a decade. But the company offers a new Strong-Wall catalog that explains the different types of Strong-Wall products now available and clarifies the many ways these structural systems can be used. Chief among these is the "two-story stacked shear-wall solution." Stacking two steel-panel shear walls accomplishes two things: it provides high load values, and it uses minimal

wall space — both key in meeting structural requirements in contemporary home designs. Namely, the stacked Strong-Wall design takes up very little wall space, allowing more room for openings in extra-high window walls. It also provides the moment resistance required for wind-loaded, open-style "great" rooms up to 20 feet tall. The new Strong-Wall catalog is available for downloading at www.strongtie.com/strongwall, or contact Simpson Strong-Tie at 800/999-5099.



STACKED STEEL SIMPSON STRONG-WALL

ADA-Approved Door Handles



BASER PUSH-ENTRY HANDLE

According to their inventor and manufacturer, Owen Baser, these prizewinning door handles are ADA compliant. Baser Door Handles' new **Push-Entry** model opens with less than one pound of pressure, and there's no grabbing or twisting required, making them ideal for homeowners with any kind of physical limitation. The Push-Entry is comprised of only three parts, and is available to fit all standard bore sizes, which is good news for contractors. Made of a zinc

alloy, the new Push-Entry model comes in only nickel and brushed brass, for now. As any contractor in coastal regions knows, salt air usually tarnishes and corrodes hardware finishes quickly. According to Baser, these handles have a "grade one" finish that survives a 90-hour salt-spray test. Go for the nickel, known to last longer in salt air. All handles cost \$39.95 plus \$6.75 shipping and handling. For more information, contact Baser LLC, 800/569-0935, www.baserdoorhandles.com.

Sweet Cedar Railing

The **Maine Ornamental preassembled cedar railing system** includes glass rail inserts and Tiffany-style post caps that may provide the perfect accent to a Victorian home or Shingle-style cottage. The handrail comes packaged in fully assembled sections, complete with mounting brackets and all required hardware, and is available in 34-inch-high sections in both 6- and 8-foot lengths. Matching 42-inch cedar post sleeves and 6-foot stair rails are also available. For more information, contact Maine Ornamental, 866/780-3507, www.postcaps.com.



MAINE ORNAMENTAL PREASSEMBLED RAILING

Flexible Arches

Interior archways

Need a fast way to frame-out arched interior doorways? **Easy-Arch** is a simple piece of curved sheet steel with upturned flanges along each edge that can be screwed to the framing of a rectangular opening. Once it's secured, this curved track provides a nail base to support interior dry-wall. **Easy-Arch** comes in two widths to fit 2x4 and 2x6 framing and can be used in steel or wood framing. Various styles available to form quarter-circle, half-circle, eyebrow, elliptical, and compound-radius arches. For more information, contact **Easy-Arch**, 800/854-2461, www.easy-arch.com.



EASY-ARCH



ARCHCLIP SYSTEM

Exterior brick archways

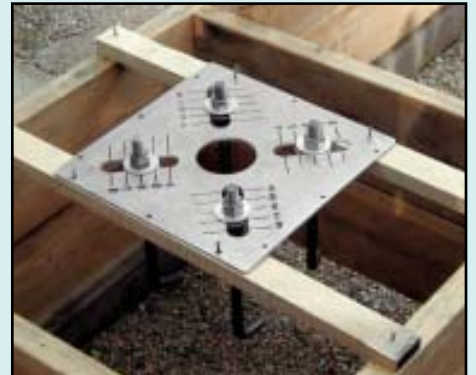
A new system designed by Estate Products promises to dramatically reduce the time and expense involved in building masonry arches. The **ArchClip System** consists of two components: an **ArchClip** and an **ArchStrip**. The clip is a 16-gauge galvanized metal clip that gets positioned around an arch window. A self-adhesive backing holds the clip in place for fastening with a nail (and also self-seals around the fastener to avoid water penetration, claims the

manufacturer). Next, the **ArchStrip** — a 16-gauge flexible metal strip — feeds into the mouth of each clip, creating a perfect arch that serves as a support form for laying the brick. The strip is removed once the arch is built, and it can be reused. No weight from the brick rests on the window, eliminating any window warranty issues. For more information, contact Estate Products, 800/264-5141, www.archclip.com.

Steel Column Templates

The typical steel column base has a four-bolt anchor connection to the footing — a very strong tension connection that's particularly frustrating to align correctly prior to the concrete pour. **Bolt-Rite's** adjustable templates not only enhance the precision required for this task, but also save time by eliminating the usual plywood templates that get made and then tossed between jobs. The aluminum templates can be cleaned easily

as well. They are available in standard sizes for 9- x 9-inch columns (single, \$14.94; 10-pack, \$139.44) and 14- x 14-inch columns (single, \$27.81; 10-pack, \$257.30) with anchor bolt sizes from 5/8 inch up to 1 1/2 inches. Centering layouts can be adjusted from 4 to 6 inches on the 9- x 9-inch templates, and from 5- to 10-inch centers on the 14- x 14-inch templates. For more information, contact **Bolt-Rite**, 530/243-0181, www.boltrite.com.



BOLT-RITE 4-BOLT TEMPLATES

Low-Vibration Recip Saw

Got to do some demo? Hitachi has introduced a new reciprocating saw that reduces motor vibration and promises to significantly decrease end-user fatigue. This is accomplished, says the manufacturer, with a counterweight mechanism that reduces the vibration transferred to the user. The **CR13VBY Reciprocating Saw** also offers a “swing cutting” mechanism (for the same kind of aggressive cutting action you get with “orbital” action) and a 1¹/₄-inch stroke with 0 to 3,000 strokes-per-minute variable-speed control. Other features include tool-less

blade changes and “triple-seal” protection of the motor from dust generated by demolishing drywall, say, or from water when cutting into pipes. For more information, contact Hitachi Power Tools, 800/829-4752, www.hitachipowertools.com.



HITACHI CR13VBY RECIP SAW

Uplift Panel

For improving moisture resistance, Roy O. Martin's new **WindBrace OSB** side-wall panels are specially designed for coastal applications: thanks to their high-resin, southern yellow pine composition, they offer a significant moisture-resistant option over ordinary aspen OSB panels (see *Soundings*, page 29). In addition, the 7/16-inch-thick sheathing comes in panel lengths each 1¹/₈ inches longer than conventional 8-, 9-, and 10-foot-long panels, so there's enough meat to tie into the top and bottom plates on standard framing or to lap over the floor framing in multistory construction. In wind zones, this uplift connection will require an aggressive nailing schedule (see “Solving the Uplift Puzzle,” July/August 2007; available at



WINDBRACE OSB SIDEWALL

www.coastalcontractor.net). When asked about resistance to nail pull-out, Roy O. Martin stated that these panels shouldn't be any different than any other sheathing panel. In green-building applications, WindBrace OSB Sidewall can also be

ordered as a FSC-certified product, providing assurance about the sustainable origins of the product's wood content. For more information, contact Roy O. Martin Lumber Management, LLC, 318/448-0405, www.royomartin.com.

Impact Curtain

Shield Technology Group's new **ImpactShield** improves on most other shutter systems and storm panels for ease of use and aesthetics. Made of waterproof, UV-resistant polyethylene fabric, this translucent shield deploys from a tube, which is installed over each opening (all you need is a drill, says the manufacturer). To operate, the shield is hand-cranked down like a bedroom shade and fastened into another tube along the bottom of each opening, then back-cranked to stretch the fabric as taut as a trampoline. Shells can be painted to taste. Standard sizes (37 x 60 inches) start at \$199 (an entire house is estimated at \$4,000) and do not require support bars — but larger, customized sizes might. Two-panel glass door sizes are also available with larger sizes coming soon. Although novel enough to be recognized by the History Channel's Modern Marvels Invent Now Challenge and strong enough to meet the standards of the American Standards Testing and Measures (ASTM), the Florida Building Code, the International Building Code, and the International Residential Code, the ImpactShield awaits Miami-Dade impact certification. According to the manufacturer, the product has passed the necessary windborne debris testing, but this would be the first fabric shutter approved. A new test may be needed to set the standard for future fabric shutters. For information, contact Shield Technology Group, 866/443-0046, www.shieldtechinc.com.



IMPACTSHIELD