

PRODUCTS

Steel Deck Framing

Trex Elevations carries 25-year warranty

by Scott Gibson

With its acquisition of Denver-based Iron Deck Corp., Trex has added galvanized steel framing to its growing line of deck-related products.

The company is looking to boost its share of the “low-maintenance” decking business and sees the same opportunities in the \$1.9 billion deck-substructure market as it did in wood-plastic composite decking.

Trex Elevations steel framing — which is backed by a 25-year warranty — will last longer than pressure-treated lumber, says the company. The steel members weigh less than wood lumber, and they won’t warp, twist, split, or decay. They’re manufactured from 25 percent recycled material, and job-site offcuts and scraps also can be recycled.

Framing members include joists, box beams, and ledger material (called “track”), all of them 8 inches deep, in lengths of 12 feet, 16 feet, and 20 feet. They can typically span 14 feet, according to Trex.

The steel can be cut with a standard circular saw fitted with a metal-cutting blade, and the members are assembled with self-tapping sheet-metal screws and L-shaped galvanized brackets.



Decking boards can be either face-screwed, installed with hidden clips, or attached to the framing from below with pneumatically driven pins.

Trex Elevations will be manufactured in Fernley, Nev., and Winchester, Va.

Trex didn’t announce pricing but said the cost difference over conventional pressure-treated material should be between \$2 and \$5 per square foot of deck.

Scott Gibson is a writer in East Waterboro, Maine.

■ **Trex**, 800/289-8739, trex.com.

SOLAR-POWERED LIGHTS

No wiring required

Designed for fence and deck-railing posts, CertainTeed’s Solar Wedge Lights cast light downward, unlike the company’s post-cap lights, which generally broadcast light in all directions.

The new light uses two rechargeable batteries and three bright LED lights with enough power to cast a 15-foot beam of light.



An integral solar collector charges the AA batteries during the day; the batteries are good for 500 charge cycles before they need to be replaced, according to CertainTeed.

The fixtures come in four finishes — black, white, copper, and stainless — and can be installed on any post at least 3 inches wide.

Wedge Lights carry a two-year warranty and cost \$55 each. — S.G.

■ **CertainTeed**, 800/233-8990, certainteed.com.

Quick Fix

A plastic “skim coat” for decks

A Quebec-based company now has a way of dressing up a worn, faded, or splintered deck surface that’s still structurally sound but past its visual prime.

Plastibec Millwork’s Deck Cover is a 1/4-inch-thick by 6-inch-wide shiplapped PVC plank that attaches to the existing deck surface with stainless steel pan-head screws. One edge of the plank has a slotted bib for screws while the other has a narrow lip that slips under the adjacent plank. Fasteners are concealed when the decking is installed.

Decking comes in 8-foot and 12-foot lengths and in six colors — antique gray, cedar, charcoal, cherry wood, sand beige, and walnut — with an embossed wood-grain surface pattern. The company also sells trim pieces for deck edges and plank connectors.



Plastibec says the planks, which come with a 10-year warranty, will hold up under heavy foot traffic.

Deck Cover retails for about \$4 per square foot, roughly half the cost of wood-plastic composite decking. — S.G.

■ **Plastibec Millwork**, 800/361-4917, plastibecmillwork.com. ❖