

Products | Gutters | by Patrick McCombe

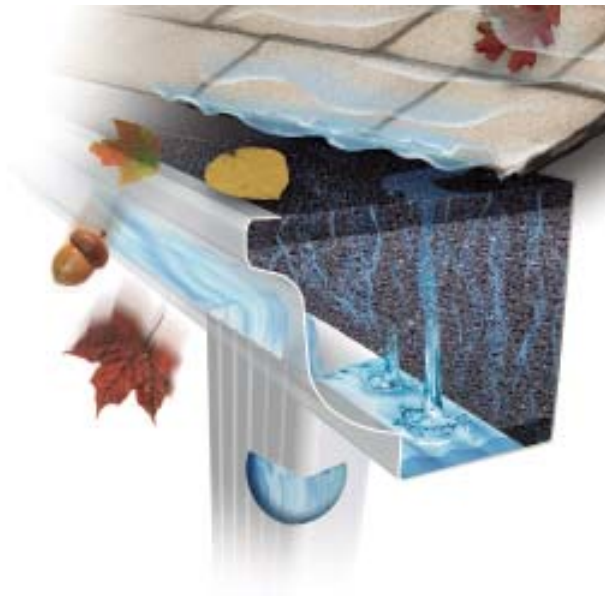
Wet-Stick Sealant. A rain gutter that leaks is about as useful as a wooden nickel. Now you can seal even the smallest holes and seams with OSI's new *Pro-Series Micro Gutter Sealant*. According to the manufacturer, the substance has great stretch and adhesion, and sticks to both wet and dry surfaces. A 7-ounce squeeze tube sells for \$4.

OSI Sealants, 888/445-0208, www.osiproseries.com.



Gutter Stuffer. Of the dozens of methods I've seen for keeping leaves and other debris out of gutters, the *Leaf Defier* strikes me as one of the most promising. This UV-stabilized foam insert — treated with a fungicide and biocide to prevent mold, fungus, algae, and moss — fills the gutter, preventing leaves from getting inside. On new installations, the foam can be inserted while the gutter is on the ground — a convenience not possible with aluminum gutter covers. The maker says installation takes a fraction of the time required by other systems. The insert is available for both 5- and 6-inch K-style gutters and in custom profiles. It costs \$3.24 per foot.

Monzi, 866/795-4770, www.leafdefier.com.



Special K. Got a client who wants K-style gutters in a color other than run-of-the-mill white or brown? Alcoa's *DreamColor* line of exterior products encompasses some 700 baseline hues — or, if that doesn't do the trick, the company can create a custom color. In addition to gutters, the DreamColor collection includes vinyl siding, soffit and fascia, shutters, and window trim.

Alcoa, 800/962-6973, www.alcoahomes.com.



Products | Water Treatment

On Tap. Providing your customers with quality drinking water could be as easy as installing Delta's *Simply PUR Water Filtration System*. The company says this sink-mounted dispenser removes a variety of harmful chemicals and contaminants, including heavy metals like lead and mercury, chlorination by-products, pesticides, and industrial pollutants. The filter also removes 99.9 percent of microbiological cysts (cryptosporidium and giardia), says Delta. An indicator light keeps homeowners abreast of filter and battery conditions. Prices range from \$158 to \$283 depending on model and finish.

Delta Faucet, 800/345-3358, www.deltafaucet.com.



Drain-Free Membrane. Unlike charcoal or carbon filters, which become increasingly clogged with each glass of water, reverse-osmosis systems use a semipermeable membrane that's continually cleaned as water is forced through it. The problem is that even the most efficient reverse-osmosis systems use a minimum of 4 to 5 gallons to produce a single gallon of drinkable water. However, some products — like the *ZRO-4* from Watts — use “zero-waste” technology to return the water that would ordinarily go down the drain to the home's domestic hot-water system. The *ZRO-4* can remove arsenic, copper, iron, lead, chromium, fluoride, radium, cyanide, nitrates, bacteria, pesticides, PCBs, benzene — even the gas additive MTBE — from drinking water, says the maker. It sells for about \$400.

Watts, 623/931-1977, www.premierh2o.com.

Colorful, Compact Softener. Water softeners can take up a pretty large chunk of living space. One notable exception is Kinetico's surprisingly small *2020c Compact Water Softener*.



Besides being the world's littlest softener, it's the only one that uses block salt instead of pellets, making refills easier. Plus it comes in five different colors, so homeowners can coordinate the unit with their decor. It doesn't require an electrical hookup, and it back-washes according to water consumption —

not in response to a mechanical timer — saving salt and water, says the manufacturer. It costs about \$2,000 installed.

Kinetico, 800/944-9283, www.kinetico.com.

For more product information, visit [ebuild](http://ebuild.com), Hanley Wood's interactive product catalog, at www.jlconline.com or www.ebuild.com

Products | Electrical Devices

Fine Finish. If traditional white or ivory outlets just aren't a good match for your customer's granite countertops and wood-paneled library, you might suggest the *Elements* line of Decora electrical devices from Leviton. Made to simulate finishes like marble, oak, and walnut, the switches, outlets, dimmers, and GFCIs feature screwless wall plates and high-quality construction, says the manufacturer. Single-gang wall plates sell for \$4.35 and duplex receptacles for \$5. Both prices are list.

Leviton Manufacturing, 800/367-5424, www.leviton.com.



Safer Outlets. The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that about 1,300 children are killed or seriously injured every year when they insert foreign objects into electrical outlets. Pass and Seymour's new line of *Tamper-Resistant Decorator Receptacles* with self-closing shutters were designed to prevent this kind of tragedy. The company says the devices are easier to use — and look better — than those little plastic plugs. They come in both GFCI and conventional styles; I found the non-GFCI outlet on the Web for \$7.

Pass and Seymour, 800/223-4185, www.passandseymour.com.



Trouble-Free Tails. The best method for wiring a receptacle is to group the wires and run pigtails to the device. That way, even if one of the devices in the series malfunctions, the voltage is maintained down the line. Yet most residential electricians avoid this method because it's time-consuming. To speed up installation, Cooper's *Prewired Receptacles and Switches* have the pigtails already attached. They range in price from \$7 to \$36.

Cooper Wiring Devices, 866/853-4293, www.cooperwiringdevices.com.

For more product information, visit ebuild, Hanley Wood's interactive product catalog, at www.jlconline.com or www.ebuild.com