

## Weigh In!

Want to test a new tool or share a tool-related testimonial, gripe, or technique? Contact us at [mclement@hanleywood.com](mailto:mclement@hanleywood.com).



# TOOLS OF THE TRADE

## Rub Some Dirt in It and Get Back to Work

BY MARK CLEMENT

**The general category** for this month's tool coverage is "safety." But there are only so many pieces of eye protection and fall-arrest gear any single person can stand to read about, so I'm going to take a wider view and include a few things that'll keep your work safe, your temper safe, and your "you" safe too. First, though, is a reminder to take a first-aid and CPR class; it will be well worth your time. Our co-workers and colleagues don't hurt themselves only with tools or

by falling, and you can't solve every jobsite injury with electrical tape and a paper towel (or by rubbing dirt in it). Since it's possible that a co-worker could have a seizure or go into shock or get heat stroke, it's handy to have a reasonably good idea of how to remedy those problems. In a first-aid class, you'll learn that the Heimlich Maneuver is a little more involved than a bear hug, and CPR isn't chest-pounding theater like you see in bad movies.

## Standing Cool

I don't know if being cool is actually "safe" in the narrowest definition of the word, but I can certainly say that being uncomfortably warm in a sweltering shop or an unconditioned room isn't maximally productive. And no one would argue that having sweat pouring off your face while setting cabinets or running a table saw is not, at the very least, a distraction.

Now, you can be cool at work when the heat is hammering, with Portacool's Cyclone 140 evaporative air conditioner on wheels. Instead of refrigerants, the portable unit uses water evaporation, ambient air, and a specialized evaporative medium to create a current of cool air. It can be plugged into a 110-volt outlet or a generator, and it can be used with open windows and doors.

The company says that the unit delivers 3,900 cfm and can effectively cool up to 900 square feet—which means it can be stowed in a corner out of the way. Well, as out of the way as anything standing 5 feet tall can be. It costs about \$1,000. [portacool.com](http://portacool.com)



## Safety in a Cage

The Knaack Safety Kage looks to be more commercial than residential in its pedigree, but I think it's a cool idea, at least for jobsites bigger than the ones I work on. The brand calls it the industry's first one-stop-shop for jobsite safety. The interior of the unit has space for fall-protection gear, including harnesses, lanyards, lifelines, ropes, and the like. There are also three shelves for hard hats, vests, and gloves. The top shelf has cubbies for smaller safety items like ear plugs, glasses, and dust masks. The exterior of the unit has protected storage for a first-aid kit, a fire extinguisher, and personal eye-wash station. PPE is not included with the box.

The Power Pass feature allows for power distribution on every shelf. The unit is made of 16-gauge solid-steel panels and has Knaack's Watchman IV Lock System with a three-point latch and recessed lock housing to keep the idiots with bolt cutters challenged. A foot latch enables you to open it with your foot. The doors just pop open. At 370 pounds unloaded, it's a heavyweight. Prices range online from \$2,210 to \$3,000, so check around. [knaack.com](http://knaack.com)



## Customers, Dust, and Reputation Safety

I don't need to explain the dangers of dust and disappointed customers. What you perhaps haven't seen is ZipWall's new take on sealing the perimeter of a sheet-plastic dust-containment system. The company's Span Kit looks cool and—thank you, ZipWall—seems to eliminate tape.

The core of the kit is the six included expandable FoamRail Spans that seal the sheet plastic to the walls, ceiling, and floors. The FoamRails telescope from 4 feet 3 inches to 8 feet long and can seal up a barrier 16 feet all the

way around, or 32 feet along the ceiling and walls.

There are also mounts for jogging past protrusions like crown molding and radiators, which otherwise result in frustrating holes that you can't tape and that suck drywall dust through your barrier, no matter how carefully you try to seal them up.

The FoamRail Spans and accessories work with ZipWall poles (not included) and come with a carrying bag. A kit costs \$270 at the company's website. [zipwall.com](http://zipwall.com)

## Site Light

Cast a little light on the subject with Milwaukee's Radius LED 130-watt Temporary Site Light. At 15,000 lumens, the company says, the "TrueView" high-definition technology reduces the number of fixtures required on a jobsite while still maintaining OSHA standards (if that's on your radar). If it means less squinting, fewer shadows, and vibrant light (the light temperature is 3,900K), then that's good for everybody.

The light is hardwired with a 3-foot, 120-volt power cord, but Milwaukee has designed it with an integrated wiring terminal that accepts voltages from 120 to 277 volts, allowing multiple units to be wired together in a series with MC or Romex cable through universal strain reliefs. Milwaukee says this significantly reduces the labor time associated with temporary lighting installation. Able to hang from virtually any overhead area with its convenient hanging cable, the new light has a quick-feed cable retention, so users can easily adjust the height of the cable during installation.

Milwaukee says the light's polycarbonate lens can survive a 9-foot drop, making it tougher than lenses on a typical work light. As proof, the company offers a limited lifetime LED warranty and five-year product warranty. The Radius costs \$250. [milwaukeetool.com](http://milwaukeetool.com)



## Safe Face

Some of the best money I ever spent for work was the nine bucks I paid for my 3M plastic face shield. I thought I'd use it just once, but as it turns out, I've used it so many times for so many things, I forget the original reason I bought it. It's one of those things that I thought would occupy a shelf for most of my working life, but instead has become one of those things about which I find myself saying: Hey, I could use the face shield for that.

I know I used it on an ill-fated job stripping paint from an old door for a quirky remodel I was doing. I wanted to protect my face from the projectile layers of paint that I had planned (wrongly) to rotate out of existence with my angle grinder. The door turned out OK—and nothing touched my face shield.

It's great for insulation, too. During a basement remodel, I had to stuff fiberglass batts into the ceiling joists of an old house. The bays were filled with ancient dust, so I used the face shield to keep it out of my eyes. Well, it worked, but even better, it kept the dust out of my hair and off my face. Ditto for drywall sanding above my head.

The OSHA-compliant polycarbonate window is



tough. After seeing a photo on Facebook of a guy with a failed grinder wheel severing his safety glasses, I know I'll never run an angle grinder without wearing my face shield. [3M.com](http://3M.com)



## Tape It Up

The MyMedic Boat Medic is the first-aid kit of first-aid kits. While it's designed for boating, this thing looks born for the jobsite, with a wide range of medical supplies including a tourniquet, fingertip bandages, and a CPR mask. Everything comes packed in a rugged, waterproof Pelican-style case that comes in bright colors that make it easy to see when it gets knocked over or pushed aside, or (better yet) hung on a wall where those things won't happen to it. Also jobsite friendly, it comes with tweezers and paracord. We'd probably all try to impress each other with various knot-tying skills with the paracord, but the tweezers are sure to come in handy. The company calls it the best waterproof first-aid kit on the planet, describing it as sink-proof, dust-proof, and crush-proof. It's worth a look, even at \$300. [mymedic.com](http://mymedic.com)