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# PSN

POOL AND SPA NEWS

NESPA's Outstanding  
Achievement Awards

page 30

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# PSN

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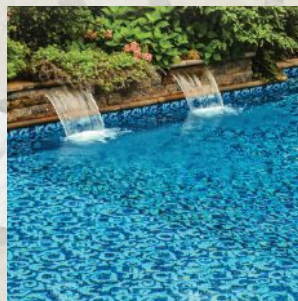
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# Taking the Industry's Pulse



**Joanne McClain**  
Editor-in-Chief, PSN

**We're in the middle** of show season, with the two largest events — the Pool | Spa | Patio Expo and The Pool & Spa Show powered by NESPA — now behind us. Both were inarguably successful— well attended with a large number of manufacturers exhibiting their latest wares, robust education schedules, and myriad networking opportunities.

As a member of the media serving this industry, the last is truly the most important for me. It's at these events that I'm able to connect with a lot of you, learn what business challenges you're dealing with, and brainstorm ways to address those concerns in these pages.

This year, most of the buzz and underlying anxiety centered around the economy and the uncertainty surrounding an election year. The pool builders I spoke to mentioned the slowing demand for new construction and the ways they're responding to it. Some are adding service departments to their companies, others are offering less expensive pool options, such as package pools, to combat the growing number of homeowners experiencing sticker shock over gunite pool prices. Yet others have plans to branch into renovations.

All are obvious signs that our industry is in the midst of a contraction, and they're all things we've seen before — most recently after the Great Recession.

That brings me to the housing market. As I've noted before, it's a key economic indicator for the pool and spa industry, which is why we like to keep an occasional finger on that pulse. Our chief economist, Ali Wolf, often offers insights into how the economy is performing and, in her latest column, makes note of the continued leveling of inflation. (See "Inflation Insights: A Deep Dive Into Metro Trends" on page 18.) This is a hopeful sign that the pool and spa industry will rebound from the slight slump that most are currently experiencing.

Another positive sign? Service pros I met with at both recent shows seemed to be too busy to be too worried. Many said they've never been more in demand, and that that demand is also attracting a large number of newbies. It's another echo of 2009 and how the industry emerged successfully through the service sector.

What's been your experience? I'll be at FSPA's Everything Under the Sun Expo in booth 727 on Feb. 23 and 24. If you're there, please drop by for a chat. I'd love to hear from you.

  
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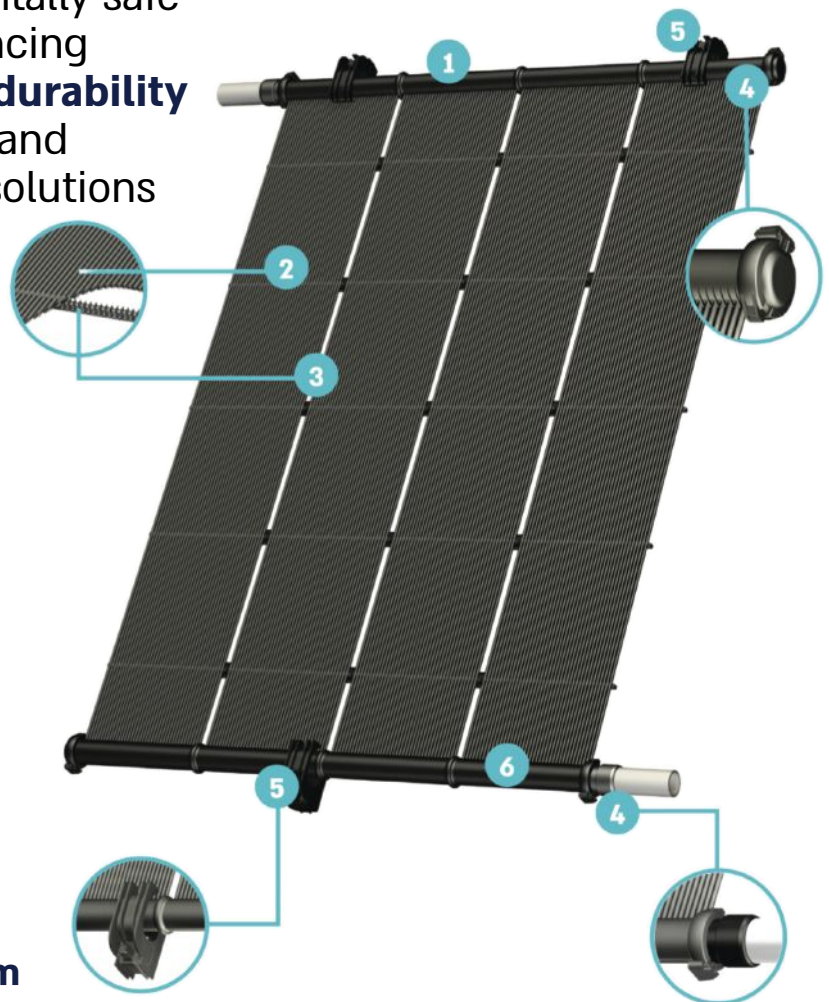
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# Clear Skies Welcome NESPA's Pool & Spa Show

A growing women's event, fundraiser concert, and brisk activity on the show floor and classrooms marked the trade show.

BY REBECCA ROBLEDO



Clockwise from left: Attendees at the opening of the Pool & Spa Show: Powered by NESPA; a \$100,000 check is presented to PHTA's Step Into Swim program, from Heritage Pool Supply, NESPA and PHTA; the Women in the Industry event.

**With upbeat crowds**, an expanded program and mostly clement weather, The Pool & Spa Show: Powered by the Northeast Spa and Pool Association saw another brisk year.

Taking place Jan. 23-25 in Atlantic City, with pre-conference programming held the weekend before, the event was attended by pool and spa professionals from 45 states and 14 countries. Attendance figures were still being processed at press time, but organizers were encouraged by early numbers and crowds large enough to provide steady traffic over a show floor that was 10% larger than the year before.

The outlook for this year was positive overall, with professionals taking a

cautiously optimistic approach. “Most dealers feel like this is going to be another solid year,” said NESPA Executive Director Dominick Mondì.

This year saw the continued growth of the show’s Women in the Industry event, bringing female professionals together for a day of seminars, networking and inspirational talks. Topics included how to deal with the challenges of working as a woman in a male-dominated world, maintaining work-life balance, and various business-related subjects. This was the sixth time for the event, which started as a single seminar then gradually grew into a full day. It was organized by NESPA and a number of volunteers, as

well as the Penn-Jersey Chapter group called Women in the Industry (WITI). A record 70 attended.

Once again, hands-on technical courses saw the most attendance, with sessions on heaters, tile, pumps and aboveground pool assembly selling out.

Heritage Pool Supply’s concert featuring Cheap Trick and Marshall Tucker Band raised \$25,000 to donate to the NESPA Foundation. After a series of donation matches by NESPA and the Pool & Hot Tub Alliance, a total of \$100,000 was presented to PHTA for its Step Into Swim program.

Next year’s Pool & Spa Show: Powered by NESPA is held Jan. 28-30, 2025 at the Atlantic City Convention Center.

PHOTOS COURTESY NESPA

# Florida Considers Bills Addressing Scope of Work and Recovery Fund

BY REBECCA ROBLEDO

Florida is about halfway through this year's legislative session and, so far, two bills are standing out for the pool/spa industry:

**Scope of work:** Two FSPA-backed bills are expected to help clear confusion about what tasks can be performed by licensed pool/spa contractors in Florida. Some confusion has surrounded issues such as when a licensed electrician must be brought in, along with whether or not pool/spa contractors can build retaining walls to shore soil. In the past, some pool/spa builders have even been told they can't build decks, perform excavation or install rebar.

Senate Bill 922 and House Bill 525 are written to clarify such issues, as well as simplify and modernize the language to make the scope of work easier to understand and interpret.

"We are feeling optimistic," said Dallas Thiesen, senior director of government affairs for the Florida Swimming Pool Association. "We've done the legwork with all the stakeholders, legislators and their staff to make sure all questions have been answered. We're hoping to see it start moving soon."

**Homeowners construction recovery fund:** Another set of FSPA-supported bills expands the fund meant to provide aid to homeowners who have been abandoned mid-project by contractors because of bankruptcy or other reasons.

Senate Bill 1544 and House Bill 1335 would increase the maximum available per claim to \$30,000, with a lifetime cap of \$600,000 for a single contractor. The current ceilings are \$15,000 per project and \$150,000 per contractor.

"The fund ... is a way to help make consumers whole in the worst case," Thiesen said. "Our goal is to prevent these things from happening, but we have to be realistic and make sure that fund is available for consumers, should the worst happen."

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## Pentair Pool Reports Small Sales Dip in 2023

**Pentair's quarterly** and end-of-year reports showed a drop in sales.

Sales for the company's pool segment went down 2% in the fourth quarter of 2023, compared to sales for the same period last year. Net sales in the fourth quarter 2023 were \$336.2, compared with \$343.3 for the same period in 2022.

Across all the company's divisions, the company saw sales of \$985 million in the fourth quarter of 2023, also a drop of 2% compared to the same period in 2022.

For the year, pool division sales dipped 18% compared with 2022. In 2023, it saw net sales of \$ 1.344 billion, compared with \$1.633 billion the previous year.

Company-wide, full year 2023 sales were \$4.1 billion, flat compared with 2022, according to the company.

## Plaster Standard Set for Revision

**The Pool & Hot Tub Alliance** and the National Plasterers Council are updating their ANSI/PHTA/ICC/NPC-12 American National Standard for the Plastering of Swimming Pools and Spas.

To do this, they are seeking subject matter experts for the writing committee, as well as change requests. The process for the committee should take less than two years, according to PHTA. Those interested in joining must apply by March 11.

Change requests will be accepted until May 31.

For more information, go to [phta.org/standards](http://phta.org/standards).

## Big 3 Firms Donate for Swim Lessons

**Two of the Big 3** manufacturers presented donations to PHTA's Step Into Swim program at the Pool & Spa Show: Powered by NESPA. Step Into Swim helps fund swim lessons for children.

Fluidra presented PHTA with a check for \$100,000 for the program. "Their continued financial support has made it possible for us to expand our reach and gift the lifesaving skill of swimming to tens of thousands of children," said Olympic Gold Medalist Rowdy Gaines, PHTA vice president of partnerships & development, who leads the Step Into Swim initiative.

Hayward made a donation to fund 1,000 lessons through Step Into Swim. "With Hayward by our side, I know we will make a difference together in the world of water safety at PHTA and Step Into Swim," Gaines said.



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# Inflation Insights: A Deep Dive Into Metro Trends

Popular coastal and lifestyle markets top the list for the highest inflation

BY ALI WOLF



**Previously, we published** an article highlighting inflation trends in metropolitan areas across the United States. At that time, inflation on a 12-month basis was coming down off its June 2022 national peak of 9.1% but, at 5%, was still elevated.

Today, inflation at the national level has moderated further to 3.1%, per the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This is still above the Federal Reserve's target for price stability of 2%, but it has come down substantially since last year.

The cooling of inflation is due to fiscal stimulus wearing off, consumers working through their excess savings, diminished global supply chain issues, and policy changes. The Federal Reserve's rate hikes that started in March 2022, for example, have had an impact on credit availability and are dampening demand to an extent.

The inflation rate, however, varies

widely by market. In comparing the 10 metro areas with the highest inflation from 2021 to 2022 with the most recent data, here are some takeaways:

**Coastal markets top the list.** Popular coastal relocation and lifestyle markets top the list with Miami; Tampa, Florida; and San Diego exhibiting the most price growth year over year.

Miami, the No. 1 metro, is a sought-after location due to its weather, lifestyle, and labor market. In fact, Miami has a robust job market for higher earning occupations, and this trend has only increased since the pandemic. Migration plays a strong role in the local economy as well, driven by those moving in from outside the country. Miami has had more international migration in than out since 2000.

These strengths also bring challenges. Miami's growth has led to more

congestion and greater competition for resources. Related, Miami is seeing huge demand for housing, which is playing into the inflation equation. The demand for housing also increases the need for energy, such as air conditioning, due to Miami's warm climate. Taken together, the demand pressures in Miami have contributed to higher costs of living.

**Six markets were on the highest inflation list last year as well.** Tampa; Miami; Seattle; Dallas; Baltimore; and Riverside, California, were all repeats from the highest inflation markets list last year. Phoenix, Atlanta, Detroit, and Houston dropped off the list, while San Diego, Denver, Philadelphia, and St. Louis joined it.

**Huge improvement in Phoenix and Atlanta.** The top two markets with the most inflation last year were Phoenix and Atlanta with 11.5% and 10.7%, respectively. The latest data shows both metros now have a 2.9% inflation rate, below the national average.

**Inflation is notably down from the peak.** In the top five markets with the most inflation, levels have improved from the peak seen in early 2022. Each of the markets, though, are still a way off from returning to the figures seen pre-pandemic.

As global supply chains normalize and the Federal Reserve rate hikes continue to take hold, we should expect inflation to continue its moderation.

*Ali Wolf is the chief economist for Zonda, the largest home building prop tech company in North America, and PSN's parent company.*

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# 8 Outdoor Design Trends Shaping Backyards In 2024

The TurfMutt Foundation and Houzz share some of their backyard predictions for the upcoming summer season

BY SYMONE STRONG



**No longer deemed** as just an area behind a house, today's backyards are getting dedicated room treatment, as more people choose to spend more time outside. The TurfMutt Foundation, an organization that advocates for the care and use of backyards, community parks, and other green

spaces, is even coining a new term, "backyarding," or the act of taking activities typically associated with the indoors outside into green space.

"Now more than ever, homeowners are recognizing the power of their yards and parks doing environmental good, as well as benefiting their health

and well-being," says Kris Kiser, president and CEO of the TurfMutt Foundation and its parent organization, the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute. "Homeowners are making improvements in their yards with many goals in mind, thinking about what's good for their families, pets, and our planet."

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The organization expects the practice of “backyarding” to evolve into an ongoing sustainability practice and also predicts the following trends for 2024:

**Fun in the sun:** From parents looking for ways to lure their kids away from screens to neighbors wanting to connect with friends, homeowners are turning their backyards into a place for fun and games. Some go all out to install a pool or a pickleball court, while others take a simpler approach like designating a strip of grass for cornhole or soccer.



**Living landscapes:** Since homeowners have come to value their lawns, trees, and plants more than ever, they are investing in their care like never before. This might mean planting for pollinators, adding drought-tolerant plants, investing in lawn care equipment, or calling in landscape professionals, as needed, for pruning, rescuing diseased trees, and revitalizing turf grass.

**Mixing materials:** As outdoor living has become incorporated into daily life, homeowners are taking care to design cohesive outdoor spaces. They factor in landscaping, hardscaping, and natural aesthetics.



**Backyard birding:** The birdwatching craze took flight during the pandemic, but it’s not a fleeting fad, says TurfMutt. Birdwatching is not only relaxing; it is a great way to connect with nature right outside the back door.

Houzz’s team of outdoor design experts also decided to weigh in on yard expectations for 2024. They predict the four below trends will be prominent next year.



**Petite patios:** Earlier this year, Houzz search data revealed significant increases in searches for terms like “small screened-in porch ideas,” “small backyard patio,” and “small front porch.” For homeowners with modest-sized yards, adding a small patio or deck can turn an unused side yard or entry into an inviting outdoor living space.



**Great gathering:** Professionals on Houzz are increasingly adding outdoor gathering areas that can help maximize living space and create a more dynamic home entertaining experience. Anchoring the area with a feature like a fireplace or a fire pit, a bar, or an outdoor TV creates a focal point and draws guests out into the yard.

**Adjacent add-ons:** Screened-in or glassed-in porches are growing in popularity as they allow homeowners who live in regions that experience inclement weather, pollen, or insects to enjoy the benefits of being outside while still having the comforts of home. As these spaces often sit directly off the main house, Houzz is seeing more design continuity between the home and porch.



**Paver plantings:** Garden paths and patios made of pavers separated by ground cover have gained popularity on Houzz due to their natural look, permeability, and design versatility. This approach softens pathways, breaks up large expanses of hardscape, and generally makes a walkway or patio feel more like a lush, living part of a garden.



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# Changing of the Guard

Meet this year's incoming chairman for the National Plasterers Council

BY REBECCA ROBLEDO



**It's time again** for the National Plasterers Council to welcome a new chairman.

Every two years, the group changes leadership, and the incoming chairman for 2024-2025 is Shaun Goldberg,

plaster operations manager for Burkett's Pool Plastering & Remodeling in Ripon, Calif. The 30-plus-year plastering veteran begins his two-year term at the NPC Conference Feb. 21-23 in Fort Worth, Texas.

Like so many in NPC, Goldberg's plastering career started in the literal trenches. But in both NPC and Burkett's Pool Plastering & Remodeling, he moved up the ranks quickly.

Here, we learn about Goldberg's career and outlook coming into his new position.

## GROUND-LEVEL START

Goldberg grew up in Central California, first in Gustine, Calif., a small Portuguese dairy and farming community about 100 miles from San Francisco, then in Modesto, a considerably larger city nearby.

Like so many in the pool and spa industry, Goldberg happened upon the trade. At 19, after having taken a year in college, he received a job offer from a friend in the pool/spa plastering business.

"I didn't know anything about it," he says. "I was 19 and in good shape, so I went to work with him one day and thought, 'Wow, I think I could do this and like it.'"

So he began his swimming pool plastering career working for Earl Adams, founder of Adams Pool Solutions, then located in nearby Pleasanton, Calif.

He came in very much at the ground level — as a hod carrier and mixer for \$30 per pool. But that didn't last for long. Goldberg seriously saw this as a potential career path and wanted to move forward.

"I only mixed for about four months, then convinced them to put me in the pool and teach me to

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trowel,” he says.

He liked the hard work, the people, the ability to work in a different city every day — and avoid working in an office. He seized the opportunity to learn from the seasoned veterans around him.

“I loved working with these guys,” Goldberg says. “I would clean their pools just so they’d teach me this trade. I wanted to be as good as they were. That kind of motivated me to just keep with it.”

As much as anything, he appreciated the artistry and challenge involved in pool and spa plastering.

“I’ve never done flatwork concrete, but I know you have forms and screeds, where in a swimming pool, you have all these curves and steps and noses,” he explains. “Every pool is different, because there are so many variables, with how long the shotcrete has been there, who shot it, what the weather conditions are like. And it’s all by hand.”

He also liked the strategic aspect of timing the work to finish before the material sets, accounting for things such as weather conditions and whether or not the material is tinted. He liked the challenge of having to complete the whole job in one sweep.

“Once the plaster is shot in, your time has started,” he says. “There’s no stopping to have lunch or take a break. You’re going until it’s done. So you really have to be efficient to make it look good.”

He worked with Adams Pool Solutions for about five years when Rob Burkett reached out to him. He’d recently started a company and was looking for skilled plasterers.

“I thought, ‘I have a pretty secure job here,’” he recalls. “But he said, ‘Well, come play golf with me, and we’ll talk.’ By the end of the golf round, I realized what kind of person he was. From then on, he would not only be my boss, but my mentor and a friend.”



“I see myself as a facilitator, giving the guys in the field everything they need to accomplish their job and keep moving forward.”

### UP THE LADDER

He joined Ripon, Calif.-based Burkett’s Pool Plastering & Remodeling in 1991 and has remained there ever since.

After a few years serving as a plasterer, he became a foreman, which he did for about 15 years. Then he was named plaster operations manager 22 years ago.

“We had grown into five or six crews, and somebody needed to manage that,” Goldberg says. “[Burkett] took me out of the pool and had me start managing the day-to-day operations.”

Some business courses at night school helped him transition from the field to the office.

“It was eye-opening to see everything else that goes on in a business to accomplish what you do,” Goldberg says. “I see myself as a facilitator giving the guys in the field everything they need to accomplish their job and keep moving forward. Rob always taught me to do things the right way even if it costs more, and the right thing will happen.”

But experience in his position has taught him that the most important part of business for him was pretty straightforward.

“A lot of things come down to relationships and how much time you’re willing to spend with a client or your crews,” he says. “Making myself available for those personal relationships, I think, has made the difference for

me. I try to teach that to our young employees here who are more [into] texting: Sometimes getting on the phone and talking to somebody or getting in front of them and listening ... I think you have a different outcome, a positive outcome.”

That approach helped him build a high-end niche for Burkett’s. “On some of these projects ... there’s a \$25M house, and they have a colorist, a landscape architect, a designer. They have five different people working on this project, with hundreds of emails going back and forth, and site visits before you even show up to do the job. Before, there were two finishes to choose from, now you have 65 colors and options. I’m trying to help guide a homeowner, designer and general contractor to go through that, so it’s time consuming.”

Engaging personally with clients and crews also gets him out of the office, which he appreciates. While he holds a top-level management position in the company, he tries to get out in the field regularly.

“Even to this day, I carry secondary work clothes, because sometimes just to clear my head, I’ll jump in with my guys,” he says. “Just being able to walk away from a job and see what you’ve done with your hands ... My heart is still in the field even though I dress differently. I don’t think it’ll ever go away.”

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## AT THE HELM

Goldberg's National Plasterers Council career began shortly after his promotion at Burkett's, when he became an NPC member and attended his first conference.

He joined committees soon after. In the years since, he has held co-chair positions on the Research Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee, participating in the updating of the last two Tech Manuals. He also has participated in the committee that writes the American National Standard for the Plastering of Swimming Pools and Spas.

Within a few years of joining NPC, Goldberg was nominated for a spot on the organization's Board of Directors, on which he has served for approximately 15 years.

In his time with the Research Committee, he helped run the test

pools at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, which were dedicated to testing of various products to learn their durability, performance and reaction to various conditions. He expects that experience to come in handy as incoming NPC Chairman, while he helps shepherd the group in approaching its top issue: the rising levels of limestone being added to cements in an attempt to reduce the material's carbon footprint. While the Research Committee had taken a break a few years back, the organization plans to revive it to learn more about how increasing the ratio of limestone will affect the application and longterm performance of pool and spa plaster.

"I think the first segment of research will in the laboratory, with some testing," Goldberg says. "Then the second part will be some field testing."

No timeline has been established yet, as the cement industry is still figuring out how much limestone it will eventually want to add. Some have said 15%, but other projections have gone higher.

"So I think in some respects, the world will put the cart in front of the horse by changing, but may not have all the technical information and know the ramifications," Goldberg says. "That may be something we have to figure out."

To start, the group will begin assessing the parameters of cements currently on the market, to help develop baselines to compare against with the new mixes.

He has no doubt the group is up to the task.

"This has been a dynamic group that has punched above their weight with research," he says.

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# Gold *in the* Northeast

The Northeast Spa and Pool Association's top honors in building, retail and service

BY REBECCA ROBLEDO

**Each year**, the Northeast Spa & Pool Association recognizes not only the most beautiful and technically noteworthy pool and spa designs, but also its best retailers and service firms.

On the following pages, you'll find a sampling of the last gold-winning pools, along with the winning retail storefronts.

But, in addition to the Builder and Retail competitions, NESPA holds a competition for service companies. While less picturesque (because the contest doesn't include photos), the achievement is no less impressive.

Each firm that enters the service competition must select 10 customers with a surname beginning with the random letters chosen by

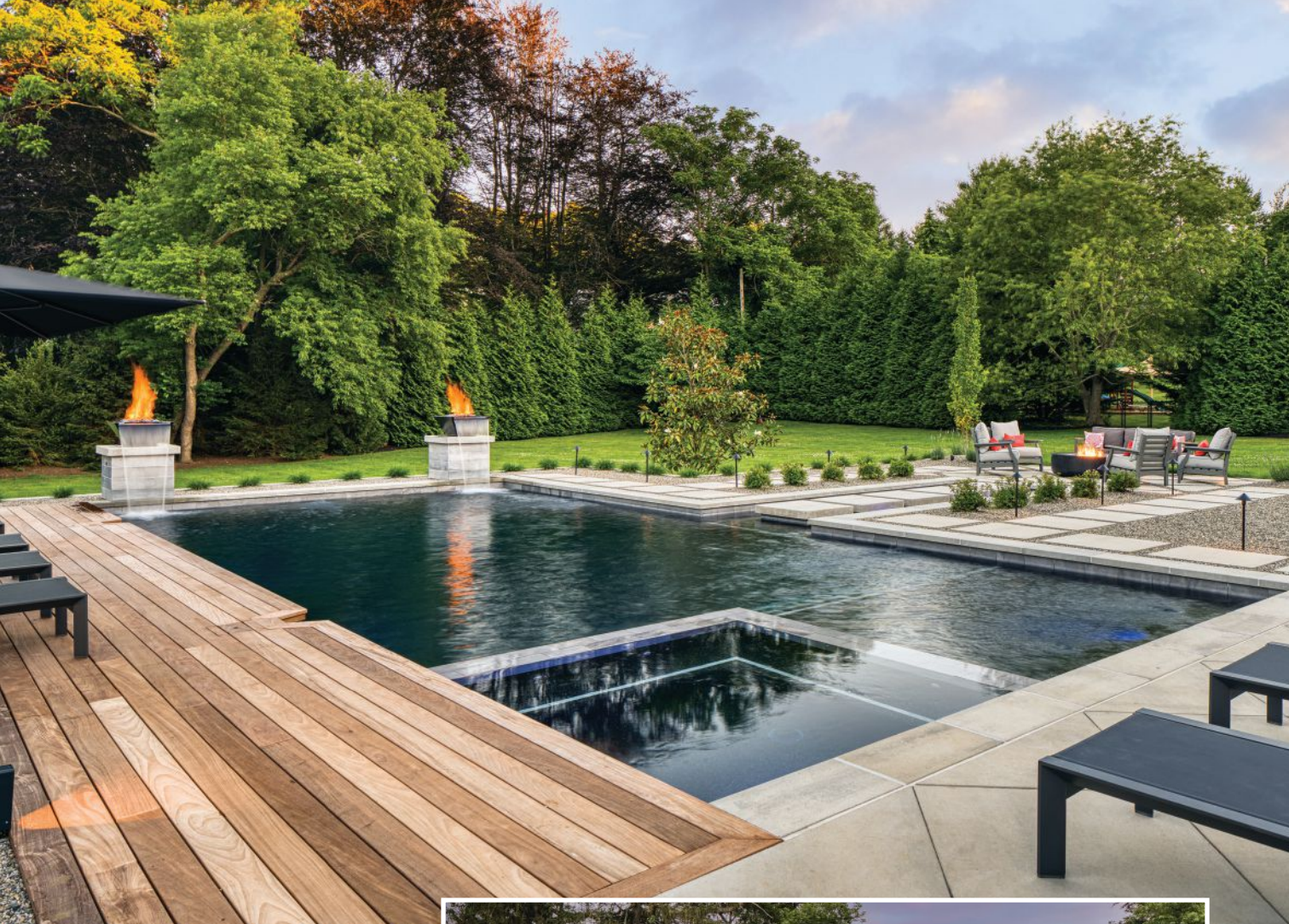
NESPA. Via email, those customers are directed to an online survey, asking them to rate the company on six parameters of service, such as performance and response time.

Responses are weighted to determine which entrants receive gold, silver and bronze status.

The following took the gold in the 2023 NESPA Service Competition:

- Aqua Pool & Patio, East Windsor, Conn.
- Blue Wave Pool Service and Supplies, Wallingford, Conn.
- Integrity Pool & Spa, Lanoka Harbor, N.J.
- Lipari Pools, Middlesex, N.J.

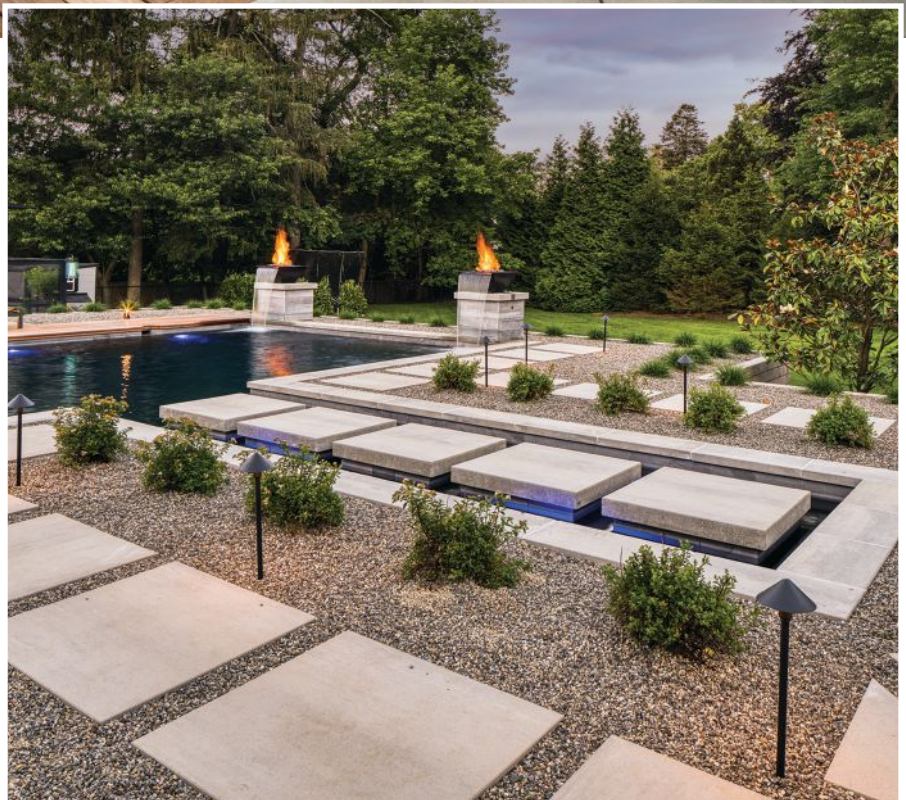
Congratulations to all these companies!



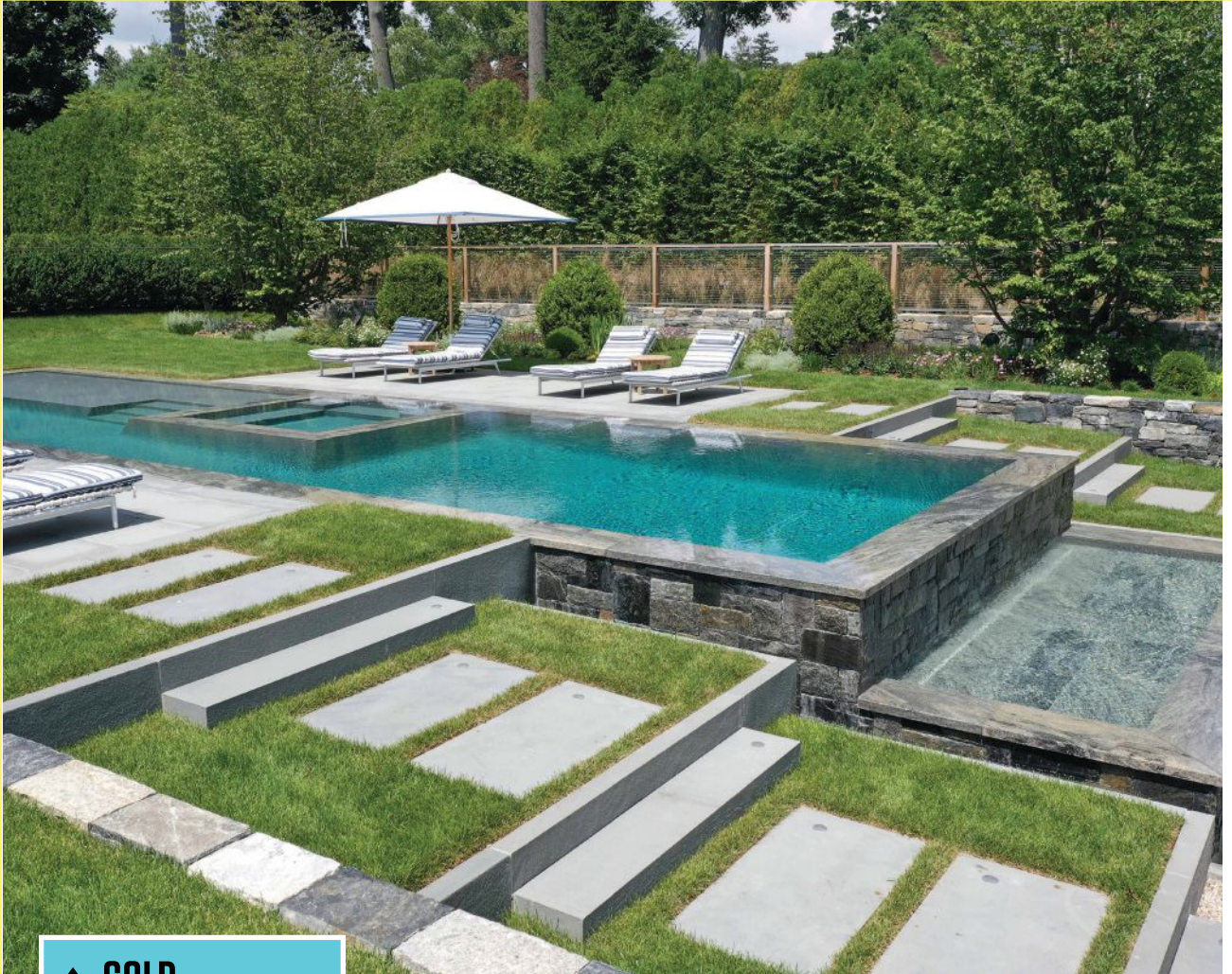
► **BEST OF  
COMPETITION**

Pool/Spa Combination  
Concrete

Elite Landscapes  
Perrineville, N.J.



PHOTOS COURTESY NESPA



▲ **GOLD**

**Residential Concrete Pools  
Geometric**

Drakeley Pool Company  
Bethlehem, Conn.



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◀ **GOLD**

**Pool/Spa Combination  
Concrete**

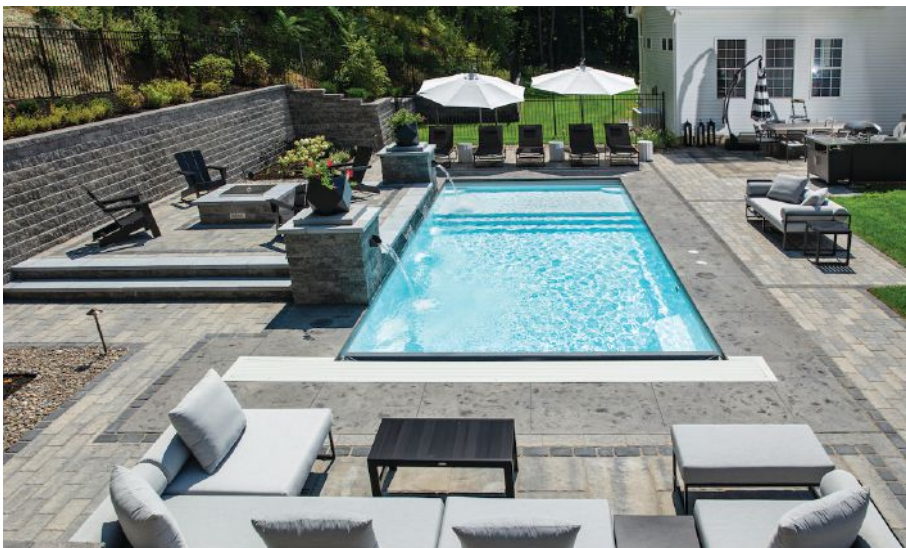
Elite Landscapes  
Perrineville, N.J.



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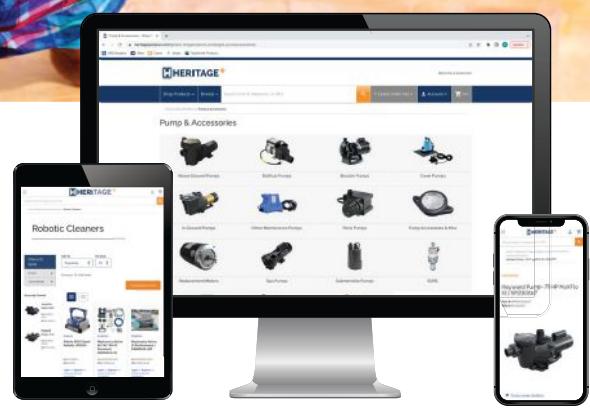
◀ **GOLD**

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Concrete

J & P Pools  
Elmont, N.Y.



◀ **GOLD**

Pool/Spa Combination  
Concrete

Coral Sea Pools  
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◀ **GOLD**

Retail

Concord Pools & Spas  
Latham, N.Y.

▼ **GOLD**

Retail

Denscot Swimming Pool &  
Landscape Service  
New Preston, Conn.



▲ **GOLD**

Retail

Wholesome Pool and Spa  
North Haven, Conn.

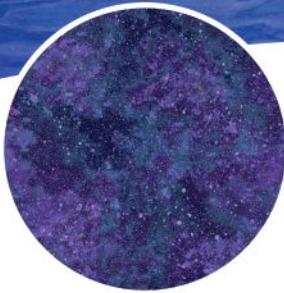
▶ **GOLD**

Retail

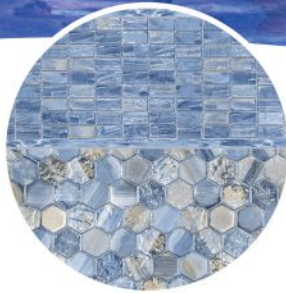
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# RESURFACING A DECK

Replacing decking on existing framing requires a confluence of building code, craft, and common sense

BY MARK CLEMENT

**In my experience,** deck builders have one of two approaches to resurfacing decks. For Group 1, it's a hard "No," and for plenty of sound reasons. For Group 2, the response is the opposite: "No permits. Ready-made revenue." Neither group is wrong, of course. Much like the dump truck/dump trailer/dumpster debate, the choice depends on what works best for your business and what you're set up for (I'm in the dump-truck camp, by the way).

While I prefer new construction — and a number of the decks that I've resurfaced have left me wondering why on earth I'm not in Group 1 — the majority of the frames I inspect have decades of life left in them. I can't see below grade, of course, but 99% of the framing I've seen looks lumberyard new, even joists and other framing that is in ground contact. Other than some staining and maybe some rust at the hangers and some unfortunate 19.2-inch-on-center joist spacing, I

can read the tags and lumber stamps like the lumber just slid off the truck. At times, the wood fiber is still so tenacious that removing fasteners is impossible.

For the most part, belt-and-suspenders structural repairs on decks like these are straightforward. But deck resurfacing projects call for a confluence and overlap of building code, craft, and common sense, especially when it comes to guard rails and unique features such as privacy screens or built-in benches.

## CLIENT BASE

My resurface customers tend to have a lot in common with one another, again landing in two main groups. Clients in the first group are older and want minimal disruption and expense. I can see in their eyes that they want their old deck back. Those in the second group have kids in college or thereabouts and are justifiably trying to maximize their budgets.

When we meet to discuss resurface options, I can also see in their eyes — whether they're trying to save a buck or repair what they've got — that unless I can demonstrate that there are structural flaws, they're finding somebody to resurface the deck. The way I see it, that can be me — a deck builder set up for it — or not me.

**Client meeting.** All the decks I have resurfaced — and by resurface, I mean remove and replace the decking, guard rail system, or both — have been built with pressure-treated lumber or western red cedar and are around 25 years old. Some age out. Others incur storm damage. Either way, the decking is cooked.

**Paint.** Sometimes, a deck has been "rescued" with deck rescue paint. These paints cake up the old, checked wood grain and deliver a robust new look ... until they don't. It seems to me that once water gets into these systems, it can't get out, and decay accelerates. I've seen recoated decking



This home's existing low-level deck was structurally sound, but the aging western red cedar decking and guard rails needed replacement.



The author began by removing the rails, then used a NestorBar to pry up the decking, starting from the center and using the demolition tool for leverage.



Pulling up deck boards often leaves screws embedded in the framing. When the author can't break off a fastener with a hammer, he cuts it off flush with the framing with an angle grinder.

on old decks on houses that needed to be sold without a pricey ping on the home inspection.

**Materials.** Despite being on a budget, everyone asks for composite decking. Upon my sharing the additional materials cost compared with treated southern pine, the lights start to dim. Upon clients' learning the additional labor and material costs for the extra blocking needed for picture-framing composites, and the similar cost trajectory of the rails, the lights flicker. And when I explain that composite decking gets hotter in the sun than wood decking, the flicker is just about out — especially for pet owners. But they still want low maintenance. Who wouldn't?

## SELECTIONS

The real headache for deck maintenance is surfaces that need it least: the verticals. Assuming 2x2 PT balusters (or similar), each one requires coating on all four sides — none of which the coating applicator is ever optimally positioned to coat. Instead, it becomes a slatherfest.

**Railing.** The stuff that's easiest to prep and coat — the wood decking — is more affordable than composite material, even after factoring the time spent coating it, especially if you can eliminate all the persnickety vertical work. To that end, I recommend a wood-metal-hybrid rail system: Dek-Pro powder-coated aluminum balusters and rail brackets with wood rails and a wood top cap. My supplier can get the balusters and brackets quickly, the combination looks terrific and short-circuits the vertical maintenance tedium, and it's in line with a budget project. It's also in line with my business model of leaving customers happy for the long haul.

**Decking.** Most of my clients select PT decking, but lately, I've been using a middle-ground composite that has the qualities of wood without the maintenance issues: Acre by Modern Mill. It's not all plastic — or plastic-y. It's low maintenance, but it also accepts coatings. There's a natural component to it, too: 53% upcycled rice husks, combined with 47% PVC. It is more versatile than typical composite

deck boards (it comes in 1-by profiles, shiplap, V-joint tongue-and-groove, and more), and it's mercifully cool on the feet. It also works beautifully when cut, ripped, and routed — think dust, not statically charged, snowy fibers.

## DEMO

Put a bunch of deck building carpenters in a room, and you'll get 10 sets of preferred methods, tools, and levers for quickly dismantling a deck. I've tried approaches such as cutting up the existing decking with a circ saw or chain saw (definite "no thank you" to the chain saw; I prefer not to be feathered in the rooster tail of chips shooting out everywhere). I've also tried various levers, none of which I find better than the uber-useful and effective, carpenter-designed NestorBar wrecking bar I prefer. It works both as a breaker bar and a lever.

First, though, I try to back out any fasteners I can, especially with PT decking. Some screws come out. Others ... well, the second the bit skids out, that's it, and I've found there's no payback in



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Once the existing framing is exposed, the author reinforces it with additional structural screws driven through the ledger into the rim joist and blocking as needed.

trying to get after it. For cedar, like the deck shown in this article, it's almost moot. The NestorBar's perfect fetch pulls boards right through the screws and I break them off later.

On diagonal decking, I like to start on a long board in the field. Using a NestorBar and a set screw, I can lift a board, get some levers under it, and pop it off. Then, with the NestorBar's front and back claws, I can work from the center in either direction.

Some guard rails can be pulled apart by hand; those that can't, I unbolt and unscrew. Bashing stuff might save time upfront, but I lose it in the end picking up splinters and shards and fixing what I moved or broke.

**Debris.** I have three categories of debris: bucket, trash can, pile. I carry a bucket to fill with fasteners and little things. The trash can (with liner) gets whatever is in the 3-foot range. The rest goes in the pile. The debris all has to find its way out of the yard, and it's easier to manage it on the front end than to pick it out of the grass on the back end.



To extend the life of the PT framing that is in contact with the ground, the author inserts Post Preservative rods containing a fungicide and wood preservative into holes bored into the wood.

## EXPOSED FRAME

With the frame exposed, I inspect whatever connections I can and make an assessment. That typically means driving a pair of structural screws per joist bay into the ledger. I use 5/16-inch-diameter, 6-inch-long Spax PowerLags with a washer head; they invariably suck the ledger tightly back to the house.

On a deck with post-to-beam connections, I drive the same screws into those connections to reinforce them. On the project shown here, a patio deck over a concrete slab, I dropped a few 2x6 blocks to the slab to help support some longer spans and stiffen things up.

A lot of organic debris had built up in the quarter-century this deck had been in place. Disrupting it made me cough up a lung, so I spent a couple of hours blowing off the debris and rinsing off the slab. I'm the only person who knows those couple of hours were spent doing that, but I sleep better at night when a jobsite is clean and tidy.

**Fasteners and joists.** What fas-

teners don't break off with a hammer, I beat back into the framing. Fasteners I can't reach with my Estwing I cut flush with the framing using an angle grinder.

After the fasteners are gone, I apply joist tape to the tops of the joists and beams. I've used brands that have writing on them or that peel like duct tape, but I prefer Spax peel-and-stick, pressure-sensitive tape. It's easier to use and doesn't have lettering that shows through the gaps between decking boards. Whatever tape I use, I've found that a sharp, 25mm, snap-off knife is by far the best tool to cut it.

Last thing, I make sure to roll flashing tape along the top of the ledger and up the side of the house a little ways. Most of the time, the ledger is unflashed; 25 years ago, nobody gave a second thought to flashing.

**Added preservative.** The chemical treatment in deck and fence posts degrades just at and below grade over time. I visually inspect posts and poke them with an awl, and they are almost always intact. However, that condition can't last forever, so I've started using Post Preservative, a product new to the consumer market but one that utility companies have used for decades to re-treat utility poles. It's a dehydrated stick of fungicide and wood preservative in the form of a fused glass rod that inserts into a drilled hole. Here, I used it in the grade beam, but I've also used it on PT support posts that extend below grade. Once the wood reaches the right moisture level, the chemical liquefies and is drawn into the wood fibers via capillary action. It's a simple add-on and upsell.

## NEW DECKING

Using Acre on this deck allowed me to get the tight looks composite installation techniques deliver — namely, parting boards and nicely divided sections of decking rather than just an ocean of deck space.



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**- Rob Goodall, Goodall Pools & Spas  
PSN Top 50 Builder**



And I can skip most of the difficult, time-consuming elements associated with composites — blocks galore, fighting picture-frame miters closed — with no sacrifice in overall look. Acre is uniform all the way through, so there's no need to hide the ends or cut edges.

While many deck builders insist that decking should start at the outside band and work inward, leaving a ripped board at the house, I prefer to start with a full board at the house. Getting as parallel as I can to the front band is my main layout concern when I snap the chalk line for the starter board.

Another thing I like about Acre is that it is not shiny. If there is a low joist or the deck frame is lumpy, there is no penalty to me. When there are low spots, like at a parting board, I keep some 30-pound felt paper handy like flooring installers do and pack it up as needed.



After covering the tops of the joists with self-adhering flashing tape, the author installs the new decking. On this project, he used Modern Mill's Acre decking, a composite material made from upcycled rice hulls and PVC that can be cut like wood and can be stained or painted.

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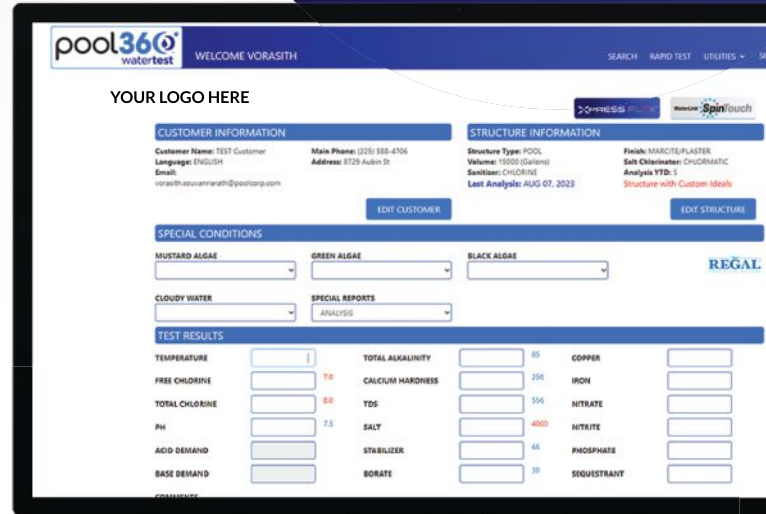
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An L-block temporarily fastened to a post helps to hold it in position ....



... while the author drives structural screws through the post and into the framing.



On the top rail, the author uses the stepped transition shown here at corners and when joining two top rail sections together mid-span.



The author likes to use DekPro's aluminum balusters, a low-maintenance alternative to wood balusters that are available in both round and square profiles.

More often than not, I'm replacing notched, saddled 4x4s. If they're cedar, they're like toothpicks after 25 years of service. PT posts can be too. Sometimes, a post is notched around a single-ply band joist. In other cases, a band joist consists of 2x8 framing with a 2x10 "fascia."

Should I add blocking and hold-downs to a modest, suburban deck because that's what is drawn in the local code book? Or should I use a career's worth of common sense and experience to replace what was there with something I know would cause catastrophic failure to the frame before it would fail — but is not drawn in the IRC or DCA-6?

On the low-level deck in this project, the point is moot, because the railing is effectively decorative, but in a detail the internet loves to hate, I've landed a post-setting process and connection I'm certain works the day I install it, two weeks later, and two years later. It is the simplest, fastest, most accurate way to set a deck post by myself I've found yet.

I start by screwing an L-block made with scrap 2-by stock 9 inches up from the bottom of the 4x4 post. Then I drive three 5/16-inch-diameter, 6-inch-long Spax structural screws with washer heads into the post. After setting the post tight to the band joist, I drive a single 3-inch screw in through the L-block into the band, which holds the post in place while I check it for plumb. Then I just snug one structural screw, replumb the post in both directions, and set the second screw, shimming as needed. This second one I drive home, crushing the 4x4's wood fibers. I recheck for plumb, adjust and shim as necessary, then drive in the third screw. The top and bottom screws I set on the left side of the post; I set the center screw on the right. Using structural screws instead of drilling holes for through-bolts gives me 100% wood-fiber engagement, such that when the wood

**Camo.** On this project, I used Camo hidden fasteners (I always tell customers they're harder to see; they're not invisible). With easily 1,500 screws on a deck like this, I try to root out any wasted motion mercilessly. The number of moves required to position your body, the tool, the clips, and the fasteners is not nothing. Finding a way to move all those things in four moves instead of eight (times 1,500) puts money in my pocket.

## POSTS AND RAILS

As a member of Group 2 (repair/no permits), I'm left to my own devices to weave safe, effective — and profitable — guard rails into frames I didn't design or build while meeting a tight budget. And it is here that I take the spirit of the building code — a guard post and, by extension, rail system that can resist 200 pounds of lateral force without failure — into account.



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shrinks, and even if the shims fall out, the post remains slammed in.

Is this detail drawn in the code? No. Will hobbling this connection cause catastrophic damage to the deck frame? 100%. Do I spend money and time on hardware that's arguably not necessary? Nope.

**Balusters.** The DekPro aluminum baluster and bracket system is fast and easy to install. Layout is a snap. It's tough as nails and just as easy to maintain after the fact. I use it on new construction as often as I do on re-skins.

**Top cap.** For those of you proud of your miters in PT the day you finish building your decks, you should be. You dialed them in. Two weeks later, however, as the lumber dries, the toes of each miter shrink toward each other while the heels retreat, resulting in a miter that opens about 3/8 inch.

I've landed on an alternative I

call a "stepped" transition. I use it to transition mid-span rail caps and to get around corners. The basic idea is that all the opposing grain moves together. If it all shrinks, the opening is even along the step. If it all swells, same thing. Basically, however, it stays where I put it.

To hold it in place, I screw it down to the post. I also predrill two 1-inch pilot holes with a 3/8-inch paddle bit in each ear and drive #10 x 3-inch screws into the pilot holes.

### CLEAN UP

The last step is getting all the detritus out of the yard. I use a dump truck rather than a dumpster. I can back it up where I need it and load it easily, and it is a revenue stream as a hauler for other clients.

I get that some deck builders don't want to tangle with existing frames — especially those that were "weekend

warriored" together — and I get there is a "but that's not code" conversation about connection strategies that make common sense but stretch the spirit of the code. And I get that deck builders like me see that the customer is going to pay for the deck to be surfaced no matter if I do it or not. But for the way my business is set up, I stand to make a profit and do high-quality work I enjoy.

*Mark Clement is a former editor of Tools of the Trade, as well as remodeling carpenter, business owner, and flipper of a few houses. To date he remains a B+ drywall finisher and tile setter and painter. He's also a presenter at the R/D/J shows. He can set a kitchen just as well as the next guy, but decks and pergolas are where it's at for him. Along the way he's worked behind the scenes (and in front of them) on various television shows from Extreme Makeover: Home Edition to Spartan Race.*

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Wed.-Thurs., Mar. 27-28, 2024
  - WU C3611 Essential Plaster Workshop  
Tues.-Wed., Mar. 26-27, 2024
  - WU C2241 Quality Shotcrete Placement for Pools  
Thurs., Mar. 28, 2024
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Friday 2:00pm - 6:00pm

Saturday 1:00pm - 6:00pm

### Exhibitor Sales:

800-746-9772

exhibitsales@westernshow.com

# WesternShow.com

# Everything Under the Sun Expo Exhibitors Marketplace

Details on products of exhibitors at The Everything Under the Sun Expo are based on materials provided by the manufacturers.



## **Aiper Intelligent LLC, Booth 321**

**Product:** Seagull Pro Cordless Robotic Pool Cleaner  
**Features:** WavePath Navigation Technology, quad-motor system, wall-climbing capabilities, 3-hour run time  
**Contact:** aiper.com



## **Anderson Mfg., Booth 1236**

**Product:** Light Leak Tester  
**Features:** user covers the light and squirts dye to see if it gets drawn into the dome, indicating a leak  
**Contact:** leaktools.com



## **Aquabella Tile, Booth 613**

**Product:** Chateau - New Porcelain Series  
**Features:** new Chateau series evoke playful and stress-free tones of the French countryside  
**Contact:** aquabellatile.com



## **AquaCal AutoPilot, Booth 1001**

**Product:** PoolSync System  
**Features:** controls PoolSync Ready equipment through simple phone app; holds up to six relays and four valve actuators; connects with other pool/backyard equipment  
**Contact:** aquacal.com/poolsync



## **Aquamatic Cover Systems, Booth 432**

**Product:** Hydramatic Automatic Safety Cover  
**Features:** motors run on hydraulic pressure, not electricity, so ropes self-adjust, no lubrication needed  
**Contact:** aquamatic.com



## **AquaStar Pool Products, Booth 921**

**Product:** PureStar Ozone System  
**Features:** patented plug-and-play system installs in-line, requiring less than 18" of horizontal pipe  
**Contact:** aquastarpoolproducts.com

## Inventor of The Pool Bladder™

The Pool Bladder™ is a simple to use, high capacity, temporary water storage unit. Use these ultra-portable units when doing a liner change, draining a pool for maintenance, or to stage water when you need it fast.



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## Robust & Smart Safety Covers



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**Basecrete Technologies, Booth 1224**

**Product:** Basecrete Waterproofing System  
**Features:** easy to apply, 10 year warranty and chosen by top pool builders for strength/flexibility, per maker  
**Contact:** Basecreteusa.com



**Carvin Pool Equipment, Booth 1025**

**Product:** Lumina  
**Features:** the Lumina is the company's new resin pool.  
**Contact:** carvinpool.com



**CCEI Pool USA, Booth 1424**

**Product:** TILD Automation System  
**Features:** simple, affordable entry-level automation system for heater, lights, pump; easy to sell and install; manage the pool using a simple app on any smart phone  
**Contact:** ccei-pool.com/us



**Fluidra, Booth 801**

**Product:** Jandy Infinite WaterColors Lights  
**Features:** choose from 10 pre-set colors and five light shows or create a custom color palette  
**Contact:** jandy.com



**Hammerhead Patented Performance, Booth 539**

**Product:** REMORA PRO Kit  
**Features:** portable 21" vacuum head with accessories  
**Contact:** hammerheadvac.com



**Haviland Pool & Spa, Booth 439**

**Product:** Bagged Balancers  
**Features:** select sizes of water corrective products now in resealable retail friendly packaging; gusseted base allows the bag to stand independently on retail store shelves  
**Contact:** havilandpool.com



**HFS Financial Services, Booth 1305**

**Product:** Home Improvement Loans  
**Features:** 100% unsecured loans; terms of up to 20 years; loans of up to \$500,000; no stage funding  
**Contact:** hfsfin.com



**Industrial Test Systems, Booth 404**

**Product:** PoolCheck Xpress 3-way Test Strip  
**Features:** safe range indicators are right on the strip; tests for Total Alkalinity, Free Chlorine and pH  
**Contact:** sensafe.com



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ALLIANCE**



**Jack's Magic Products, Booth 723**

**Product:** The Filter Fiber Stuff  
**Features:** safe filter media that can be used as an aid to cartridge and sand filters or as a replacement to DE  
**Contact:** JacksMagic.com



**LaMotte Co., Booth 925**

**Product:** WaterLink SpinTouch Lab  
**Features:** photometer designed for retailers, pool operators and service pros; measures up to 10 different tests in 60 seconds; results can be viewed on the touchscreen display or transferred into the WaterLink Solutions PRO water analysis program; cloud-based program stores all records and reports; can be accessed from an internet connected computer or mobile app  
**Contact:** lamotte.com



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*- Based on a 2022 pool servicer survey.*

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[raypak.com/pool](http://raypak.com/pool)



**VISIT US AT BOOTH #1115**



**Lyon Financial, Booth 715**

**Product:** Unsecured Swimming Pool Loans  
**Features:** company offers homeowners buying power with loan options; Lyon Financial offers low rates and long terms for pool financing; pays the pool builder directly throughout the project, ensuring on-time payments and in full; facilitated more than \$2B in loans in 2023  
**Contact:** lyonfinancial.net



**Magen eco-Energy US, Booth 843**

**Product:** The SPHERE Pro  
**Features:** pre-assembled solar pool heating interconnection device is designed to simplify installation; provides self-contained, pre-engineered means of connecting solar pool heating to the pool; pre-plumbed to reduce install time; onboard Wi-Fi-enabled controller; VSF pump control and scheduling; freeze protection and nocturnal cooling  
**Contact:** mageneco.com



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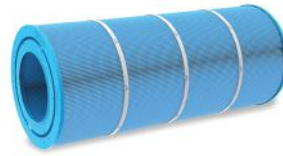


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phta.org



**Natural Chemistry, Booth 1325**

**Product:** Pool Perfect Max  
**Features:** formulated to simplify pool care routine; reduces scrubbing of scum lines, frequency of filter cleanings, and removes phosphates  
**Contact:** naturalchemistry.com



**On Core Filtration, Booth 945**

**Product:** EverFlow+ Replacement Cartridge Filter  
**Features:** pointbond design prevents bacteria buildup; chlorine and mildew resistant urethane  
**Contact:** oncorefiltration.com



**Pentair, Booth 501**

**Product:** IntelliBrite Architectural Series Lighting  
**Features:** spread light widely and evenly to minimize hot spots, dark areas, glare and stripes  
**Contact:** pentair.com



**PoolCorp, Booth 813**

**Product:** POOL360 PoolService  
**Features:** software for service businesses offers leading route optimization, mobile water testing, automated billing/payments, integrated pricing with pool360 for installation and repairs, and more  
**Contact:** pool360service.com



**Poolside Tech, Booth 1223**

**Product:** The Attendant  
**Features:** from pumps, heaters and actuators to lighting and salt cells, The Attendant can control and monitor any equipment from existing manufacturers in the industry, such as Pentair, Hayward and Jandy  
**Contact:** poolside.tech



**Raypak, Booth 1115**

**Product:** Crosswind V  
**Features:** fits on standard equipment pads and industry standard 2-inch water connections, conveniently accessible through the front panel for enhanced serviceability; small and light  
**Contact:** raypak.com/crosswindv



**Rico Rock, Booth 1047**

**Product:** Temple Stones  
**Features:** new cast concrete stones for use around pool and outdoor living spaces; can be used as jump rocks on the pool deck, as seats or benches  
**Contact:** ricorock.com



**Speck Pumps — Pool Products, Booth 1315**

**Product:** BaduJet Turbo Pro System  
**Features:** designed to provide a smooth and strong swim lane; magnetically coupled motor for seal-free operation  
**Contact:** usa.speck-pumps.com



**The VacDaddy, Booth 1138**

**Product:** The VacDaddy Pool Vacuum 2.0  
**Features:** portable pool vacuum with a continuous power supply; new IP67 dimmable transformer for international adaptability; larger filter bags  
**Contact:** thevacdaddy.com



**Water Tech Corp., Booth 402**

**Product:** Volt Leaf Vac Recharge  
**Features:** easily removes leaves from water surface and pool floors; works independently from pool filtration systems; smart water sensor; auto on/off; 3-hour run time  
**Contact:** watertechcorp.com



**Waterco USA, Booth 1331**

**Product:** HRVR Retro-Fit Series Fiberglass Filter  
**Features:** this filter is a direct replacement for Pentair's Triton Series and features Waterco USA's fishtail laterals for improved backwashing hydraulic efficiency; 2-inch bulkhead connections with a reinforced internal wall; saves up to 30% waste water, per maker  
**Contact:** waterco.us



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Learn More About WaterLink Solutions PRO Water Analysis Program

# Product Profiles: Chemicals



## All Clear Professional Pool and Spa Chemicals

If there's a problem or a watercare need for a pool or spa, the All Clear line has an application for it.

Manufactured for more than 50 years, this complete line has eight selling categories.

The list includes large and small stabilized chlorinating tablets, granulated stabilized chlorinating products, algaecide products, non-chlorine sanitizer and acid/PH decreaseers.

The 3-inch tablets and sticks are extremely hard and slow-dissolving.

Dealers and consumers love the All Clear Professional Pool and Spa Chemicals, from the quality of the child-resistant packaging to the attractive color-coding system, according to the company.

Technical support is provided on the website, where SDS's are posted for all products.

**Contact:** Aqua Tri | [aquatri.com](http://aquatri.com)



## CCEI Phileo VP Compact pH Controller

Phileo VP pH controller automatically tests and monitors pH levels in pool water and adjusts chemicals in the water as needed. This peristaltic dosing system offers a color changing, LED light that changes from green, to yellow and red — providing quick visual indication if the water chemistry is balanced or falls out of the accepted levels for sanitized pool water.

"This patented process provides the water chemistry feedback you need immediately—with a quick glance, you can see your pool's water chemistry without having to test," says Arthur Schutzberg, head of CCEI USA.

The system is designed with an ultra-simplified installation. It comes complete with a 120V plug for connection to the mains. The device is connected to a flow sensor, providing more reliable information than a simple filter control.

**Contact:** CCEI USA | [ccej-pool.com/us/](http://ccej-pool.com/us/)



## Haviland Liquid Stabilizer

Haviland Pool & Spa Products is now offers a liquid stabilizer product that provides a liquid cyanuric acid that is more convenient to use.

This product helps prevent chlorine loss in pool water due to sunlight exposure. It instantly absorbs into the water with just a once-a-season application. It's easy to pour and use, and dissolves faster than dry-flake stabilizer products. It requires no pH adjustments.

"Clients love the ease of use of this product and the convenience of the gallon size," says John Bokor, director of sales for Haviland.

Made in the USA.

**Contact:** Haviland Pool & Spa Products | [havilandpool.com](http://havilandpool.com)



### Pool & Spa Water Testing Systems

Home Port Computer's BufferZone water testing software works with the Wave Test Strip Scanner and/or LaMotte Spin Lab.

Its features include the new built-in Sales Order System, which allows for fast credit card processing. It enables businesses to create sale slips directly in Bufferzone from the dosage recommendations page.

The Sales Order System links to QuickBooks, LightSpeed and Xero accounting systems, and is free to use when used in conjunction with payments partner Paystri.

The BufferZone software also has a Service Scheduling module and water testing can be performed in the field on smart devices.

Technical support is available by calling 866-275-0547.

**Contact:** Home Port Computer | [homeportcomputer.com](http://homeportcomputer.com)



### PoolCheck Xpress 3-Way Test Strip

The Pool Check Xpress 3 test strip is designed to make pool maintenance worry-free, says Mike McBride, marketing director for Industrial Test Systems.

"Forget about carrying bottles or charts," McBride says. "The safe range indicators are right on the strip, the first of its kind."

The strips tests for the three most crucial pool parameters — Total Alkalinity, Free Chlorine and pH — and is convenient for on-the-go testing. The strips are packaged 20 tests per container.

**Contact:** Industrial Test Systems | [sensafe.com](http://sensafe.com)



### The Filter Fiber Stuff

The Filter Fiber Stuff is a safe filter media that can be used as an aid to cartridge and sand filters, and as a replacement to DE for DE filters.

When used as a safe alternative/replacement to DE in DE filters, The Filter Fiber Stuff requires less than half the amount of product (by weight) than needed when using DE.

The Filter Fiber Stuff is non-toxic, biodegradable and can be backwashed safely. It can help extend filter runs and reduces clogging.

"It combines high performance, outstanding value and environmentally friendly features into one great product," says Jim Sturick, the company's regional sales manager.

"Customers love that the Filter Fiber Stuff is a safer alternative to DE that is non-toxic, safe to handle and can be backwashed safely."

Technical support is available by calling 800-348-1656, or visit [JacksMagic.com](http://JacksMagic.com).

**Contact:** Jack's Magic Products | [jacksmagic.com](http://jacksmagic.com)



### **FROG @ease Sanitizing System for Swim Spas**

FROG @ease Sanitizing System for Swim Spas is the first and only complete swim spa sanitizing system, purpose-built for the volume and temperatures unique to swim spas, says Alex Granlund, product marketing manager at King Technology.

“It keeps swim spa water clean and clear for weeks — and you shock only once a month,” Granlund says.

FROG @ease kills bacteria two ways, with FROG Sanitizing Minerals and SmartChlor, a patented type of chlorine that releases slowly and maintains a continuous low 0.5 - 1.0 ppm chlorine level at all times.

FROG @ease floats when working, and flips when empty. It's self-regulating and uses significantly less chlorine.

Technical support is available by calling 800-222-0169 or by emailing: [customer.service@kingtechnology.com](mailto:customer.service@kingtechnology.com)

**Contact:** King Technology | [frogproducts.com](http://frogproducts.com)



### **Mobile WaterLink SpinTouch Lab**

LaMotte Co.'s Mobile WaterLink SpinTouch Lab gives pool professionals the ability to test water in the field.

It uses a patented WaterLink Spin reagent disk with the photometer to measure 10 different tests in 60 seconds, and designed to deliver precise results in an easy-to-use unit.

**Contact:** [LaMotteCo. | lamotte.com](http://LaMotteCo. | lamotte.com)



### **Ultrapen PT4 FCe Pocket Tester**

The Ultrapen PT4 Free Chlorine Equivalent (FCe) Pocket Tester provides one-button, instantaneous, reagent-free pH, ORP and FCe testing in a rugged aluminum field tester.

Daniel Robinson, North American sales manager for Myron L Co., explains how it came about: The firm took decades of industry knowledge and combined that with years of pocket tester user feedback to design and build “the benchmark in accuracy, reliability and simplicity — the PT Series Ultrapens. By fully potting this product line in an aircraft aluminum tubular enclosure, it provides the toughest, most reliable pocket tester on the market.”

A quick-start guide, product data sheet/brochure and posters are available for the PT Series Ultrapens. They come with a manufacturer's warranty.

**Contact:** [Myron L Co. | myronl.com](http://Myron L Co. | myronl.com)



### Pure & Simple Scented Spa Shock

Pure & Simple spa oxidizing shock is infused with six different fragrances, color coded and packaged in display jars.

It can be used with chlorine, bromine or minerals, and will not cloud water, coat filters or build up on surfaces.

“Pure & Simple simplifies inventory from two items (fragrance and shock) to one, bigger ticket product, and it’s easy to understand and to sell,” says Daniel Holstein, president of Oxygen Water Products. “It’s formulated with quality U.S. components for best results.”

A display rack is available with a minimum order.

Pure & Simple is MAP protected and patent pending.

For technical support, call 877-246-9943 or email [info@oxygenpools.com](mailto:info@oxygenpools.com)

**Contact:** Oxygen Water Products | [puresimpleshock.com](http://puresimpleshock.com)



### FIXX IT! Total Pool Purge

FIXX IT! Total Pool Purge is formulated to help with severe water clarity issues.

Total Pool Purge is a solution that addresses four common problems with just one product. It’s designed to remove high phosphate levels, clear cloudy water, reduce cyanuric acid, and enhance sand filtration.

Total Pool Purge is available in a convenient 5-pound size.

Technical support is available by calling 860-589-7502.

**Contact:** Phoenix Products Co. | [phoenixproductsc.com](http://phoenixproductsc.com)



### Poolife NST System

The Poolife NST System includes everything needed to oxidize, sanitize and remove algae from the pool.

The NST Prime Sanitizer uses a proprietary slow-dissolving cal hypo technology, which clarifies without adding any cyanuric acid (CYA) to the pool water. It’s formulated to eliminate bacteria, contaminants and algae without overstabilizing for clear water that’s ready for use, all summer long.

The system includes:  
 Poolife NST Prime Tablets  
 Poolife NST Purify  
 Poolife NST Patrol

For technical support, call 866-476-6538.

**Contact:** Solenis | [poolife.com](http://poolife.com)

# Product Profiles: Pool Cleaners



## The VacDaddy Portable Pool Vacuum 2.0

The VacDaddy Portable Pool Vacuum features a continuous power supply to ensure sustained cleaning performance, says company President Matthew D'Aguanno.

"Unlike battery-powered alternatives, the VacDaddy boasts a lightweight, user-friendly design with no poolside assembly or training required," D'Aguanno says.

Its latest enhancements include a new and improved IP67 dimmable transformer for international adaptability, and larger filter bags, offering a 60% larger surface area and a 108% bigger volume. The unit is appropriate for both residential and commercial use.

**Contact:** Advanced Pool Technologies/The VacDaddy | [thevacdaddy.com](http://thevacdaddy.com)



## REMORA PRO Kit

The REMORA PRO Kit is designed for the pool pro. The kit includes a portable 21-inch vacuum head with a carry handle, Smart Switch to monitor power going to/from the motor, dual-speed motor, 25-foot premium floating power cord, wearable battery pack, a 10 amp battery charger, two easily interchangeable 1.8Ah LiFePO4 lithium-ion batteries, and one standard and superfine vacuum bag.

**Contact:** Hammerhead Patented Performance | [hammerheadvac.com](http://hammerheadvac.com)



## Water Tech Volt FX-8Li Cordless Vacuum

The Water Tech Volt FX-8Li is a patent-protected, cordless and rechargeable pool vac that uses a simple push button ON/OFF switch. Two reusable filter bags plus separate head and hose attachments enabling quick cleaning of both in-ground and above ground pools.

"Water Tec Volt FX-8Li is designed to clean the largest in-ground pools easily and effortlessly," says Guy Erlich, Water Tech's president. "It uses an ultra-high flow pump to provide more power and suction than the other cleaners in its class."

The vacuum comes with a 13-inch flexible vacuum head as well as an integrated spot cleaning/corner nozzle. In addition, it features a larger debris chamber and a reusable, high-capacity filter bag. The filter bags capture algae, sand and silt as well as leaves and larger debris before they reach the skimmer, filter or pump.

**Contact:** Water Tech Corp. | [watertechcorp.com](http://watertechcorp.com)

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# New Products

BY PSN STAFF



## Haviland Pool & Spa Products

Haviland's liquid stabilizer product is formulated to provide a liquid cyanuric acid that is more convenient to use. It helps prevent chlorine loss in pool water due to sunlight exposure, and instantly absorbs into the water with just a once-a-season application. It requires no pH adjustments. Available in 1 gallon containers.

**Contact:** [havilandpool.com](http://havilandpool.com)



## Poolside by CGT

The new Cirali Beach pool liner design is an all-over print on a medium blue colored base material. It uses the company's exclusive aquashimmer feature, with sparkling gold pebbles combined with natural stones, to give the design a dramatic and fiery effect.

**Contact:** [poolsidebycgt.com](http://poolsidebycgt.com)



## PUL Products, LLC

The PUL Collekt LD-1 Drain can be easily installed with its built-in leveling, and is fully fitted during rough-in, eliminating the need for trim kits. It's designed to reduce debris and safety risks, making it ideal for diverse pool styles. The PUL Collekt LD-1 Drain is VGB certified at 256gpm.

**Contact:** [pulproducts.com](http://pulproducts.com)



## RENOLIT

RENOLIT SOLID is a reinforced PVC membrane created to renovate and waterproof decks in aquatic facilities. This 80-mil-thick membrane renovates decks to make them waterproof and slip-resistant for safety, and provides long-term ease of maintenance. It's available in a variety of colors.

**Contact:** [renolit.com](http://renolit.com)



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