

Products | by Tom O'Brien



Recycled Roofing. Even up close, EcoStar's roofing tiles could easily be mistaken for weathered shakes or antique slate. But they're made of rubber, 80 percent of it recycled from post-industrial scrap. *Seneca Shake* and *Majestic Slate* tiles are UL-listed for fire resistance and Class 4 impact resistance. Each line offers 10 color choices and a variety of widths and thicknesses. Prices start at \$3 per square foot.

EcoStar, 800/211-7170, ecostarllc.com.



Heat-Pump Water Heater. The *Accelera 300* can reduce hot-water costs by as much as 80 percent, says the manufacturer, because the pump's compressor generates 3 to 5 kilowatt-hours (kwh) of heat for every kwh of electricity it consumes. An electric booster element provides backup if the heat pump can't keep up with demand. The unit holds 80 gallons and costs \$2,800.

Stiebel Eltron, 800/582-8423, stiebel-eltron-usa.com.

Can Cover.

Recessed lights — including IC-rated ones — leak huge amounts of energy when they penetrate an insulated ceiling. *Recessed Light Covers* are designed to surround the cans and seal to the drywall with low-pressure spray foam, preventing airflow and heat loss.

For non-IC fixtures, the covers also ensure that the fire-code mandated 3-inch air space is maintained. They're made of fire-resistant mineral wool, measure 9 inches tall by 14 inches wide, and cost about \$20 each.

Fomo Products, 800/321-5585, fomo.com.



Simplified Sheathing. Most panel edge clips — or H-clips — are made of rigid steel, but *Grip H Clips* are made of pliable nylon, which makes them easier to install, says the maker. The clips have funnel-shaped mouths and sharp teeth that hold on tenaciously, and they're sold in $\frac{7}{16}$ -, $\frac{1}{2}$ -, $\frac{5}{8}$ -, and $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch sizes. A bag of 250 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch clips costs \$25.

M&O Products, 608/742-6565, griphclip.com.



Products

Safe Roof Cover. Wet or dry, the *Opus Roof Blanket* provides better walking traction than any other underlayment — including felt — says the manufacturer. The company offers a tear-free guarantee and says the material can be left exposed for as long as 30 months. The surface does not reflect sunlight and is supposed to be easy to mark with pencil or chalk. One 32-pound roll is 42 inches wide and covers eight squares. The product is suitable for all types of roofing materials and costs \$15 to \$18 per square.

Propex Operating Co., 888/437-3423, opusroofblanket.com.



Got Lead? The *D-Lead Lead Paint Test Kit* doesn't just determine whether lead is present; it also indicates whether the paint sample contains less lead than the amount allowed by the EPA. According to the manufacturer, this test kit is the only one recognized by the agency for use on a total of four materials (plaster, drywall, wood, and ferrous metals). You can buy a six-test kit at home centers and hardware stores for about \$30 or order a 24-test professional version (\$85) through a distributor.

ESCA Tech, 877/532-5323, esca-tech.com.

Hassle-Free Lighting. I-Lighting's outdoor lighting kits for rails, posts, and stairs are designed to make illuminating a deck as easy as lighting a Christmas tree. Each kit includes an LED lighting fixture, a wiring harness, and fasteners. Material costs are comparable to those of traditional deck lighting products, the manufacturer says, but installation should take half the time. The company also sells a low-voltage DC power supply (\$100) guaranteed to light up as many as 50 modules.

I-Lighting, 888/305-4232, i-lightingonline.com.



Stone on Steel. *Stone Coated Steel Roofing* offers the look of traditional roofing materials in a lightweight modular package. Available styles include Mediterranean tile, cedar shakes, and modern dimensional shingles. All come as 26-gauge steel panels with an acrylic bonded stone-chip finish. Depending on the style, it can take as few as 15 panels to complete a square. The finished surface can withstand foot traffic and winds up to 120 mph. Material costs average \$218 per square.

Decra Roofing Systems, 877/463-3272, decra.com.

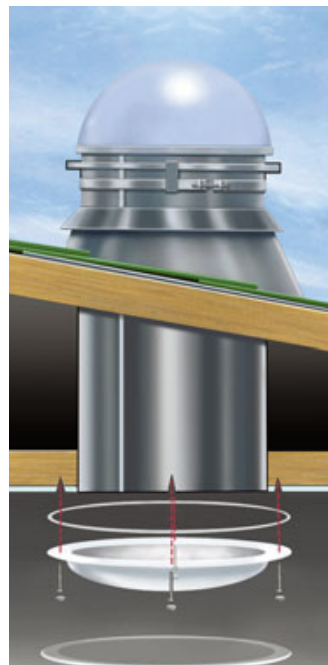


Products



Plastic Studs. The *EcoStud Track and Stud System* for framing basement walls assembles like steel studs but doesn't have steel's thermal conductivity problems. The 100 percent recycled plastic material fastens with standard dry-wall screws (though the company recommends also using adhesive to fasten drywall). Prepunched slots in the track lock studs in place. An 8-foot stud costs about \$5.

Superior Polymer Products, 877/586-5543, superiorpolymer.com.



Premium Tube Light. *SunPipe* tube skylights feature clear acrylic top domes, industrial-grade galvanized-steel flashings, and aluminum pipes coated with a highly reflective silver lining. They're sold in 9-, 13-, and 21-inch pipe diameters. A basic 9-inch kit costs \$310.

The SunPipe Co., 800/844-4786, sunpipe.com.



Forced Air and Hot Water. Plenty of hydronic systems use the same boiler for heat and hot water, but few provide cooling as well. Rheem's *Integrated HVAC & Water Heating System* uses a tankless water heater as a boiler, heats forced air with a hydronic air handler, and can be combined with various cooling coils and plenums to complete an hvac system. Pricing for the full package (hvac and hot water) ranges from \$1,850 to \$4,550.

Rheem Manufacturing Co., 866/720-2076, rheem.com/integrated.

Pure Polyester Batts.

EnGuard is billed as a 100 percent polyester batt insulation that contains no formaldehyde or VOCs.

According to the maker, it's made using 50 percent recycled raw materials (primarily plastic bottles), and 100 percent of the job-site waste is recyclable.

Installers will be happy to hear that it's not itchy and can be handled without dust masks or protective gear. It comes in R-13, R-19, and R-21 thicknesses and costs roughly 50 percent more than fiberglass; a 69-square-foot bag of R-13 retails for \$50.

Vita Nonwovens, 336/431-7187, enguardinsulation.com.

