

Products

Deck Clips

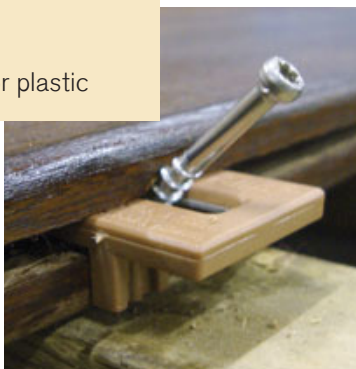
New hidden fasteners work with wood or plastic

by Scott Gibson

The Extreme4 hidden fastener from the Ipe Clip Fastener Co. is designed to give a range of wood and plastic decking plenty of room to move with changes in humidity or temperature.

The clip, which fits into a slot created by a biscuit joiner or into pre-grooved decking, creates a gap of $\frac{5}{32}$ inch between planks. That's enough to allow both air-dried and kiln-dried lumber to shrink and expand without buckling. It also allows plastic decking to move along its length as temperatures fluctuate, according to the company.

Ipe Clip already makes several other clips for hidden fastening, although those space the decking differently. The ExtremeKD, for example, sets the gap at $\frac{1}{4}$ inch, which gives kiln-dried material enough room to expand after installation. When used with air-dried material,



however, the KD clip may allow a board to pull out of the fastener as it dries and shrinks. The smaller gap of the Extreme4 is designed to prevent that from happening.

Stainless steel fasteners can be driven through the clips at either 45 degrees or 90 degrees, depending on the material: 45 degrees to maintain an even gap for wood decking and 90 degrees for PVC and composites, to allow end-to-end movement.

Extreme4 clips can be purchased either as individual components or in a kit that also includes tapered ipe plugs for perimeter boards, a driver bit, and a drill bit. Standard kits, which contain 175 clips, cost \$119; 100 clips and Torx-drive screws cost \$73. Square-drive screws also are available. The clips come in brown, gray, and black.

Scott Gibson is a writer in East Waterboro, Maine.

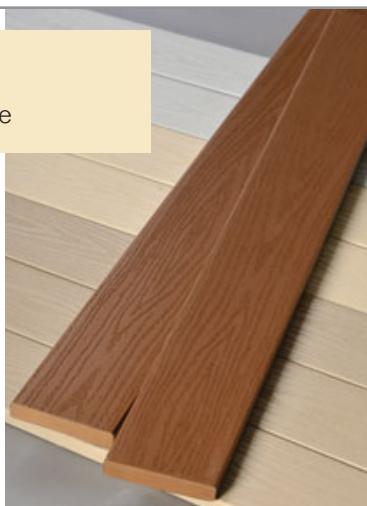
■ **Ipe Clip Fastener Co.**, 866/427-2547, ipeclip.com.

Quartet of Colors

Enduris adds a cellular PVC decking line

Florida-based Enduris has expanded its offerings beyond vinyl railing and fencing with its new Endeck brand of cellular PVC deck boards. They come in four colors, including a reddish brown the company calls Ironwood. Other colors are gray, tan, and khaki.

Cellular PVC has working characteristics similar to those of wood and is lighter in weight than wood-plastic composites. Manufacturers say because it's all plastic, it's less likely to allow the growth of mold than



either wood or composite decking.

Endeck is a co-extrusion with a scratch- and stain-resistant topcoat. It's embossed with a wood grain pattern on both the top and the bottom so either side can be exposed. It carries a Class A fire-spread rating and is IRC approved.

The 5/4-by-6-inch decking comes in 12-foot, 16-foot, and 20-foot lengths and has matching 12-inch fascia. The company was still working out distribution in early 2010 but said the decking should retail for between \$3 and \$3.50 per foot. — S.G.

■ **Enduris**, 888/329-7428, enduris.com.

Hanger Fasteners

Using screws instead of nails

Tired of banging your knuckles while trying to install joist hangers in a tight spot? Simpson Strong-Tie's SD Strong-Drive screws might be your answer.

The load-rated screws are designed for use with many interior and exterior Strong-Tie connectors, and they're certainly a lot easier to get started than a nail when there's no room to swing a hammer. Screws are made with hex heads to reduce cam out, sharp points for fast starts, and serrated threads to reduce the torque needed to drive them.

Strong-Drives are available in two versions, the SD9 and the SD10, which take the place of 10d and 16d nails, respectively. The fasteners are mechanically galvanized and meet the 2009 International Residential Code.

SD screws can be used with treated lumber under



some, but not all, conditions. In high-exposure environments, such as an oceanfront site or where chemical content of the wood is high, Simpson recommends stainless steel connectors and fasteners instead. More specific recommendations on where SD screws are appropriate are available at Simpson's Web site or by calling the company. — S.G.

■ **Simpson Strong-Tie**, 800/999-5099, strongtie.com. ♦

Green Concrete

Premixed blend with high recycled content

Green builders are delighted with the high durability of concrete, but many of them aren't so happy about all the energy it takes to produce the cement and mine the aggregate that goes into it.

Quikrete has a new product for them: Green Concrete Mix. Half of the blend consists of recycled materials, including crushed concrete for aggregate, and fly ash as a partial replacement for Portland cement. In all, each 60-pound bag of concrete mix diverts 0.25 cubic feet of waste from landfills, according to the company. Also, the company points out, Quikrete is mixed with locally available aggregates rather than material that has to be trucked long distances.

The concrete develops a compressive strength of 3,500



pounds per square inch in 28 days. Each bag of dry mix yields a little under a half cubic foot of concrete.

Fly ash is especially attractive from a green point of view. It's a by-product of coal-burning power plants and can replace some of the cement in a conventional mix, reducing the amount of energy and greenhouse gas emissions needed to make concrete. Millions of tons of fly ash are produced every year in the United States.

A bag of the mix retails for between \$3 and \$5, depending on the retailer and the region. Initially launched in the Pacific Northwest, Green Concrete Mix is now also available in Denver; Columbus, Ohio; Salt Lake City; and New England. — S.G.

■ **Quikrete**, 800/282-5828, quikrete.com.