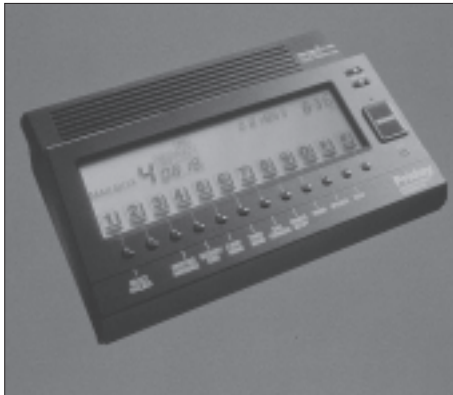


Digital Voice Mail

by Bill Brockway



Projecting a professional image is crucial to success in today's competitive market. Sometimes the old answering machine with the scratchy message saying, "Please leave a message after the beep," just doesn't cut it. Bogen Communications has introduced *Friday*, a digital voice-mail system designed specifically for small businesses. Friday features eight voice-mailboxes — four individual ones, three announcement-only boxes, and a secure dataport that connects to a desktop computer and can also be used as an automatic fax machine switch. Any of the individual boxes can forward calls to a remote phone or a pager. You can even plug in your tape deck and play your own on-hold music. The Friday-1000, which operates on a single phone line, sells for about \$400. A two-line model costs \$500.

Contact: Bogen Communications, 50 Spring St., Ramsey, NJ 07446; 201/934-8500.

I-Joist Rim Board

If you support the subflooring in your houses on I-joists, Georgia-Pacific has a new product that might make your life a little easier. The *Fiberstrong* rim board is a 1¹/₈-inch-thick manufactured panel that you can use as both a rim board and a starter joist. The rim boards come in the same heights as G-P's I-beam joists — 9¹/₄ through

16 inches. Fiberstrong rim boards are engineered for applications where they are fully supported by a wall

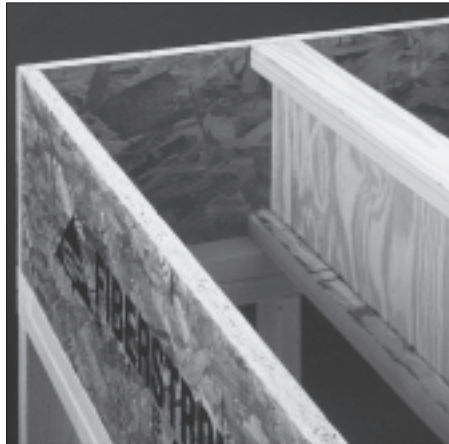
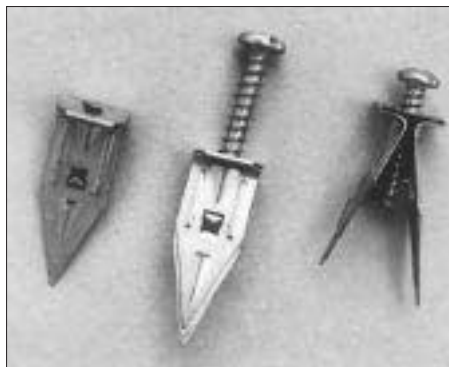


plate — this is not a structural joist. Cost is typically more than for a plywood rim board, but less than for solid wood.

Contact: Georgia-Pacific, 133 Peachtree St. NE, Atlanta, GA 30303; 800/284-5347.

Wallboard Anchors

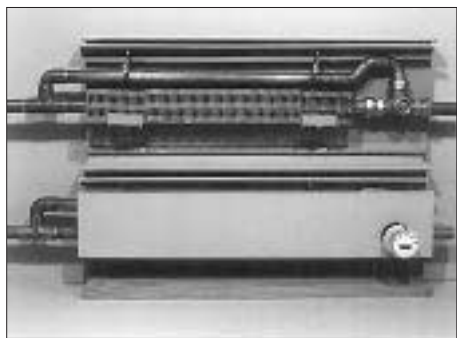


Here's a wallboard anchor that does a little less damage to the wall than some others on the market. The *Legs* anchor has a thin profile in the closed position that can be tapped into the wall (without a pilot hole) with a hammer — even with the end of a screwdriver. Driving the screw in spreads the legs and secures the anchor. They're rated to hold up to

165 pounds shear in $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch wall-board. Remove the screw and the anchor will slide out, leaving just a thin slit in the face of the wall. Legs anchors sell for about \$16 for a box of 50, including the screws.

Contact: The Rawlplug Co., 200 Petersville Rd., New Rochelle, NY 10802; 914/235-6300.

Retrofit Zone Control



In the simplest hydronic heat piping system (the series circuit), a single pipe carries the water from radiator to radiator, giving off heat as it goes. The entire system is either on or off and there is no way to control the heat output in individual zones. Now you can upgrade an old system with the *Thermostatic By-pass Valve* from Enerjee. The liquid-filled thermostat requires no wiring, and can divert the hot water flow away from the fin-tube when the room is already warm enough. The copper connections are $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch compression fittings, and you'll need to cut a hole in the cover for the thermostat to stick through. The By-pass Valve sells for around \$60, including the thermostat.

Contact: Enerjee, 24 S. Lafayette Ave., Morrisville, PA 19067; 215/295-0557.

Combustion Gas Detector

Whether you think they're a fad or an important safety device, builders are installing more and more carbon monoxide detectors than ever. The *Lifesaver* detectors from Fyrnetics were designed for industrial use and use sampling techniques that reduce



the number of false alarms — a common complaint with many detectors in residential use.

According to the manufacturer, the detector's solid-state technology samples the air every $2\frac{1}{2}$ minutes. Between each sampling, the unit changes the air inside the sensor, which reportedly reduces false alarms. The sensors last up to ten years before they need to be replaced. Models range from simple plug-in devices to hard-wired sensors that can be interconnected to cover an entire building. Prices range from \$40 to \$60.

Contact: Fyrnetics Inc., 1055 Stevenson Ct., Suite 102W, Roselle, IL 60172; 708/893-4592.

Skinny Skylights



Retrofitting skylights is complicated when existing framing is in the way. *Sweet 16* roof windows fit into a rough opening just $14\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, so you don't have to cut any rafters or install any headers. The fixed roof windows come in two sizes: $46\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and 57 inches long. Options include low-e glass and argon-filled panes. The smaller window costs about \$200 and the larger one costs around \$210. Both prices include a step flashing kit for installation.

Contact: Roto Roof Windows, P.O. Box 599, Chester, CT 06412; 800/243-0893. ■