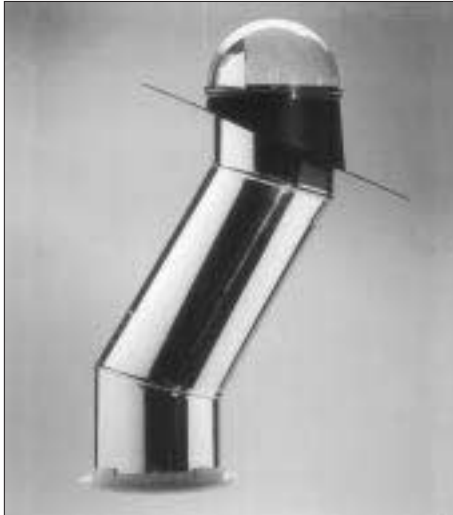


Skylight in a Tube

by Bill Brockway



Here's a nifty skylight option you might want to offer your next remodeling clients — the *Solatube*. It's a 10-inch-diameter dome that installs on the roof coupled with a long, bendable tube that's lined with a reflective coating. All this works together to bring sunlight right down to the ceiling of a dark room. The pipe is 10 inches wide, so it fits between joists and rafters easily. If this all sounds a little like leaving an open hole in the roof, remember that the lower end of the tube is covered by an airtight diffuser, and the tube is sealed to prevent drafts. There will still be some loss to convection, but the manufacturer says that the average impact on an annual heating bill will be negligible. Solatubes cost about \$250, which includes an installation kit.

Contact: Solatube North America, 5825 Avenue Encinas, Suite 101, Carlsbad, CA 92008; 619/929-6060.

Comfort Kit

If your employees don't wear their safety glasses because the eyewear is uncomfortable, surprise them with this new kit from J.I. Morris. The products are part of a *Comfort Center* that



includes adhesive foam-rubber nose pads, soft plastic ear piece covers, and eyeglass cords for keeping the glasses handy. Your employees will be more likely to use their glasses if they don't hurt. Supplies to customize a dozen pairs of glasses cost around \$36.

Contact: J.I. Morris Co., 394 Elm St., P.O. Box 70, Southbridge, MA 01550; 800/621-3937.

Steel Joist for Wood Frames



If you're thinking about taking a baby step toward working with steel framing, check out the *Carpenter's Steel Joist* from HL Stud Co. — the same outfit that makes the Carpenter's Steel Stud for nonbearing walls. The joists are manufactured to order for specific projects and come in several gauges and widths. The manufacturer claims that the joists will save you between 30¢ and 35¢ per square foot. These steel joists are most often used in a

hybrid system, with a wood rim joist. You'll need to load special fasteners (available from Erico, 29019 Solon Rd., Solon, OH 44139; 800/248-2376) into your nail gun to attach them. No joist hangers are required.

Contact: HL Stud, 2000 W. Henderson Rd., Suite 60, Columbus, OH 43220; 800/457-8837.

Flexible J-Channel



I once helped a friend out with a vinyl siding job. The thing that slowed us down most was working around some round-top windows and a fan light over the door. I wish we'd known about *Ply-J*. It's a flexible J-channel designed to capture the cut ends of vinyl siding, and its nailing strip is perforated so it will conform to curved openings. Ply-J comes in four colors and prices vary with the quantity you need.

Contact: Pierce Plastics, P.O. Box 2118, Elkhart, IN 46515; 219/294-6502.

Bushings for Metal Studs



Steel studs can be hard on wires — either the sharp edges of punched holes slice the insulation or they

create so much drag that it's impossible to pull wires through long walls. The *Twistit* bushing looks like a good answer for most situations. The plastic collars fit into several different-shaped holes, both prepunched and field-punched, and you only need access to one side of the stud to install them. Twistit bushings cost around \$20 per hundred.

Contact: Electroline Manufacturing Co., 18681 S. Miles Pkwy., Cleveland, OH 44128; 216/475-9044.

Water-Based Contact Adhesive

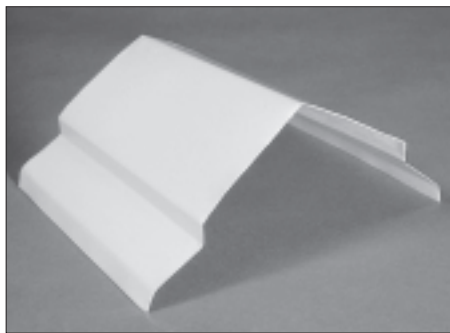


Nobody wants to inhale VOCs. This new contact adhesive from Pratt & Lambert provides a water-based way to bond laminates to substrates. *Hybond 16WB* is also nonflammable and can be used just like conventional contact adhesives. It's ready for bonding in five minutes, and the open time is 30 minutes. One gallon will glue up about 350 square feet of countertop. *Hybond 16WB* sells for about \$25 per gallon.

Contact: Pratt & Lambert Specialty Products, Box 1505, Buffalo, NY 14240; 716/873-2770.

Metal Ridge Cap

A new metal ridge cap from Benjamin Obdyke Inc. is designed to install over the company's Roll Vent to create a continuous ridge vent. *Ridge Caps* are available in three materials: .026-inch galvanized steel, .019-inch aluminum, and 16-ounce copper for \$1.25, \$1.50, and \$6 per linear foot, respectively. The caps



come standard in 10-foot lengths and are paintable.

Contact: Benjamin Obdyke Inc., John Fitch Industrial Park, 65 Steamboat Dr., Warminster, PA 18974; 800/346-7655.

Freestanding Cooler

Most contractors have used space heaters at one time or another to keep a cold work site bearable on a winter's day. But have you ever thought you could solve the problem of a sweltering site? A *Movincool* portable air conditioner offers a cool breeze with no installation. Just roll it into place, plug it in (10-amp breaker required), and flip the switch. The model rated at 10,000 Btu per hour plugs into a standard 110-volt outlet. *Movincool* units are thermostatically controlled and list for about \$2,500 each.

Contact: Nippondenso of Los Angeles, 3900 Via Oro Ave., Long Beach, CA 90810; 800/264-9573. ■

