

Products | Surface Protection | by Tom O'Brien



Carpet Runners. Want to know how to protect a home and its contents? Ask a mover. New Haven Moving Equipment manufactures floor coverings in a range of materials and sizes, all of which are designed to stay where you put them, unlike the drop cloths that most contractors use. The company also stocks an amazing variety of furniture covers, moving blankets, and other protective products. For a free catalog, see its Web site.

New Haven Moving Equipment Corp., 800/743-7237, www.newhaven-usa.com. **Circle #1**



Serious Dust Control. The *DustDoor* should interest anyone whose remodeling jobs involve a lot of traffic between work areas and occupied space. Constructed of two-ply nylon-reinforced vinyl with a heavy-duty zipper, this product appears to provide as close to a perfect seal as you can get in the real world. It can be nailed, stapled, or duct-taped to the opening — or you can opt for either the manufacturer's hook-and-loop mounts or its clamping system, which promises to leave trim surfaces intact. DustDoors come in several widths and heights; a no-frills model that fits openings up to 58 inches by 94 inches sells for \$99. Mounting systems cost extra.

The DustDoc, 800/781-6111, www.dustdoor1.com. **Circle #2**



Treasure Trove of Tape. I learned the hard way that Scotch-Blue *Painter's Tape for Multi-Surfaces* (#2090) cannot be left in place one day more than the advertised 14. Longer durations require the company's #2080 *Delicate Surface* tape; it's flimsier than its cousin, but safe to leave stuck for up to 60 days. These are just two of the many masking products sold by Scotch and its parent company, 3M. My other favorites include prefolded masking films, pretaped plastic drop cloths, heavy-gauge masking paper, double-sided tape, and applicator tools that make quick work of masking. Although 3M's Web site is notoriously unfriendly, visiting it is worth the effort if you need to protect finished surfaces from disfigurement.

3M, 888/364-3577, www.3m.com. **Circle #3**

Products | Mold Fighters

New Treatment. Framing lumber that's exposed to the elements (and what lumber isn't?) is often covered with mold spores before the roof is even dried in. *FrameGuard* is a new treatment designed to give wood products extra protection against mold and other wood-destroying organisms. The water-based coating is applied in a spray booth at a lumber mill or distribution center — it's not intended for job-site applications. The manufacturer claims that the bright green coating is suitable for all manufactured lumber products, not just solid wood. Building a house entirely with FrameGuard-treated products increases costs by less than \$3 per square foot, the company says.

Arch Wood Protection, 866/736-7366, www.archchemicals.com/Fed/FG. **Circle #4**



Mildew No More.

Cleaning alone may not eradicate chronic mildew on painted surfaces. The maker of *TWP Mildew Sealer* contends that this problem can often be traced to mildew embedded in the paint film — which even power washing can't completely remove. The company says its 100 percent acrylic latex nonpigmented sealer is impervious to mildew and prevents its regrowth with a special blend of fungicides. The standard surface-preparation rules apply; the sealer must be top-coated with a high-quality acrylic latex (not oil) paint within two weeks. Gallon cans cost \$30 apiece, 5-gallon pails \$135 apiece.

Amteco, 800/969-4811, www.twpmildewsealer.com. **Circle #5**



DIY Remedy. Bleach, the traditional cleanup product for localized mold outbreaks, is nasty stuff. *Concrobium Mold Control*, by contrast, contains no bleach, ammonia, acids, or VOCs, and is odor-free. Its maker says it eliminates mold spores by encapsulating them — not by exposing them to toxins. The company also says the product eliminates musty odors, prevents new mold growth, and works as a mold-inhibiting pretreatment on new wood surfaces. It comes in 32-ounce spray bottles (\$11 each), gallon jugs (\$40), and 5-gallon pails (\$180).

Siamons International, 866/811-4148, www.concrobium.com. **Circle #6**



Products | Accessibility



Multi-Height Sink. With the *Adjust-a-Sink*, family members of varying heights and physical abilities gain unfettered access to one of the most vital elements in the kitchen. The unit's stainless-steel lift mechanism — powered by a low-voltage electrical motor — positions the sink cabinet anywhere from 31 inches to 43 inches above the floor. The manufacturer supplies the lift, plumbing lines — including a patented telescoping drain — and switch, but not the sink, countertop, or cabinetry. For a 6-inch single-bowl sink cabinet, the setup costs \$2,200. The company also offers a version for a 41½-inch double sink (\$2,700), as well as lifts for vanities and cooktops.

BJ Industries, 952/890-3870, www.bjindustries.com. **Circle #7**

Walk-in Bathtub. Way too many accidents happen in the bathtub. The *Escape* walk-in tub aims to remedy that with a door that affords access with no climbing or bending — and hence less chance of slipping and falling. The tub's high walls and lounge-type seating also boost safety and comfort. According to the maker, the *Escape* is designed to fit into the same space as an existing tub or shower; it comes in a standard 60-inch (three-wall) size and a space-saving 50-inch model. The company warrants the door seal against leaks for the life of the unit. Costs range from \$6,500 to \$8,000.

Best Bath Systems, 800/727-9907, www.escapebathing.com. **Circle #8**



No Blocking Needed. Retrofitting an existing bathroom with grab bars often requires cutting into the wall cavity to install blocking — not an easy job if the wall surface is tiled. *SecureMount Anchors* promise to make mounting a grab bar as straightforward as hanging a mirror. Here's how the product works: You drill a 1¼-inch hole, insert the two-piece togglelike anchor, and attach the bar. The anchors have been independently tested to exceed ADA and other standards, says the maker. They can be used with the company's specially designed grab bars or with various models from other companies. One pair costs \$36.

Home Care by Moen, 800/882-0116, www.homecare.moen.com. **Circle #9**

Products | Efficient Lighting

Long-Lasting Spots and Floods. TCP, a manufacturer of compact fluorescent lights, recently introduced a line of energy-efficient *Flat PAR* lamps, the cone-shaped bulbs most often used as spotlights or floodlights. Available in 14-, 16-, and 23-watt sizes, the lamps cost twice as much as comparable halogen bulbs — but they purportedly deliver 75 percent energy savings and triple the life. TCP says that a 23-watt Flat PAR, which provides the same light output as a 90-watt halogen PAR, could save as much as \$54 in energy costs over the life of the lamp. The longer life span may also reduce maintenance costs when the bulbs are in hard-to-reach locations.



TCP, 800/324-1496, www.tcpi.com. **Circle #11**

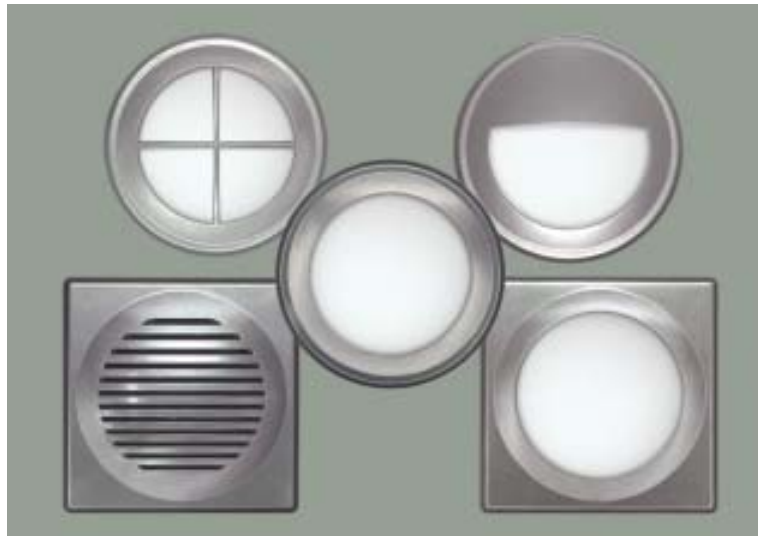
Fashionable Fixtures.

If the term “Energy Star lighting” brings to mind a stark white fixture with a curlicue bulb sticking out beyond the lens, you need to check out today’s Energy Star-qualified products. Among them are decorative fixtures, chandeliers, wall sconces, recessed units, ceiling fans, and outdoor lights; many are indistinguishable from their more traditional counterparts. With more than 500 varieties of Energy Star fixtures in its inventory, Sea Gull Lighting Products lays claim to the most expansive line in the industry. Visit the company’s Web site to find a local retailer or request a catalog.



Sea Gull Lighting Products, 800/347-5483, www.seagulllighting.com. **Circle #10**

A Step Up. If I had to bet my money on the future of efficient lighting, I’d bet on LEDs. These units are up to 50 times more energy-efficient than other lighting options. They’re also shock-resistant and unaffected by extreme temperatures, and they last 10 years or more. The only drawback is their high price. Apparently Lumière, a division of Cooper Lighting, also believes in the technology: The company recently unveiled the *Rio Series*, designer-quality architectural step lights that can be outfitted with 4-watt or 7-watt LED lamps. Prices start at around \$325 per light. Lower-cost halogen, metal-halide, and compact-fluorescent lamps are also available.



Cooper Lighting, www.lumierelighting.com. **Circle #12**