

Products

by Dave Holbrook

Sticky Feet

While you fiddle on the roof, gravity waits for you to take one false step. Gain the upper foot with *Korkers* over-the-shoe sandals. A selection of sole options adapt to various roofing materials: felt for soft, warm asphalt; foam or magnetic for metal; and shallow-penetration steel spikes for wood and ice. Heavy-duty straps and buckles keep the sandal firmly in place over bulky workboots. Three sandal styles and 13 sole types are available, from \$58 to \$90, with a convertible sole option (\$38)



that lets you swap between pads and spikes.

Contact: Korkers, P.O. Box 166, Grants Pass, OR 97528; 800/524-8899; www.korkers.com.

Ladder Safety

The more friction you have, the harder it is to get moving. That's the idea behind the *Ladder Stopper*, designed to increase ground surface contact to nearly 200 square inches. The T-shaped aluminum pad is bonded to a rubber base with an aggressive tread, which the manufacturer claims grips equally well on wood, concrete, or wet grass. Drop the stopper on the ground, place the ladder on it, and up you go — the heavier the climber, the harder it grips. Two sizes are available: The 24-inch-wide version costs \$90, and the 36-inch-wide base goes for \$160.



Contact: Bird Barrier, 20925 Chico St., Carson, CA 90746; 800/503-5444; www.ladderstopper.com.

Can Conversion Kit

Low-volt lighting is perfect for art and accent lighting, and the bright halogen bulbs last three times longer than regular incandescents. Make an easy switch from line-voltage recessed ceiling lights with 360-degree ratchet socket *Retrofit Fixtures*, which screw into existing lamp bases. The white fixtures feature integral transformers, adjustable flange covers, a universal swivel, and 25- or 50-watt PAR 36 sealed-beam or MR-16 halogen bulbs. Several models are available, priced from \$100 to \$115 per fixture.

Contact: Roxter Lighting, 10-11 40th Ave., Long Island City, NY 11101; 718/392-5060; www.roxter.com.

Glowing Review

Want your solid surface work to stand out from the crowd? Brand new Midnight Visions should do the trick, especially if the crowd turns the lights off. The clear solid-surface material will glow phosphorescent green after brief exposure to light for as long as 8 to 10 hours. The manufacturer suggests uses such as switchplate covers, signs, counter stripes, and floor markers — but see what you can come up with.

Available through accredited Fountainhead fabricators for \$52 per 1x36-inch strip.

Contact: Fountainhead, 8305 Telegraph Rd., Odenton, MD 21113; 877/386-4323; www.ftnhead.com.



No-Sand Hardwood Flooring

The reason we go to all the mess and trouble of finishing strip flooring on site is that there's no better way to get that distinctive uniform look on a wood floor. Prefinished solid strip *Signature Plus* attempts to change all that, with a flooring said to "truly rival" a traditional sand-and-finish job. A microbevel on the square edge takes a little wind out of that sail, but the $\frac{3}{4} \times 2\frac{1}{4}$ -inch tongue-and-groove strip is claimed to be the straightest in the industry, taking some of the aggravation out of nail-down installation. The strips

are available in red oak, white oak, ash, cherry, and walnut, and cost between \$6 and \$9 per square foot.

Contact: Harris-Tarkett, P.O. Box 300, Johnson City, TN 37605; 800/842-7816; www.harris-tarkett.com.

Drip Relief

How many times have you wrestled with ornery, kink-prone copper flex tubing, praying for a drip-free seal at the ferrule? *No-Burst* flexible braided stainless steel faucet connectors provide a less infuriating way to connect bath faucets, toilet supplies, washing machines, and dishwashers. Sold through distributors, the price varies by connector.

Contact: Fluidmaster, 30800 Rancho Viejo Rd., San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675; 949/728-2000; www.fluidmaster.com.



Get a Grip

When your reputation hangs on a slender concrete fastener, you're going to need something as good as the self-undercutting *Hilti Dynamic Anchor*, engineered to withstand vibratory dynamic loading. An integral spring washer helps maintain anchor tension during seismic activity. Installation is simple and, unlike many anchors, reversible for temporary setups. The anchor retails for under \$14.

Contact: Hilti, 5400 S. 122nd East Ave., Tulsa, OK 74146; 800/879-8000; www.us.hilti.com.

Vinyl Reinforcement

It's standard practice to install vinyl siding over fanfold or other foam underlayment, but using *ThermoWall Plus Contoured Underlayment* has a couple of advantages over flat material, according to the manufacturer. Available for all major siding profiles, the custom backer fits precisely behind the vinyl contour. Filling the void improves impact resistance, keeps the laps tight, and helps



maintain straight siding lines. I wouldn't get too excited about the claim for three times the insulation value of conventional backerboard — it has next to none to begin with.

Contact: Progressive Foam Products, 6753 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Beach City, OH 44608; 800/860-3626; www.progressivefoam.com.

Full-Contact Contracting

If your crew is searching for an identity, or you have a friendly rivalry going between production units, consider *NFL-licensed hardhats* for every-



one. At the very least, wearing a hat makes it hard to stand around scratching your head. Win safety points at your next OSHA raid for \$30 per hat.

Contact: MSA Safety Works, P.O. Box 426, Pittsburgh, PA 15230; 888/672-4692; www.msanet.com.

One-Stop Chopping

Cutting starters and caps for asphalt roofing shingles is one of those jobs you break in the new guy on. Provide a decent wage and a *Shingle Shear*, and maybe they'll be yours forever. The crescent-shaped cutter slices cleanly through two shingles in one pass, can be easily removed for sharpening or eventual replacement, and is sized to handle square



cuts on the new 18-inch-wide laminated shingles. The cutting table has an inlaid tape for quick reference. The shear costs \$233 including shipping and handling; replacement blades cost under \$20.

Contact: Howard Tools, 2 Willow Ln., Conklin, NY 13748; 607/775-2200; howardtoolsinc@hotmail.com.

Airtight Attic Access

Airtight construction isn't everyone's Holy Grail, but if it's as easy and inexpensive as the *Quick-Seal Insulated Attic Hatch Cover*, it may still have its place on the job. The cover



is made of paintable white ABS plastic, concealing a core of R-7 insulating EPS foam. Installation and removal are simple, with four special turnbuckle fasteners to hold the closed-cell gasketed mounting flange in place. Finished openings up to 23x30 inches can be covered for about \$50.

Contact: ADO Products, 21800 129th Ave. North, Rogers, MN 55374; 800/666-8191; www.adoproducts.com.

