

Products | Deck Treatments | by Tom O'Brien



Paint That Lasts. The good news is that a paint-maker has finally come out with an actual paint that's suitable for decks. The bad news is that it's designed for vertical surfaces only. Wolman's *DecoWhite Decorative Deck & Porch Paint* is self-priming and requires two coats, but the 100 percent acrylic formulation hides knots and tannin bleed-through and dries to a brilliant satin finish, says the maker. It can also be applied immediately to pressure-treated lumber. The paint sells for \$30 per gallon and comes in any color you want — as long as it's white.

Wolman Wood Care Products, 800/556-7737, www.wolman.com.
Circle #7

Safe Stripper. Removing an old finish prior to recoating a deck should not require a hazmat team. *Injectable Safe-Strip* was developed by former deck-cleaning contractors as an alternative to harsh chemicals. Designed to be applied with a pressure washer, the biodegradable deck-stripper easily removes oil and latex semitransparent stains and sealers without harming wood fibers, pets, or foliage, says the manufacturer. It costs about \$20 per gallon; a 5-gallon pail costs \$105.

Gemini Coatings, 800/262-5710, www.geminicoatings.com.
Circle #8



Life Insurance for Finish. Stop! If you're planning to stain a deck, Sherwin-Williams wants you to pretreat the unfinished surface with its new *DeckScapes Coating Life Extender*. The company claims that this oil-based formula fuses the loose wood fibers — on both old and new decks — into a rock-solid substrate that ensures better top-coat adhesion. The fast-drying product should be applied with a brush or a roller and allowed to cure for about four hours; then it's ready to be top-coated with a semi-transparent or solid color stain. It costs \$40 per gallon.

The Sherwin-Williams Co., 800/474-3794, www.sherwin-williams.com. **Circle #9**

Products | Brick Pavers & Patio Stones

Vintage Supply. The easiest way to create the look of an old brick walkway or patio is by using old brick. Gavin Historical Bricks claims to be the largest supplier of antique bricks and cobblestones in the nation. Reusing old brick not only offers an aesthetic advantage — it's also good for the environment. The company estimates that it has saved more than 100 million pounds of material from clogging up landfills by using products reclaimed from buildings and streets throughout the country. Prices for brick pavers range from \$5 to \$7 per square foot; cobblestones cost about \$10 per square foot.

Gavin Historical Bricks, 319/354-5251, www.historicalbricks.com. **Circle #10**



Concrete on Steroids. Anyone who's spent a winter in snow country knows that ice, water, and road salt play havoc with concrete. According to the manufacturer, *Cambridge Pavingstones* are practically impervious to the rigors of winter. Although they're made from a high-density concrete that's twice as strong as the poured-in-place variety, the real key to their durability is a bulletproof, ³/₈-inch-thick surface material called "ArmorTec." This outer layer is color-saturated, fade-resistant, and guaranteed to stay smooth yet slip-resistant for a lifetime. A local dealer (in Bethel, Conn.) quoted me a price range of \$2.70 to \$3 per square foot for the various ArmorTec collections.

Cambridge Pavers, 201/933-5000, www.cambridgepavers.com. **Circle #11**



High Tiles. Just because your clients are building a raised deck doesn't mean they have to give up their wish for a patio. Like many other pavers, *Dekstones* are made from steel-reinforced, precast concrete — but they're designed to rest on wood framing (4-inch-thick joists laid out approximately 24 inches on-center). The maker says most Dekstones need no fastening; you simply place them on top of the joists and then corral the perimeter with a skirtboard. Any cut sections that do need reinforcement can be fastened to the joists with manufacturer-supplied framing angles. Shipping costs vary, but material prices start at around \$8 to \$10 per square foot.

Stepstone, 800/572-9029, www.dekstone.com. **Circle #12**



Products | Storm Doors & Windows



Good Wood. Although aluminum storm doors are inexpensive and easy to install, nothing beats the rich look of wood. The Combination Door Co. has been building wooden storm and screen doors for nearly a century. The company's signature product, the hand-built custom-size *Easy-Change Door*, boasts a patented tool-free locking mechanism that affords "easy changes" from glass to screens. The door comes in a variety of styles and grille choices; since it's shipped unfinished, color choices are unlimited. (An attractive hardware kit containing a lockset, hinges, and closer is also available.) The company's most popular Easy-Change model, the Ultra View — shown with a Prairie grille — costs \$385 with sash and screen.

The Combination Door Co., 920/922-2050, www.combinationdoor.com. Circle #13

Save Energy and Taxes. Adding or replacing a storm door is one of the most cost-effective ways you can save energy. And if you choose the right one, the government will pick up part of the check. The Federal Energy Policy Act of 2005 grants homeowners a 10 percent tax credit for qualified energy-efficiency improvements. Larson Manufacturing's entire line of aluminum storm doors qualifies for the tax incentive. The company claims that adding one of its storms to an existing entry door reduces energy loss by as much as 45 percent. (A SecureElegance model is shown.) Prices range from \$100 to \$350 per door.

Larson Manufacturing Co., 800/352-3360, www.larsondoors.com. Circle #14



Secret Panels. Standard triple-track storms are inexpensive and energy-efficient, but they don't exactly blend in. Allied Window makes a complete line of storm windows designed to be imperceptible to all but the nosiest of neighbors. The flagship of the company's line, the *Allied One Lite*, is a low-profile single-track glass panel that comes in almost any frame color, shape, or muntin configuration. A variety of window films can be factory-applied to the glazing; screens are available as well. The company also manufactures interior storms that mount with magnets or clips. Prices range from \$125 to \$500 per window.

Allied Window, 800/445-5411, www.invisiblestorms.com. Circle #15