

# Products

by Patrick McCombe

## Cable Ready

Not that many years ago, wiring a house for technology meant installing a couple of phone jacks and maybe a roof-mounted antenna, but now you have to install Cat-5 cable, coaxial cable, security system cable, and phone cable. And who knows what's next? Fortunately, you can prepare your customer's home for future low-voltage upgrades with *WireTracks*. The 1/2-inch plastic raceway installs behind the baseboard in a channel that's cut into the drywall. The raceway's cover is fastened to the back of the baseboard. When it's snapped back on the raceway, it not only secures the baseboard, it also allows wiring upgrades and easy relocation of electronics. *WireTracks* are sold in 8- and 5-foot sections, for \$20 and \$14, respectively.

**WireTracks**, 206/365-3737, [www.wiretracks.com](http://www.wiretracks.com).



## Valve Cover for Remodelers

Installing a new shower valve is a tough job, especially when you don't have access from the back side of the tub. A common solution is to rip out the walls and start from scratch, but that may be more than your customer's budget and psyche can take. Symmons' *RC Remodel Cover Plate* is a 13x8<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub>-inch, oval-shaped escutcheon that covers and finishes off even the biggest oblong access hole. The stainless-steel escutcheon is available in several finishes and matches the company's popular line of Temptrol pressure-balancing valves. The RC Cover includes a cutting template, and it seems like a great way to switch from two- or three-handle shower valves to a single-handle, pressure-balancing unit. I just wish it made sweating the connections inside the tight space a little easier. The Cover Plate and Temptrol valve shown list for \$172.

**Symmons**, 800/796-6667, [www.symmons.com](http://www.symmons.com).



## Escape Ladder

While egress windows in the bedroom are an important step in preventing a tragedy, they don't get the building occupants safely to the ground. An easy way to increase

safety and give your customers peace of mind is the *Chains of Life*. The 14-inch square box houses an emergency escape ladder and installs under the window in a standard 2x4 (or 2x6) stud cavity. According to the maker, it reaches the ground from most second stories and is more stable than the typical escape ladder. Builders buying 12 or more pay \$80 each, or you can buy them individually for \$160. It seems like a good way for new home builders to separate themselves from the competition.

**Chains of Life**, 800/241-7708, [www.chainsoflife.com](http://www.chainsoflife.com).



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### Arch Supports

Forming drywall arches is a slow and tedious process, but it was made a lot easier when the preformed Easy-Arch was introduced a couple of years ago.

Unfortunately, the original Easy-Arch was made only for



2x4 and 2x6 framing, so if you had another wall thickness, you were out of luck. But the manufacturer now has an adjustable arch for wall thicknesses from 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches to 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> inches. Like the original, the *Adjusta-Arch* is available in quarter and half circles, eyebrows, and ellipses. Prices range from about \$20 to \$150; a 6-foot ellipse, for example, sells for \$58.

**Easy-Arch**, 800/854-2461, [www.easy-arch.com](http://www.easy-arch.com).



### Horse Power

These might be the best-designed sawhorse brackets that I've ever seen. Unlike the

wobbly, stamped-steel variety, these are heavy-gauge welded aluminum. Not only do *Bull Brackets* make a sturdy horse, they include 2x4 receiving tubes for adding extra supports. The aluminum brackets are secured with only a couple of screws or nails, so you can break down the whole setup in a couple of minutes. The setup makes a great saw station, and the manufacturer's website shows a number of other creative uses for the unique brackets. They cost about \$60 per pair, plus shipping.

**Bull Brackets**, 877/265-2855, [www.bullbrackets.com](http://www.bullbrackets.com).



### A Place for Everything

Organizing your warehouse or workshop is a lot easier with the collection of shelving products from *Stud Buddy*. The 18-gauge steel shelving takes advantage of otherwise wasted space by mounting between 2x4 or 2x6 wall studs. The product comes in several sizes and provides handy storage space for everything from paint cans to plumbing fittings. You can even add bins for fasteners and other small items, as well as hooks for extension cords and air hoses. Of course, you could tidy things up with some shelving made from plywood and lumber scraps, but don't you have enough projects already? Price for the instant shelf is \$6.

**Stud Buddy**, 888/578-7452, [www.studbuddy.com](http://www.studbuddy.com).

