



THE JOURNAL OF LIGHT CONSTRUCTION

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JLC's

Letters

Home Depot Defense

To the Editor:

Home Depot has received quite a bashing, from the guys at my local lumberyards to the subs on my jobs. The usual complaints are that you have to carry lumber through a grocery check-out line; you ask for products only to be looked at like you are speaking Chinese; you have to bump elbows with Harry the homeowner, who wants the five minute breakdown on wiring his own house; and — the granddaddy of them all — you're taking jobs away from the local suppliers by shopping there.

Although I have run into these things at the "Depot," I have a few things to say in their defense. They open at 5:30 a.m. My local suppliers cannot seem to get out of bed before 8:00 to help me get my jobs started. They also take back any tool I have a problem with, no questions asked. My lumberyard or tool supplier makes me go through their supplier, which constitutes downtime and hassle. The guys at the Depot have also given me a great line of credit and will break down my purchases any way I want. The lumberyards treat me like some deadbeat contractor who can't pay his bills. One yard wouldn't even honor my license for a discount until I submitted my lumber takeoff for pricing.

Home Depot may be guilty of all of those terrible things, but we can learn one thing from them — service!

Scott Belknap
Scott Belknap Construction
Reno, Nev.

You Call That "Light Construction"?

To the Editor:

After an overly enthusiastic reading aloud at the breakfast table of "A Concrete Slab for Y3K" (*Backfill*, 5/00), describing the massive 1,000-yard fly

ash pour, my 10-year-old daughter asked me what magazine I was reading from. After my response, she observantly noted, "That's not light construction!"

Paul Fenner
Fenner Construction
Americus, Ga.

Source for Adjustable Steel Posts

To the Editor:

In the article "Tying In a New Foundation" (3/00), the author refers to adjustable steel columns. I am doing a foundation repair job and these might be useful. Where can I find them?

Roger Cram
via email

Dave Holbrook responds: The brand I use, which I get from my local lumberyard, is made by Marshall Stamping, 355 Glade Mills Rd., Valencia, PA 16059; 800/635-1166. They make two posts: The Extendo Post, for temporary shoring, and the Extendo Column, a heavier duty version for permanent use.

Taking the Plunge

To the Editor:

Regarding the article on testing toilets (*Notebook*, 4/00), I don't see why they need artificial turds, which can't replicate the various forms, sizes, and consistencies produced by different people eating different food combinations. It would be far better to equip the testers' houses with quick-change toilet adapters so they can see how the toilets perform with the real thing.

I bought two Eljer 1.6 gallon toilets three years ago. We have since replaced one with a pressure-assisted Kohler toilet, which works great, and made a custom plunger holder that we

keep by the other one. The plunger gets used almost daily. When complaining directly to Eljer, they defend their products to the utmost. Too bad, because I'm sure a lot of people have the same attitude as my family when it comes to their 1.6 gal. toilet.

Tom Guelcher
St. Paul, Minn.

Dung in Cheek?

To the Editor:

Thank you for the article "Developing A Better Toilet Test" (*Notebook*, 4/00). This information is long overdue; for too long we have yearned for something more than wadded up toilet paper to simulate a homeowner's daily constitutional duty. We appreciate the fact that NAHB's Research Center is working hard, committed to testing low-flow toilets. (But how do you justify condoms in the NAHB's operating budget?)

Speaking from experience, before the days of the 1.6-gallon flusher, we sawed a Briggs toilet bowl in half lengthwise with a rescue saw to determine if a homeowner was full of it or if the toilet was. We videotaped the experience (wearing, of course, the proper safety gear) to document our findings. There were no surprises, as the S-trap was clear and free of any flaws. Our confidence in the product was fully restored.

We recognize the 1.6-gpf toilet, (sometimes called the "double-flusher") to be a different beast, but in our years of experience, our callback problems have been minimal. We credit this to proper training and a complimentary plunger with every

house. In most cases, any backups are due to human error from overloading the system. The development of the perfect test turd must be pursued, as there is a critical need to adequately address and respond to the doubts and fears of the nation before it becomes a crisis.

Gary Lichthardt
HBA of Illinois
Itasca, Ill.

Correction

To the Editor:

In the article "Engineered Exterior Trim" (5/00), you refer to Louisiana-Pacific's unprimed OSB trim product, FiberStrate. FiberStrate is actually an unprimed version of Georgia-Pacific's hardboard trim product, PrimeTrim. Because it comes in panel sizes, we promote it for interior and exterior millwork applications, such as molding patterns, door and window components, exterior signs, and column facings.

Jeff Key
Communications Manager
Georgia-Pacific Building Products

Positive Placement Nail Capacity

The Paslode Positive Placement Nailer, described in *Toolbox*, 6/00, holds two strips of 22 nails each.

KEEP 'EM COMING! Letters must be signed and include the writer's address. *The Journal of Light Construction* reserves the right to edit for grammar, length, and clarity. Mail letters to JLC, 186 Allen Brook Ln., Williston, VT 05495; or e-mail to jlc@bginet.com.



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