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POOL AND SPA NEWS

2025 New Products

page 26



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ABOVE LEFT: FRANK WOESTE
ABOVE RIGHT: ADOBE STOCK

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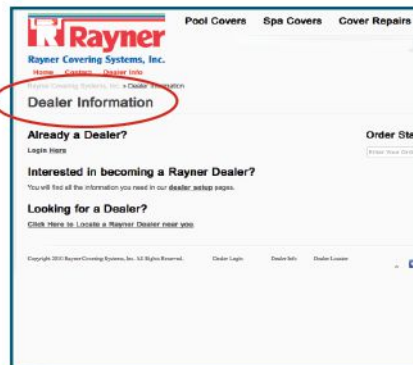


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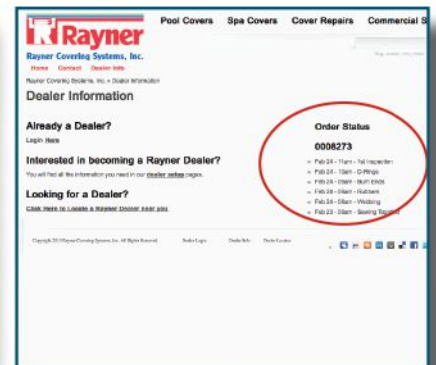
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Innovation on Parade



Joanne McClain
Editor-in-Chief, PSN

Last month, Piscine Global, the largest industry tradeshow in Europe, invited me to participate as one of an international panel of judges for their Pool Innovation Awards.

The program's focus is to recognize new pool and spa products for innovation and sustainability. Entrants were asked detailed questions on design intent, the need for innovation, and the process involved in product development. Finally, they were required to explain the environmental, social and economic benefits the product provides.

It was interesting to see what European pool and spa manufacturers were concentrating on for their market. Here are a few observations:

1. Aftermarket products to make a pool more versatile are booming.

There were myriad entries for portable or easy-to-install current systems that would transform a small pool into a swim spa. Movable pool floors that rise to transform a pool into a safe, usable deck space was another example.

2. Manufacturers continue looking to make pool care easier. Robotic skimmers and pool cleaners had noticeably higher numbers of entries, each boasting greater efficiency and ease of use. Other smart devices, such as auto-levelers, controllers, pumps, etc. were also well-represented.

3. Unusual and eco-friendly ways to support good water quality are a primary concern.

Both the second and third prizes were awarded to products in the water-quality sphere. Novpool SAS came in third for its Clean Water Tab, a water clarification treatment in a tablet made of mineral wax. The company says it mimics the way oceans self-clean by

increasing the level of healthy microorganisms that support good water quality, and significantly reduces the need for chemicals for 3-6 months.

Second prize went to Big Three manufacturer Fluidra for its new Sandbag filter media, a deceptively simple but truly innovative eco-friendly solution that exclusively uses recycled glass to provide a high level of filtration while requiring very little — 90% less, the company says — backwashing.

4. Water safety trumps all. We all know the statistics around drowning and that the longterm health of the industry relies on making water safe for even the most vulnerable. Therefore, innovative water-safety products are always welcomed, and that was evidenced by Floatee, a reusable anti-drowning shirt for children ages 6 months to 6 years, claiming the top prize in the competition. Upon immersion, the shirt inflates and flips the child on their back in less than 5 seconds.

You can find out more about the award along with some of the more notable entries at piscine-global.com/en/pool-innovation-awards.

In the meantime, you can peruse the innovation on display here in America. This, our annual New Products issue, boasts the latest and greatest offerings in the industry, and I have no doubt that the right product mix will help to significantly boost your bottom line in the coming year. Here's to a successful 2025!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joanne McClain". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J".

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PSP Expo Brings Industry Together in Dallas

With mild weather on its side, the co-located pool/spa and deck trade show featured a robust show-floor education schedule.

BY REBECCA ROBLEDO



Representing two industries and preceded by a pre-conference program sponsored by several industry partners, the International Pool Spa Patio co-located with Deck Expo descended on Dallas last month.

According to Dallas-based show organizer Informa, more than 9,000 professionals registered for the show, which took place Nov. 12-14. More than 450 manufacturers and suppliers exhibited, the organization said.

The educational slate included a robust selection of sessions held on the

show floor, covering both pool/spa and deck issues. Away from the show floor, hours of the conference were expanded to allow time for more sessions.

Keynote speakers were scheduled to kick off the first two days. One of them, featuring a panel addressing economic conditions impacting business, was among the most well-attended, said Marcos Suarez, spokesperson for Informa.

Much of the program qualified for continuing education units. “As the industry evolves and market dynamics

shift, it is crucial to emphasize the vested benefit of ongoing education and certifications offered by industry leaders, ensuring continued advancements in safety, efficiency and quality,” said Show Director Kris Osterbusch.

Floor highlights included the annual Million Dollar Pool Design Challenge. For this contest, entrants design a backyard, driveway area, pools and water elements for a hypothetical client and site. This year, the grand prize went to Moses Campos, a design consultant with Claffey Pools, of Southlake Texas, who won a \$10,000 prize. The second-prize-winning duo of Kyle Polaski and Hali Mauldin received \$3,000; at third, Jason Calderia received \$1,250; fourth-place winner Jill Devendorf earned \$750; and fifth-place winner Ned Druart won \$500.

This year’s show also saw the debut of a pre-show conference by industry podcaster and educational provider Pool Nation. “It worked really well for Pool Nation, because a lot of times it’s hard for service techs to get away during the week. So with it starting on the weekend, they had a really good turnout,” said Conference Manager Krissy Adams.

Next year’s International Pool | Spa | Patio/Deck Expo will take place earlier than usual, so it will not conflict with November’s Formula One event. Set in Las Vegas, it is scheduled for Oct. 22-24, 2025, with the pre-conference running Oct. 19 to 21. Again, it will be co-located with Deck Expo.

PUL Prepares for Aggressive Campaign in Auto Cleaner Market

PUL Products, a new in-floor cleaner and drain manufacturer, has set up its sales structure to take a swipe at dominating its category in the industry.

In entering the product category,

PUL has set an ambitious goal.

“PUL’s goal is to be the top in-floor cleaning system company in the industry within the next two to three years,” said Ryan Dubes, the Phoe-

nix-based company’s newly named vice president of sales and marketing.

Hiring the sales team was the next major step toward that goal.

“After six tedious years of product development, we finally got to the point that we were ready to bring on a sales team to build some traction in the market,” said Jim Goettl, owner/founder of the company.

Dubes, a 20-year industry veteran, has worked for a number of manufacturers, including fellow in-floor cleaner maker A&A Manufacturing, along with Zodiac Pool Systems and Caretaker Systems. He most recently served as Pentair’s national sales manager for in-floor cleaning and circulation products.

PUL also hired its national team. Wil Preas, Mark Hamlin and Kimberly Hale will serve as regional sales managers for the Central U.S. Nicky Milosevich is sales manager for Florida, the Southeast, and international sales. Andrew Bracanovich is the new regional sales manager for the Southwest U.S.

For now, the company expects to serve the Northeast and California markets with the current line-up. However, Dubes said, the company expects to grow the sales team and add reps for those regions in the future.

The manufacturer sees an opportunity in the wake of the acquisitions that have taken place among automatic pool cleaner manufacturers.

“With each of these acquisitions, the category has contracted,” Dubes said. “In-floor cleaning is a very ‘high-touch’ product that requires a different level of service and support from the field sales team ... We believe that there is a growing need for a privately held in-floor company to break into the industry and be exactly what the dealer or builder base needs.”

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BioLab Partly Opens Facility; Faces Continued Pressure

As BioLab continues to face blow-back from a fire in its Conyers, Ga. facility, it also has made moves to get the plant back in working order.

On Sept. 29, the fire broke out on the roof, resulting in area-wide evacuations and shelter-in-place orders.

The facility has re-opened for partial operation. Currently it is focusing on fulfilling orders, but has not yet resumed manufacturing.

Momentum continues to build in a drive to remove the firm from Conyers. A group of citizens, called the Shut Down BioLab Coalition, is trying to pressure the county to revoke BioLab's business license there. And dozens of class-action lawsuits against the chemical manufacturer have been consolidated.

Solar Producer Closes After Half Century

Solar heater manufacturer FAFCO has shut its doors after 55 years.

For five years leading up to the closure, it worked to develop a novel solar thermal-assisted heat pump water heater. "Despite our best efforts and hard work, all attempts to pursue our dream ultimately failed," FAFCO said on its site. "Now, we find ourselves out of capital, and we've decided to close the business."

Founded in 1969 by Freeman A. Ford and Richard Rhodes "with a goal to become a large, thriving company that did good while doing well," the company said it started the United States' modern-day solar industry. More than 200,000 of its systems were installed, generating the power equivalent of five nuclear power plants, the firm said.

Williams Named PHTA Chairwoman

The Pool & Hot Tub Alliance has chosen its chair for the next year. Donna Williams, vice president of distributor PoolCorp, will head the association's board of directors in 2025. In 2018 and 2019, she served as chairman of the board for the Association of Pool & Spa Professionals, one of the associations that merged to form PHTA.

Others on the PHTA Executive Committee for next year: Scott Frost of Fluidra serves as chair-elect; Matt McDermott of Heritage Pool Supply Group is Treasurer; Caley Gibbs of Gib-San Pool & Landscape Creations serve as secretary. Joseph Laurino of Periodic Products, is immediate past chair.

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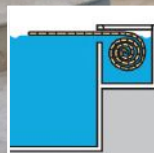
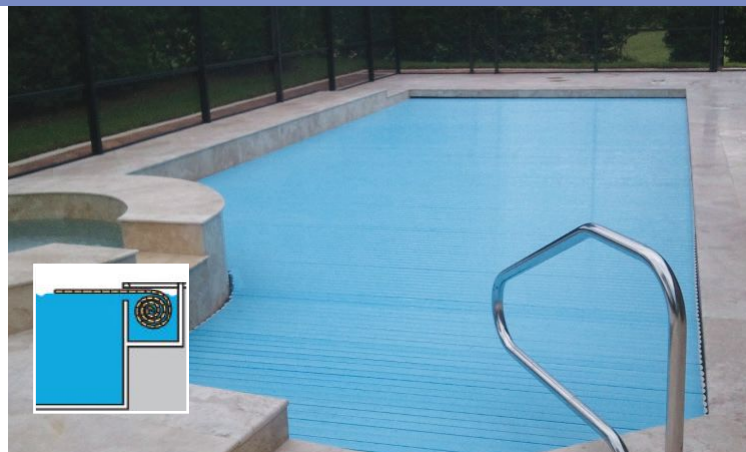
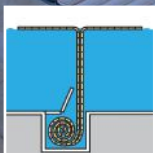
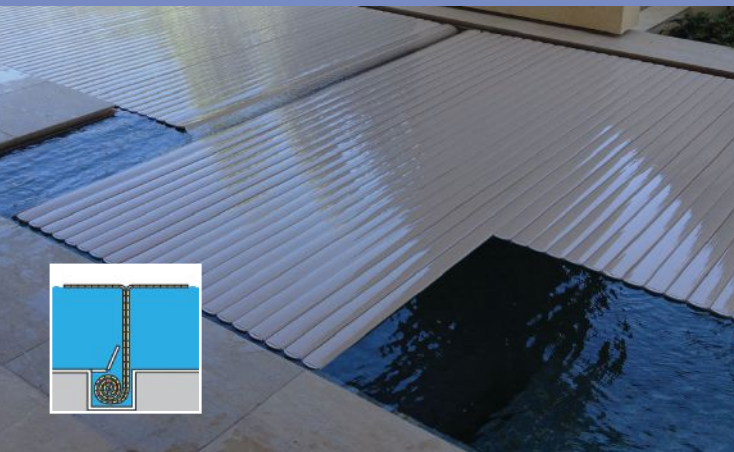


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Five Takeaways From HBI's Fall Construction Labor Report

The Home Builders Institute report suggest the construction industry is seeing a rise in the number of younger workers and in “white-collar” jobs.

BY VINCENT SALANDRO



While the overall labor market is slowing and demand for construction labor has softened, the skilled labor shortage remains a significant challenge for the industry. The demand for construction will re-accelerate in the long-run as single-family construction and remodeling activity pick up and the need for additional workers will become more pronounced.

As part of the Fall 2024 Home Builders Institute (HBI) Construction Labor Market Report, the HBI highlights the state of the current labor shortage, shifts in demographics in the construction industry, and how labor productivity growth is essential to both economic gains and wage growth.

The report includes high-level findings, data, trends, and demand

projections for construction labor.

Here are some of its findings:

Younger workers in construction are on the rise. According to the HBI, workers under the age of 25 now represent 10.8% of the construction workforce, up from 9% as recently as 2015. Analysis reveals that Gen Z — those born between the mid 1990s and early 2010s — are more likely to enter the construction in-

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dustry than Millennials.

The report suggests such individuals are drawn to the industry due to numerous factors, including innovative construction technologies, the high cost of four-year college education, competitive wages in construction, job security and the potential for growth.

The share of younger workers in construction is a welcome development. On the other end of the spectrum, the proportion of workers in construction 55 or older is 21.8%. Workers aged 34 to 54 represent 67.3% of the construction workforce, down from 71.8% as recently as 2015.

Construction is still facing an aging labor market. Even as the slowing housing market has eased some pressure on the labor pool, attracting skilled workers from younger generations remains a top priority given the overall age of the construc-

tion workforce.

The median age among construction workers is still a year older than the typical individual in the national labor force, at 42, according to the report. Around 66.9% of the construction workforce were Millennials and Gen Xers.

However, Gen X's relative gain in share of the construction workforce likely results from the number of Baby Boomer construction workers who are reaching retirement age. Baby Boomers make up 16.2%, with the potential to decline further as more of the generation reaches retirement age.

The industry still needs to hire 723,000 workers per year. Despite the decline in demand for new-home construction since the beginning of this decade, the NAHB and HBI estimate that the annual number of occupational openings in construc-

tion totals approximately 723,000 a year. This accounts for the estimated net growth in employment required to accommodate construction expansion, plus the number of workers required to replace individuals who leave the sector permanently. Over the course of 2024 to 2026, this total represents a need for an additional 2.17 million adjusted net hires.

The industry is seeing positive trends on diversity across gender and race. The number of women employed in the construction industry increased to around 1.3 million in 2023, representing 10.8% of the construction workforce. This represents a large jump from 9.1% as recently as 2017.

According to an analysis of Current Population Survey data, most women in the industry are employed in occupations such as office and administrative support, management,

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business and financial operations. Women accounted for 66% of workers in sales and office occupations in 2023, according to the report. The HBI notes that women only comprise 4% of construction and maintenance occupations.

According to the organization,

“bringing additional women into the high-demand construction trades represents a potential opportunity for the future.”

Diversifying the labor force is a strategic goal for the construction industry, given the scope of the shortage, and improvements are being

made, according to the HBI. While Non-Hispanic Whites account for 57.5% of the industry, according to the 2022 American Community Survey, Hispanics account for nearly a third. The share of Hispanic workers in the industry was just 23.6% as recently as 2010, and the count of Hispanic workers increased by 1.2 million from 2010 to 2022.

The shares of African Americans and Asians in construction are substantially smaller, though, at 5.1% and 1.8%, respectively. The underrepresentation of African American and Asian workers also presents an opportunity area for the construction sector.

White-collar jobs are on the rise in construction. According to the HIB, the makeup of the construction labor force has dramatically shifted over the past two decades. While the overall count of workers is approaching historic highs, the share of tradesmen has declined from 71% in 2005 to 61% in 2022. At the same time, the portion of computer, engineering, and science occupations doubled, and that of management and business occupations increased 60%. The HBI says the trends are noteworthy, particularly given a focus on the flat productivity growth rate in the construction sector.

“A growing count of engineering/tech workers would, on its face, suggest a boost to productivity,” the HBI writes in its 2024 Fall report. “However, a decline for the share of workers associated with trades could suggest declining productivity. These findings and possible impacts deserve additional research attention given the need to supply more attainable housing to the market.”

Vincent Salandro is an associate editor for sister publication Builder. He covers products for the Journal of Light Construction and also has stories appearing in other Zonda publications.

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2025 NEW PRODUCTS



Every year, PSN introduces the latest in pool, spa and outdoor living products. Whether you're a builder, service professional or retailer, find the industry's newest in technology, design and efficiency in this handy guide. May these products help boost your business in 2025!

COURTESY PLATINUM SPAS

AquaBLAST



AquaBLAST is a portable fitness bag that sets up in seconds using 5-6 gallons of pool water. It supports cardio, strength training, weightlifting, and kickboxing. Designed to float underwater in 3-5 feet, AquaBLAST offers low-impact, high-intensity workouts and fits into a small carry bag for easy storage.

Contact: aquablastfit.com

Aqua Technics Pools



The Saint-Grande fiberglass composite pool features a large entry zone with a generous second step area; spa seating for up to six adults with two recliner seats and bench seating; a spillway that cascades into the pool; and a long bench seating on one side of the vessel.

Contact: aquatechnicspools.com

AquaSolus Flow Swim Spa



The Flow swim spa offers a smooth, powerful current with its advanced turbine system, mimicking open water swimming. With nine speed settings, users can customize intensity for gentle or vigorous workouts. Designed for continuous, balanced flow, the quiet, efficient turbine ensures uninterrupted, endless swimming, making it perfect for fitness enthusiasts of all levels.

Contact: aquasolus.com/swim-spas/flow

AquaStar Pool Products



The new FlowStar Actuator is designed for universal compatibility, retrofitting effortlessly to third party valves. They offer plug-and-play connectivity for 24VAC systems, feature easy-to-adjust back-mounted rubberized dip-switches and an easy drop-slotted cam setting ability for precise control.

Contact: AquaStarPoolProducts.com

Aquatic Commercial Industries



Vaporshield-Pro is designed to eliminate acid fuming while allowing acid drums to be emptied with typical feed pumps and without having to handle and or mix acid with water. It is available with 1/4-, 3/8- or 1/2-inch tubing for most chemical feeders and can be used barrel after barrel. Available through most major pool distributors.

Contact: 408-741-5871

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

Automatic Pool Covers



The improved PowerTouch is an automatic pool cover controller that keeps pools closed and safe when not supervised. This lock-code controller provides tool-less, one finger torque limit adjustment. Back-lit buttons make it easy to see both by day and night. It now also has easy to read "OPEN" and "CLOSE" buttons and a simple checkmark button making it more intuitive for users to operate.

Contact: automaticpoolcovers.com

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

Beatbot



The Beatbot iSkim Ultra is a robotic skimmer designed for large, debris-prone pools. It features automatic water clarification, dual-side brushes, and solartrack technology. The Beatbot offers 24/7 operation and advanced app control.

Contact: beatbot.com

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

BettaBot



The Betta SE Plus is a pool robotic skimmer offering dual charging (solar and AC) for continuous operation in any weather. Its smart cordless design enables 30+ hours of cleaning on one charge and includes SCT motors for effective debris removal, remote control, and a large debris basket. It adapts to various pool conditions and is engineered to efficiently capture leaves, dust, and more.

Contact: bettabot.com

Carvin Pool Equipment



The D Valve features a PVC body and fiberglass reinforced components (cover, handle and diverter assembly) to ensure resistance to corrosion, chemicals and harsh weather conditions. A PTFE sealer ensures ease of use without the need for maintenance or lubrication. The shaft spline is designed to accommodate most standard actuators on the market.

Contact: carvinpool.com

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

CCEI



New 24V-DC Transformer safely powers pool and spa lights using a direct connection with two compartments that keep the primary and secondary light connections independent. It's equipped with an ON/OFF switch and a re-settable circuit breaker to protect against overload. Available in 46W or 92W with input voltage display 120 VAC, 60Hz and output voltages of 24V DC. UL Listed.

Contact: ccei-pool.com/us

Chill Tubs

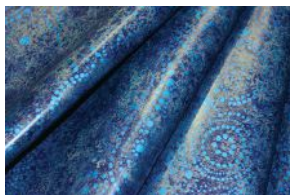


The Chill Tub Pro is designed for professionals, elite athletes and fitness enthusiasts, and those seeking the ultimate recovery experience. The spacious Chill Tubs Pro is designed to deliver the benefits of chromotherapy with jets circulating the water to eliminate the thermal barrier. Users can set the temperature to as low as 3 degrees and as high as 40 degrees. No ice required.

Contact: chilltubs.com/us/product/chill-tub-pro

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

Continental



Continental's latest inground pool liner, Starlight Swirl, is designed with a unique swirl pattern and iridescent accents that give pools a soft, glowing effect. Made from durable, high-quality vinyl, this liner is built to resist fading and wear, ensuring long-lasting color and performance. Available in a range of sizes and thicknesses, it's adaptable to suit a variety of pool shapes and dimensions.

Contact: continentalpoolliner.com



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Cubic Electrical Appliance Ltd.



The new Supreme Vertical Variable Speed Heat Pump features twin rotors in the compressor, reducing vibration. It has 10 adjustable compressor speeds and smart mode technology providing automatically adjusting to environmental conditions for optimal performance and energy savings.

Contact: cubic-heatpump.com

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

Deckorators



Deckorators offers two new easy-to-install Aluminum Fence options: One kitted option requiring assembly, and a pre-assembled panel. Both are made from powder-coated aluminum in a black finish and come in three sizes: 48" Standard Bottom, 54" Flush Bottom, and 60" Standard Bottom.

Contact: deckorators.com

Eeziblue



Eeziblue is a monthly pool additive that utilizes a patented CuZn Synergy formula, combining copper and zinc to effectively eliminate and prevent algae growth. It can be used as a monthly treatment or a quick fix for green pools. It is designed to be used in chlorine or saltwater pools as an algacide, bactericide, phosphate remover and water clarifier. Now available in trade friendly 40-pound bucket.

Contact: eeziblue.com

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

Fire by Design



The Battery Powered All Weather Electronic Ignition System is specifically designed for use on outdoor fire features without the need for low voltage wiring. It can be controlled via switch or Bluetooth.

Contact: firebydesign.com

Fluidra



The JXiQ ASME Compliant Gas Pool & Spa Heater is designed to be easy to use, install and service. Built to withstand the high-use demands of commercial properties, ASME compliant JXiQ heaters are ultra-compact and constructed with bronze headers and thicker-walled copper fin tubes. Self-diagnostic capabilities and Bluetooth connectivity make servicing simple.

Contact: Jandy.com

Fluidra



The Polaris FREEDOM Plus cordless robotic cleaner is equipped with convenient remote control so users can direct its movements underwater and call it up for lightweight waterline retrieval. Powered by a long-lasting lithium-ion battery, FREEDOM Plus comes with an Easy-Charge caddy for direct contact charging when not in use and hassle-free transport to and from the pool.

Contact: polarispool.com

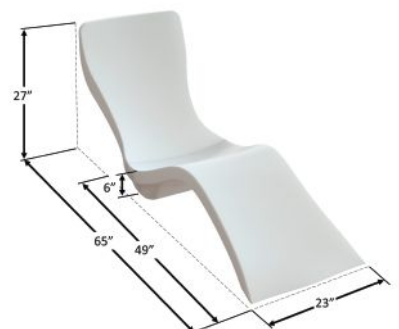
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Fountain People



Fountain People's Mediterranean Scupper imitates the classic beauty of ancient fountains using a traditional dark bronze finish with verdigris highlights to accent the detailed decorative etching on the surface. The clean, simple design complements both traditional and modern designs. Measures 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ " in diameter with a 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ " projection and supplied with a 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " FPT connection.

Contact: fountainpeople.com

Frank Wall Enterprises



The STO-PRO4 makes installing in-ground liners with plastic steps a breeze. Just roll in the STO-PRO4 to the step, open it up, lay it down and install the liner in minutes. Insert the liner vac hose directly into the tool to pull the liner into place. Made of high-grade aluminum, this tool will hold the liner taut so when the liner is removed it falls right into place with no wrinkles or sagging.

Contact: frankwall.com

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

Gecko Alliance



Gecko Waterlab is a water monitoring and dosing recommendation product. Spa owners will enjoy a comprehensive experience with Gecko's new all-in-one mobile app. This redesigned Gecko myspa app enables remote control of spa functions, including temperature adjustments, water sanitation monitoring, and water maintenance recommendations.

Contact: geckoalliance.com/products/gecko-waterlab

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

Haviland



SpaPure's new Starter Kits include all the products needed for spas using both chlorine or bromine products. These starter kits make it easy for both new and seasoned spa owners to quickly grab the products they need to get their spas ready for soaking. Available in new, brightly colored packaging that is eye-catching and easy to display on shelves as well as near and around spa displays.

Contact: spapureusa.com/our-products/starter-kits

Imperial Pools



Imperial Pools' new Blue Anchor Resort Collection of fiberglass pools offers customers 26 exciting models to choose from. The collection also offers poolside and spillover spas, and tanning ledges. The collection is exclusively available in North and South Carolina, Tennessee and Georgia.

Contact: blueanchorfiberglasspools.com

JED Pool Tools



The improved Helix Vacuum Hose is a high-grade, commercial-strength, helix spiral wound extruded vacuum hose. It is now more flexible and has an improved cuff to help pool professionals. This 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter hose comes in 30-, 35-, 40-, 45-, 50- and 75-foot lengths. It is also available in 2" by 50- and 100-foot for commercial applications. Custom sizes also available. 5-year warranty.

Contact: JEDPoolTools.com

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King Technology



The new FROG Pool Solutions is a dry, concentrated specialty pool chemicals that come in prefilled pods. For solutions to algae use FROG Algae Gone and FROG 90-day Algae Barrier. Reduce and remove phosphates and improve filter efficiency with FROG 90-Day GoodBye Phos. Prevent cloudy water with FROG 90-Day GoodBye Cloudy.
Contact: partners.kingtechnology.com/pool-solutions-program

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Las Olas Luxury Living



The Las Olas Pool Lounger features two patent-pending innovations: a mermaid-shaped design and its interlocking, tool-free assembly. Made from UV-resistant high-density polyethylene, it's durable, lightweight, and stackable. Eco-friendly materials and recyclable packaging add sustainability, while its comfort and practicality make it ideal for in-pool and poolside use at an affordable price.
Contact: lasolasluxuryliving.com

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Latham, The Pool Company



Latham's new plunge pools bring leisure and luxury to backyards of any size. Offered in both fiberglass and vinyl liner options, this collection of six plunge pool designs includes step and bench configurations with features such as swim up seating and slip-resistant steps.
Contact: lathampool.com/plunge-pools

Lazy Dog Loungers



The Lazy Dog Loungers are designed to keep pets cool in the pool. Made with sustainable Ethafoam HRC polyethylene foam and is resistant to weather, fading, and punctures. An easy-access ramp lets dogs climb on and off their raft at their own pace. Available in two sizes and three colors.
Contact: lazydogloungers.com

LEDGE



Hoopstr is features UV20 rated resin for all-weather resistance. It offers easy wheel-out positioning with stainless steel hardware and powder-coated metal rim.
Contact: ledgeloungers.com

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

LOOP-LOC



Bubbles & Bliss is a new vinyl liner pattern that combines the natural elements of the sea with a bubbly and creative mosaic that plays on the fluid movements of the ocean.
Contact: looploc.com

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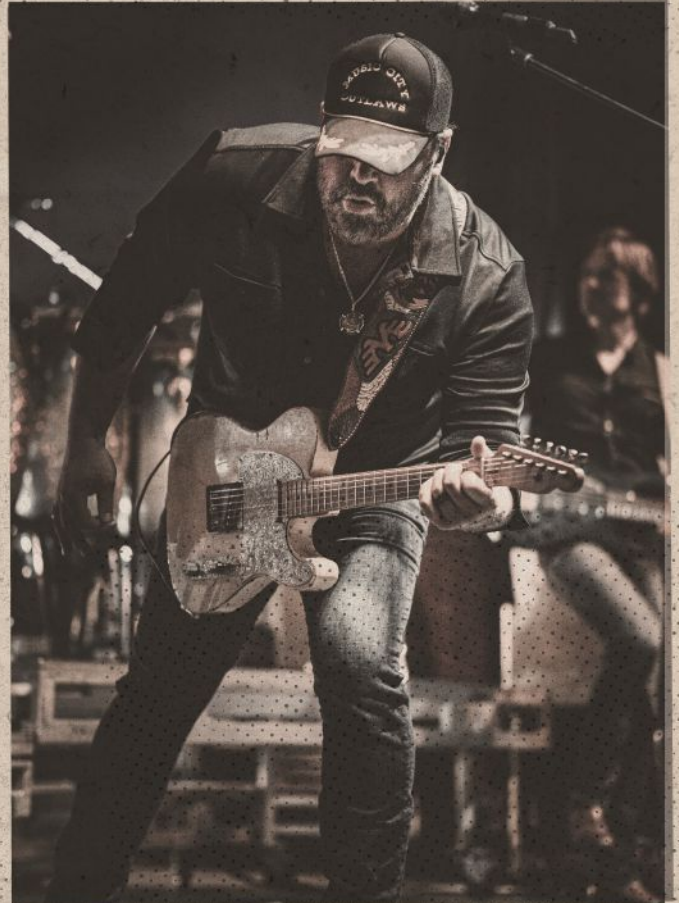


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Lyon Financial



Lower pool loan rates are now available at Lyon Financial, with even lower rates to come. The company's lowest rate is currently 7.99% for terms up to 20 years and amounts up to \$150,000 on approved credit. Conditions and limitations apply, including state restrictions. Advertised terms are subject to change without notice. Loan terms may differ based on loan purpose and credit profile.

Contact: lyonfinancial.net

MicroGlass



MicroSetNCure is a liquid admixture formulated to enhance pumpability, workability, finishing and performance of plaster, quartz, pebble, and polished finishes. It's designed to improve pump, cure, hydration, chemical resistance of cement, and promotes even pigment distribution for more consistent color and reduced mottling.

Contact: microglassllc.com

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

Moasure



Moasure 2 PRO now features a new layout mode, and uses high-performing motion sensors to simultaneously measure and draw complex and irregular decks and patios, calculating perimeter, area, elevation and volume without a Wi-Fi or cell signal. View, edit, save and export measurements with the free Bluetooth-connected app.

Contact: moasure.com

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Mont Alpi Grills



The Artwood series is an outdoor kitchen in a box, no assembly required. It's manufactured using recycled HDPE and 304 Marine grade stainless steel. The product is standard in a weathered grey cart that is suitable for modern or traditional environments and is available as a four or six burner option.

Contact: montalpionline.com

Nationwide Industries



The Trident Safe Signal Magnetic Latch helps prevent accidental pool entries, especially by young children, and helps maintain pool safety even in low-light conditions. An audible alarm sounds if a gate is left unlatched for more than 15 seconds, and eye-catching blue LED lights provide 360-degree visibility.

Contact: nationwideindustries.com

Nidec Motor Corp.



The Neptune Hybrid motor features a high-efficiency brushless permanent magnet motor integrated with a standard PSC induction motor and a variable speed control. It meets the new efficiency regulations from the U.S. Department of Energy, which take effect in September 2025, and is engineered to offer up to 80% energy savings for homeowners.

Contact: Nidec.com

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Okeanos Fiberglass Pools



The new Libra fiberglass inground pool measures 12-by-30 feet and offers two separate tanning ledges, making it ideal for deckchairs and for children to play. With a depth of 4 feet 11 inches across the entire pool, it is perfect for every family member to enjoy.

Contact: okeanospools.com

Pentair Pool



The all new IntelliCenter Lite system is more affordable, featuring a smaller enclosure for the breakerless power center. With five relays and optional high-powered wireless, it is a great replacement for the EasyTouch Lite system. It includes all the same functionality of the flagship IntelliCenter system, including Pentair Pool app control and remote monitoring.

Contact: pentair.com

Platinum Spas



The Portofino Spa in the Platinum Spas Luxury Range features an Aristech Acrylic finish, 66 powerful jets, and the exclusive PlatinumRevive Red Light Therapy for a rejuvenating hydrotherapy experience. It features built-in Wi-Fi control and the immersive PlatinumMelody Sound System.

Contact: platinum-spas.com

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

Poolside by CGT



The Baia pool liner pattern is the latest in the new Aquasculpt line. Baia boasts a large-scale repeat featuring an expansive array of medallions inspired by classic architecture, mimicking the artistry of Venetian plaster with a brushed finish for an artisan touch. Crafted with a specialized print process, each liner offers unique, natural variation, blending polished medallions and textured stone.

Contact: poolsidebycgt.com

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

Prism Hardscapes



The Isola Modular BBQ Island features a new modular design that allows for customization for any patio or pool area.

Contact: prismhardscapes.com

ProDBX



DBX has released the new DistributorConnect feature in its Pool Builder Software. It directly integrates with SCP and Heritage to pull in live pricing and availability for pool products. This feature allows users to update all pricing in the DBX software with one click.

Contact: prodbx.com

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Pul Products



The new Pul Collekt LR-1 Slot Return is a 200gpm purpose-built high flow return for applications that require a high volume return with minimal water surface disruption. It can be mounted in the floor or the wall to blend in with surrounding finish.

Contact: pulproducts.com/return-fitting

Raypak



The Crosswind V is a vertical discharge heat pump pool heater designed with a smaller footprint and lighter weight. This reduces install time and labor costs to the homeowner. It fits on standard equipment pads and industry standard 2-inch water connections are conveniently accessible.

Contact: raypak.com

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

RB Retail & Service Solutions



New Smart Pay makes it simple for pool professionals to pass along credit card fees using new functionality that has been added to its popular integration. With RB's Smart Pay simply determine what percentage of each transaction to charge customers (between 0 and 4%) as a 'program fee' and Smart Pay will automatically calculate a Program Fee to be added.

Contact: rbretailandservicesolutions.com/rb-smart-pay

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

RENOLIT



The new VOGUE Collection includes four reinforced membrane designs that are printed with a unique relief and texture. Made of 80mil thick, commercial grade, reinforced PVC with Class C slip resistant properties, these designs offer a commercial grade color selection and texture that makes them ideal for both new pool construction or to completely encapsulate and renovate pools.

Contact: renolit-alkorplan.com/collections/vogue

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

ReThink Pool Care



The Daily Dose is formulated to proactively treat pool water daily to keep ahead of problems. Using Sun Smart Technology, the Daily Dose will precisely dispense dissolving Pure Pack products during the day. At night, it automatically refills with pool water. The Daily Dose works with Pure Pack concentrates.

Contact: rethinkpoolcare.com

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

Rico Rock



Rico Rock has expanded its popular Jump Rock series. Made of pre-cast lightweight concrete, the new Jump Rocks are roughly 22-inches high and made of a high-tech concrete mix. Mortared into the deck, the new designs weigh roughly 200 pounds making them inherently stable. They are easy to install and easy to sell to pool owners.

Contact: ricorock.com



California Pools

The water's calling.

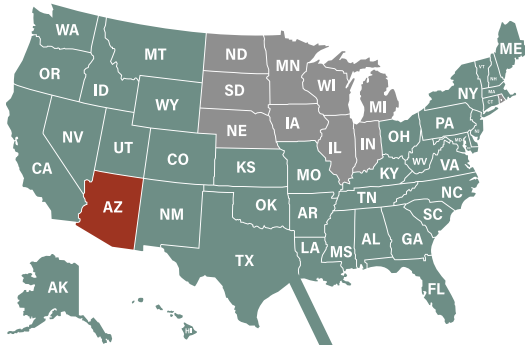
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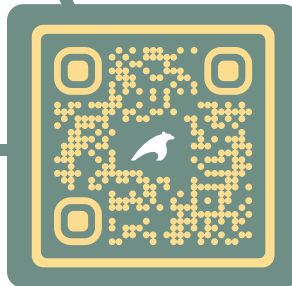
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Sensorex



The new Pool Plus line of electrodes feature the Salt Ring Reference System — a visual indication of sensor life. This crystallite structure visibly alerts users when the sensor needs replacement, eliminating downtime due to unreliable readings and sensor failure caused by depleted electrolytes.

Contact: sensorex.com/pool-spa

SKiM360 Products



For 2025, the SKiM360 Floater has a thicker metal frame and 3 inch deeper nets to make skimming faster and easier. The unit features zero pole weight, unlimited directional control, stays positioned at the waterline regardless of direction of travel and drastically reduces repetitive motion injury. It's available with 16" or 18" diameter frames and standard, fine or leaf bag netting.

Contact: skim360products.com

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

Skimmer Saver



The Skimmer Saver is designed to keep debris out of the skimmer, enabling continuous use of the pool pump. It prevents pumps from burning up from having too many leaves in the skimmer.

Contact: skimmersaver.com

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

SKIN2.0/SKIN Microplaster



SKIN2.0 Microplaster waterproofing offers a luxurious, easy-to-apply solution that can be used to create textured trowel finishes or a smooth, Level Five fine finish. It adheres seamlessly to a variety of surfaces, including concrete, fiberglass, structural plastic, steel, stainless steel, stone and wood. With a 'zero permeability' rating, SKIN2.0 is both sustainable and environmentally friendly.

Contact: skinmicroplaster.com

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

Smorobot



The Valor P10 has 8000gph suction power, a dual-layer filter basket and 3.5hrs running time. It is powered by perceptual intelligence and an AI algorithm, which enable it to self-detect the pool shape, self-adapt the motor power according to how dirty the area is, and self-decide the best cleaning method.

Contact: smorobot.com

Debuted at PSP/Deck Expo

Solar Sun Rings



The Solar Sun Keeper is a storage solution for Solar Sun Rings and Solar Sun Octagons. This lightweight and durable storage bin is made from water-resistant nylon. It's easy to assemble and features a collapsible design, offering convenient storage and portability.

Contact: solarsunrings.com

TARA



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Contact: etsy.com/listing/1821030127/chlor-ring

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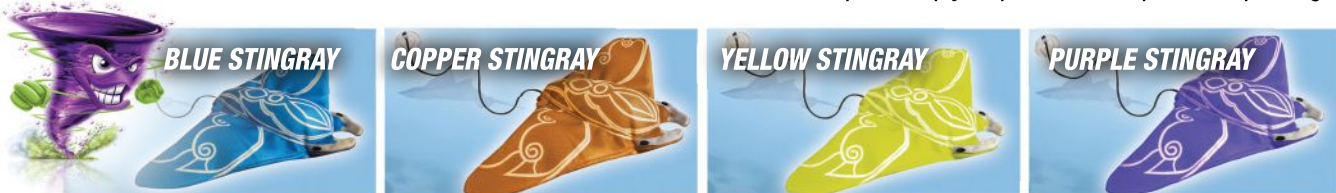
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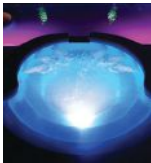
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(Continued on page 58)

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PREVENTING EARLY DECK FRAMING FAILURES

Two decades after lumber treatment changed, some see deck framing deterioration occurring faster than before. This expert explains the issue as well as a way to help protect key structural components.

BY FRANK WOESTE

Collapsing decks — sometimes involving serious and even fatal injuries — continue to grab the headlines.

The North American Deck and Railing Association (NADRA) estimates that nearly half of the more than 60 million residential and commercial decks in the U.S. are past their useful life.

Sometimes the structural connections — think bolts, lag screws, engineered structural screws, ordinary decking screws, concrete anchors, joist hangers, and other structural connector hardware — are deficient due to a design defect or corrosion (rust), which alone can cause a deck element to fail without warning. But decayed framing system components such as joists, beams, posts, footings, stairways, guard systems and handrails, decking and treads, can alone cause or contribute to a collapse. Of course, decayed wood coupled with a deficient connection can jointly cause a collapse.

I believe that contractors can do more to extend the life of the framing on a new deck, thus avoiding costly repairs or deck replacement costs and — more importantly — preventing an unexpected early framing decay collapse. My recommendation is to flash the tops of all joists, beams and stair stringers to provide preservative-treated wood

additional protection, and make sure that the framing can dry out.

CHANGES IN TREATMENT

Prior to 2004, residential deck framing in my region was constructed with southern pine (SP) lumber and preservative-pressure-treated (PPT) with chromated-copper-arsenate (CCA) at the AWPA (American Wood Protection Association) Use Category UC4A level, known as “Ground Contact.”

Because of its cellular structure, southern pine is a preferred species for the PPT process, and CCA was a proven effective preservative treatment for solid-sawn wood products. The expected life span of an elevated deck built with 2x8 or 2x10 SP joists and nail-laminated beams CCA-treated to AWPA UC4A requirements was typically two to three decades.

In December, 2003, manufacturers voluntarily discontinued producing chromated arsenicals for residential use and began treating lumber with alternative preservatives. As a result, retention levels for much of the available lumber decreased. (The retention level indicates how much preservative remains in the lumber after being treated.) In



Preservative treatment lumber tag on one end gives the size of the 2x12, along with the AWPA UC4A level that indicates it is suitable for “Ground Contact.”



Advanced decay of joists and beam treated to “Above Ground” based on an available treatment tag. The tag did not indicate an AWPA Use Category System.



Deck above shown after 10 years in service. The bulk of decay damage is where the top edges of joists are in contact with the decking. Such water-trapping joints accumulate water by gravity and capillary action and are slow to dry after a rainstorm since the top edge of the joist is not exposed to natural ventilation. At right is a different deck. Joists in-service also about 10 years were preservative treated to the “Above Ground” AWPA U1 Use Category.



many cases, retention levels in lumber that had been labeled with the heavier-duty “Ground Contact, UC4A” rating dropped, so the rating changed to “Above Ground,” labeled AWPA UC3B. The latter generally should not make contact with the ground, but should only be placed where enough air circulation will occur to completely dry the wood after water exposure.

As a result, UC4A treated lumber largely disappeared from the marketplace, except as a special-order item (see “Treated Wood Industry Looks to Tougen Standards,” at jlconline.com). By the end of the next decade, deck builders and others began to report unexpected deck framing decay, sometimes after only about 10 years of service.

By 2016, the AWPA responded to the early decay issue by adding a footnote to the AWPA Standard U1, Table 2-1 Service Conditions for Use Category Designations: “Joists and beams shall be treated to requirements for UC4A when they are difficult to maintain, repair or replace and are critical to the performance and safety of the entire system/construction.”

Joists and beams used to construct a residential deck are indeed “difficult to maintain, repair or replace” and, when elevated, are “critical to the performance and safety of the entire system/construction.” The AWPA recommendation led to UC4A treated lumber becoming more commonly available, particularly in the wider dimensions typically used for framing decks. Being that AWPA U1 is a referenced standard in the IRC, contractors are well-advised to make sure they are indeed using PT lumber rated for ground contact (UC4A) for elevated deck joists and beams. In addition, deck contractors should save all treatment end-tags and give them to the homeowner for demonstrating that AWPA UC4A treated lumber was used and to save in case of a warranty claim.

OTHER LONGEVITY FACTORS
Even with UC4A treated lumber,

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numerous factors can reduce the service life of deck framing.

Species of lumber, effectiveness of the preservative, climate, and treatment variables all can affect the quality of treated materials. For example, the preservatives used during the treatment process are waterborne, so if the wood cells are already full or partially full of water because the lumber hasn't been well-dried, the cells will absorb very little treatment solution. In addition, the heartwood at the center of a log is difficult to treat, even if well dried.

While preservative treating plants generally subscribe to a third-party quality-control inspection service that visits plants on a schedule, only a sample of lumber is tested per AWPA testing standards. As such, it is unlikely that the individual pieces of preservative-treated lumber delivered to your job site for a specific deck project would have been tested for chemical penetration and retention. In addition to the efficacy of the chemical treatment used, both penetration and retention of the chemical in each piece of lumber are critical to the in-service performance of the lumber. Due to the natural variability of moisture content (at the time of the pressure-treating process) and other treatment factors for each piece of lumber, it's likely that some pieces and batches of treated lumber may not perform in-service as expected.

According to Jim Mailey, a retired training specialist with Simpson Strong-Tie and author of NADRA's "Decks Done Right" education programs, "There are numerous stories from deck builders that the framing is lasting 7 to 10 years before significant decay has shown up that can be seen without doing the pick test (which can detect early decay before it becomes visually evident)."

Based on a concern for occupant safety as well as deck replacement costs, I believe that measures to enhance the protection of framing lumber without increasing the potential



The PWT preservative-treated LVL framing has been flashed for additional protection.

for fastener and connector corrosion caused by higher preservative retention levels are warranted.

EXTENDING DECK SERVICE LIFE

Flashing all joists, built-up beams, and stair stringers while providing free or unobstructed ventilation below is a simple way to address this uncertainty and extend the service-life of deck framing to as much as 25 years.

To do this, a self-adhering, self-sealing flashing (not all peel-and-stick membranes are self-sealing) or a self-sealing coating that has been tested to meet the standards of AAMA 711 should be used over the tops of joists to prevent the entry of water around the decking screws or other fasteners used to install the decking. The expected service-life of the flashing is also important, as the tops of all joists between deck boards will have some UV exposure, and the outside top edge of band joists and beams may have maximum UV exposure most of the day.

Built-up beams are especially vulnerable to water collecting in

the gaps between members, which can be avoided by flashing the top of the beams. At least one manufacturer, PWT, which offers a preservative-treated LVL, has a requirement to flash all framing. Flashing for 2-1/2 inches wide to ensure good coverage. Built-up nail-laminated beams (two, three, and four plies) should be flashed with a single width that is adequately sized to cover the entire assembly.

Deck ledger. Of course, the single most important structural element to flash on a deck frame is the deck-ledger-to-house-band connection. While an in-depth discussion of this critical detail is beyond the scope of this article, guidance on how to flash a deck ledger properly can be found in Figure 14 in the American Wood Council's DCA6 Prescriptive Residential Wood Deck Construction Guide, as well as in Mike Guertin's three-part series "Installing a Deck Ledger" (found at jlconline.com).

Posts. When deck structural support posts are embedded in the ground, AWPA recommends UC4B material, commonly known as "Ground Contact

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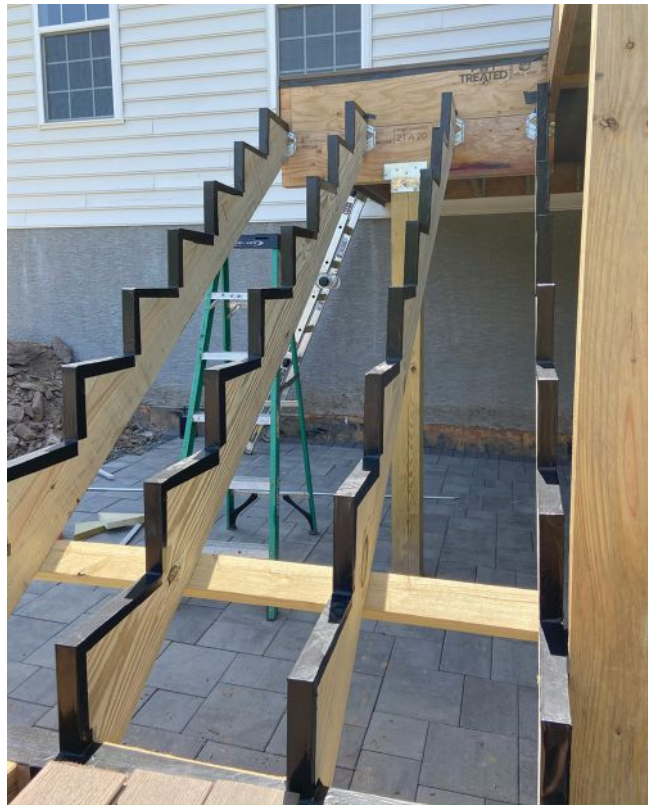


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This UC4A-treated 6x6 southern pine post has been repaired using UC4B-treated 2x6 cleats and ¼-inch-by-3-inch structural fasteners. Note that the cleats as well as the concrete have been sloped to shed water.



Cutting a stringer creates “end grain” at each stair tread and riser. End grain absorbs water up to 100 times faster than the sides of the lumber do. As such, cut edges of the 2x12 preservative-treated southern pine stringers are flashed.

Heavy Duty.” About four decades ago, leading post-frame building companies switched to UC4B after experiencing early decay failures.

For UC4A or UC4B structural deck posts attached to a concrete slab or pier, a post-base connector that separates the post end-grain at least one inch from the concrete or standing water should be used. UC4B may not be available in retail outlets and require a special order. Note that with UC4B lumber, stainless steel hardware is recommended to avoid premature corrosion.

These recommendations are in addition to IRC requirements, which call for field-cut ends, notches and drilled holes in preservative-treated wood to be treated in the field in accordance with AWPA M4. According to

the Forest Products Laboratory Handbook, sealing all end-grain surfaces to prevent liquid water from entering the wood “is probably the single most valuable improvement that can be made in standard construction practice to improve the performance of wood exposed to water. The end grain is so important because liquid water can enter wood through the end grain so quickly — 100 times faster than from the sides is not unusual.”

Flash and ventilate. Even when the tops of all joists and beam framing lumber are flashed, the installation of an under-decking water-management system that prevents the open, “natural ventilation” of the framing up to the flashed top edges will likely be counter-productive to preventing the decay potential of the framing

lumber. For homeowners who seek a protected space under a deck, “above the joist systems” are available that prevent the framing system from being exposed to rain and snow water while not obstructing the natural ventilation of the joist framing below flashing. Wood structures that are protected by cover from the weather and well-ventilated are known to maintain a moisture content (MC) well below what’s required for fungal decay.

Frank Woeste is professor emeritus at Virginia Tech University and a wood construction consultant. fwoeste@vt.edu.

A version of this article first appeared in the publication JLC — Journal of Light Construction.

LEFT PHOTO: FRANK WOESTE; RIGHT PHOTO COURTESY BREYER CONSTRUCTION

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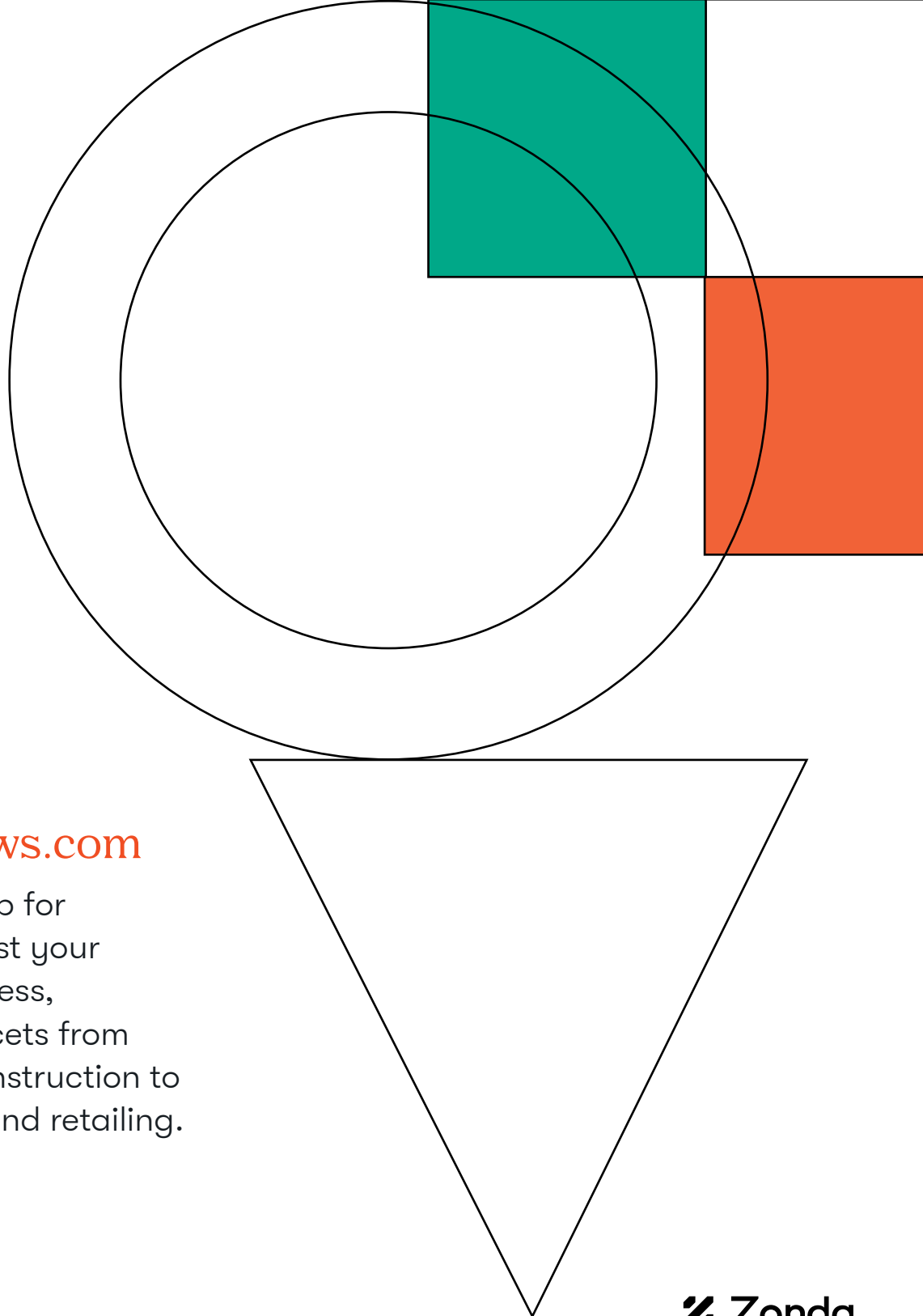
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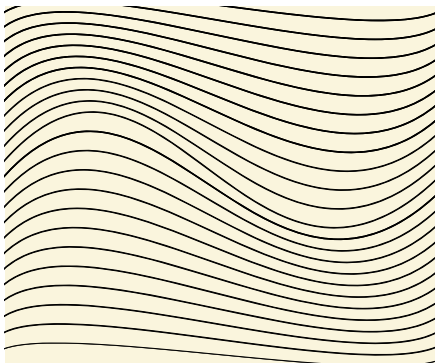
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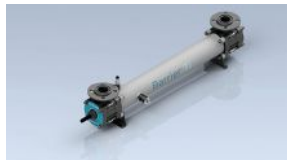
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