

Alternative Material Guide

by Pete Young

Leon Frechette's *Build Smarter with Alternative Materials* is a valuable resource for builders who are baffled by the many new products that have hit the market in recent years. Organized into chapters by type, product descriptions include photographs or illustrations, a list of pros and



cons, and estimates of labor costs for installation. Background information covers tips on successfully incorporating alternative building materials into the projects, as well as manufacturer and supplier lists. The guide (\$35; Craftsman Book Company; P.O. Box 6500, Carlsbad, CA 92018; 800/829-8123; www.craftsman-book.com) starts off with a straightforward table of contents that, together with a very good index, makes it easy to locate exactly what you're looking for.

Riding the Corporate Paper Trail

Businesses incorporate for a variety of reasons, like taking advantage of tax rules, increasing financial flexibility, and limiting company liability. But certain paperwork, such as shareholder meeting minutes and consent forms for corporate action without meetings, must be filled out regularly. Otherwise, the IRS and the courts can strip a company of its corporate status. Attorney Anthony Mancuso's *The Corporate Minutes Book* (\$70 from Nolo Press, 950 Parker St., Berkeley, CA 94710; 800/992-6656; www.nolo.com) is a do-it-yourself legal primer on maintaining records that safeguard corporate status. Especially valuable for small corporations that don't have in-house legal support, *Corporate Minutes* details all the paperwork requirements for most routine corporate activities. The book's tear-out forms are also included on a floppy disk.



Masonry Reference

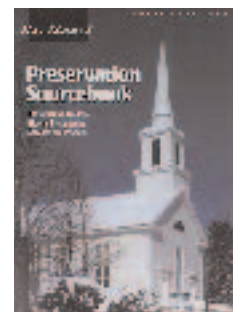
Brick, stone, block, or formed concrete show up on just about every job site. The information collected in *Modern Masonry* by Clois Kicklighter (\$30 from Goodheart-Willcox, 18604 West Creek Dr., Tinley Park, IL 60477; 800/323-0440; www.goodheartwillcox.com) will help improve both hands-on work and subcontractor oversight. At just under 400 pages, the book is

packed with well-organized information in 18 chapters detailing both materials and techniques. A 35-page reference section contains many industry standards and tables and an extensive glossary explains the terminology. Lots of illustrations and pictures throughout the book, many in color, make topics easy to follow and understand. Helpful trade tips and warnings are set apart from regular text with special symbols.



Historical Restoration Sources

The *Northeast Preservation Sourcebook* and the *Restoration Directory* offer two good listings of historic preservation products and services. The 275-page *Sourcebook* (\$25 from Preservation Publications, P.O. Box 1329, Vienna, VA, 22180; 800/707-4330; www.preservationweb.com) has a 12-chapter layout that provides alphabetical business listings related to a particular building focus, such as masonry, interior finishes, or doors and windows. A final chapter lists national, state, and local preservation organizations and programs. The Northeast edition will be followed next year by Mid-Atlantic and Midwestern editions.



Although somewhat hard to use, the 1999 *Restoration Directory* (\$15 from Old-House Bookshop; 3275 W. Ina Road, Suite 110, Tucson, AZ 85741; 800/931-2931; www.oldhousejournal.com) is useful because of its national scope. More than 1,700 companies are listed by type of product or service as well as in a company directory section that includes a short description and contact information. However, with no table of contents, it can take a few minutes of leafing pages to find the product or service section you're looking for.

Both publications contain advertising, but the *Preservation Sourcebook's* ads are less obtrusive.



FREE & CHEAP

Shingle Roofing Manual

The *Shingle Applicator's Manual* (free from CertainTeed Corporation, P.O. Box 1278, Bethlehem, PA 18016; 800/404-9880) is available in both English and Spanish. At 180 pages, the manual has chapters on basic and advanced shingle roofing practices — from estimating and tearoff to ventilation, flashing, underlayment, and shingle fastening. There are even chapters on dealing with special-shaped roofs, repairing existing roofs, and installing shingles at extreme temperatures. The manual is peppered with good illustrations that visually explain many practices.



Paint Booklet

Builders Guide to Paints and Coatings (\$12.50 from NAHB Research Center, 400 Prince George's Blvd., Upper Marlboro, MD 20772; 800/638-8556; www.nahbrc.org) explains the basic chemistry of paints and coatings and covers proper preparations and application methods. It also gives some straightforward advice about working with colors. A chapter on problems and solutions will be of particular interest to remodelers who are often faced with existing paint problems when they take on a job. The booklet ends with a short chapter on safety issues, including the dangers of volatile organic compounds.



Pest Control Directory

Put out by *Pest Control Magazine*, the *1999 Red Book* is a product and service directory covering all types of pest control — from insects and rodents to birds and other assorted varmints. Apart from listing manufacturers, distributors, and service companies, the *Red Book* (ask for code# PESD900; \$14; Advanstar Customer Service, 131 W. 1st St., Duluth, MN 55802; 800/598-6008) also provides contact information for various government safety organizations.



Power Line Safety

Accidental contact with electric lines causes thousands of construction site injuries each year. *Power Line Hazard Awareness* (\$10 from the Construction Safety Council; 4415 West Harrison St., Suite 407, Hillside, IL 60162; 800/552-7744; www.buildsafe.org) is a short training booklet that clearly spells out the dangers of working around electric lines as well as the basic rules for safely avoiding accidents. For instance, did you know that if electric current flows through a piece of heavy equipment or metal scaffolding, it will establish a charged ripple pattern around the grounding point? Workers caught in that area should move away by shuffling their feet in very small steps to minimize electrical shock.

