

Products

by Michael Springer



Quick Disconnect. Recent code changes require the use of disconnect plugs in nonresidential fluorescent installations, partly because so many workers have been electrocuted servicing fluorescent ballasts. Ideal's newest disconnect, the *PowerPlug 103*, fits the three-conductor dimming and switching systems common in commercial applications — but you can also add this safety feature to residential fluorescent fixtures with the company's line of new-installation and retrofit disconnects. Prices range from 40 cents to \$1.50 each.

Ideal, 800/435-0705, idealindustries.com.

Screws for Exotics. One problem with super-dense deck boards is that they break screws and split near the ends unless you drill pilot holes — which doubles your labor. Muro



says its 2½- and 3-inch *Ejector* wood-decking screws bore their own holes and evacuate the sawdust to make fastening ipe, cumaru, and other exotic hardwoods easier. Currently the screws are available in type 305 stainless steel, but a coated carbon steel version is in the works. Sold in collated coils and

strips or by the box, the 2½-inch version costs \$262 per thousand collated and \$236 loose.

Muro, 800/665-6876, muro.com.

Efficient Heaters. Sometimes it's not possible to reach additions or outbuildings with ducts or pipes from a house's hvac system. Other times the system just can't handle the added heating or cooling loads. In either case, a ductless split system may be the way to go. Friedrich has two new super-efficient wall-mounted units with SEER ratings of 20. Both are heat-pump models so they heat and cool, and they have variable-output compressors for efficiency. Uninstalled prices for the 9,000-Btu *M09YG* and 12,000-Btu *M12YG* (shown) start at \$1,100.



Friedrich, 800/541-6645, friedrich.com.

Roll Film. Get more life out of old deck boards by coating them with Synta *Deck Restore*. The opaque coating rolls or brushes on to fill gaps up to ¼ inch wide. According to Synta, the water-based polymer adds a tough, slip-resistant film to wood and even to composite deck materials. A two-gallon pack covers roughly 100 square feet and costs about \$60.

Synta, 800/373-6333, synta.com.



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Foil Sheathing. In hot climates, radiant heat gain through the roof can really increase a house's cooling load. Georgia-Pacific claims its *Thermostat Radiant Barrier Sheathing* blocks up to 97 percent of the sun's heat, lowering peak attic temperatures by as much as 30°F. The aluminum-foil-backed OSB or plywood sheets are installed with the shiny side down, facing the attic. The foil adds \$2 to \$4 per sheet to the cost of plain sheathing.

Georgia-Pacific, 800/284-5347, gp.com/build.

Flexible Duct. With buildings getting tighter and indoor air quality a concern, UV and HEPA furnace filter systems are becoming more common for filtering airborne bacteria and allergens. Now you can take the fight to the ducts with QuietFlex's *AMG Flex Duct*. According to the manufacturer, a special antimicrobial lining containing silver inhibits mold and fungal growth, and the insulation is formaldehyde-free, which earns the product Greenguard certification. The

duct comes in 3- to 22-inch diameters with stated R-values of 6 or 8; the 6-inch R-8 size costs \$1.35 per foot.

QuietFlex,
877/694-3669,
quietflex.com.



Toasted Pine. Looking for rot-resistant wood decking that's free of toxic chemicals? Redwood and imported exotics aren't the only options. *Radiance Wood* is southern yellow pine that's been toasted to a

point just below combustion, a process that — according to the maker — converts the wood sugars to a form that won't feed decay-causing organisms. A tinted, non-VOC polymer coating seals the surface.

The product has a 20-year warranty against rot, checks, and warping, and comes with plain or grooved faces in board lengths from 8 to 20 feet. The 1¼-inch-by-5-inch decking costs \$1.95 per linear foot.

Radiance, 866/318-9434, radiancewood.com.



For more information about any of these products, go to <http://jlc.hotims.com>