

Letters

Shepherds & Blacksmiths

To the Editor:

As a long time subscriber, and a career high school Technology Education teacher, I read with interest your article describing the decline in high school vo-tech programs (*Notebook*, 9/00). I agree with the observation that "most educators think you shouldn't do specific occupational training at the high school level." By constraint of time, this training is at the expense of general education courses, and thus deprives vo-tech students of a more comprehensive preparation for life, which in our world involves continual learning.

I have always encouraged students to consider careers in the construction industry — but only after finishing a comprehensive high school and at least trying college. The world is changing far too fast now for us to encourage our future generations into a caste system at such an early age. The best preparation we can give them, and thus benefit both the student and society, is to prepare them well to observe, analyze, adapt, and manage the various systems of an increasingly complex world. There is a reason we don't train kids to be shepherds and blacksmiths any more.

Michael Gavan
Old Greenwich, Conn.

Bring On the Physics

To the Editor:

While Blas Hernandez (*Letters*, 8/00) felt that Joe Lstiburek went far too deep into the physics of moisture vapor movement through building envelopes, I think it was just right. I agree with Blas that most contractors aren't interested in scientific explanations and just want to know how to build wall or roof assemblies. But I think *JLC* readers are looking for more than a prescriptive building code book. We want to know

how to construct better and more durable buildings than those built to minimum code standards. I hope *JLC* continues to present appropriate building science information even if it's a little over my head. What Joe wrote about moisture vapor flow is stuff that we need to know even when we are busy trying to schedule projects on time and keep them within budget.

Mike Guertin
via e-mail

Golden Rule

To the Editor:

In response to Blas Hernandez, I realize that most contractors are not interested in science and engineering. They don't have the time or the desire to learn scientific explanations about moisture and how building systems work, but instead want cookbook-type recipes handed to them that apply to all situations so they can move onto the next job. I will be glad to oblige and offer this golden rule of building (by the way, you won't find this in the codebooks): If learning about building science is too painful, please stay out of the industry. We do not need any more building failures.

Joe Swift
Middletown, Conn.

Fiber-Cement Dust Filtration

To the Editor:

I enjoyed the article "Cutting Fiber-Cement" (8/00) and found the first-hand account of "which cutting method works best when" to be very informative. While I recognize that safety was not the focus of the article, I would like to make one addition to the information provided. Whenever a vacuum is used to collect the dust created by cutting fiber-cement, or any material, we recommend that the vacuum be equipped with HEPA-grade



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A New Name on the Door

JLC has achieved a lot of success over the past several years through the efforts of a small group of talented people committed to a simple idea: If we give our readers honest, practical information about the work they do, they'll beat a path to our door. Although it's taken a while to catch on, our formula seems to be working pretty well now. Some readers even tell us that their businesses have grown and prospered as a direct result of *JLC* articles they've read and *JLC LIVE* seminars they've attended, which is gratifying to hear.

As a result of your support, our business has grown as well, so rapidly in the past few years that it could make your head spin — creating both great opportunities and significant risks. To help sustain that growth and to enable us to stay focused on our core mission, we recently decided to join forces with a larger organization with much greater resources. That organization is Hanley-Wood, publisher of *Builder*, *Remodeling*, *Tools of the Trade*, and a number of other leading industry publications — and now *The Journal of Light Construction*.

With the support of Hanley-Wood, we intend to strengthen our mission of providing builders and remodelers with the best information available about light construction business and technology. We thank you for your loyalty over the years and believe that we can continue to earn your support with the next generation of *JLC* articles, books, conferences, trade shows, and web services. We're excited about the possibilities.

Here's to the next ten years of a great relationship with you, our readers!

Steve Bliss
Editorial Director

filtration (N100, R100, and P100 are the newest designations). Lesser grades of filtration will allow respirable particles to pass through the vacuum's filter and be pumped into the air around the workers.

Todd B. Griesemer
Product Engineer
Cemplank Inc.

Safety Glasses, Please

To the Editor:

I badger my employees to wear safety glasses, as recommended by most drill, saw, nail gun, and power tool manufacturers. Then today I open your magazine, and again I see pictures of people working without safety glasses while using tools requiring them. We in the trades all know someone who has lost an eye to ignoring the need for safety glasses. Please don't print pictures showing unsafe practices.

Robert J. Hamel
Hamel Roofing
Cataumet, Mass.

More Deck Rail Options

Try as we might to be comprehensive, we inadvertently left out a manufacturer from our story "Deck Railing Options" (9/00). Nexwood (www.nexwood.com) is a wood-polymer composite available in several lumber dimensions and can be fabricated into a durable railing. Thanks also to Architectural Products by Outwater (www.outwater.com), which sent us samples of several plastic railing systems.

— The Editors

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*, 932 West Main St., Richmond, VT 05477; or e-mail to jlc@bginet.com.



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