

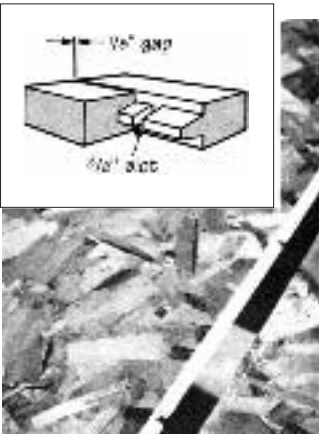
Mulch on a Roll

by Sal Alfano



If a green thumb is not your strong suit, a germination blanket called *RollLawn* may be just what you need to get a new lawn going. The "blanket" provides good erosion control and seed protection, and promotes rapid seed germination by trapping water close to the ground. The natural wood fibers (mostly poplar) decompose within ten days of exposure to sunlight, providing organic mulch for the grass. The lightweight, 40-inch by 100-foot rolls provide uniform coverage in less time than it takes to spread straw. And it's dyed green, so it looks like grass. You don't need to anchor it either because the wood fibers quickly bond to the soil when wet. The company is working on a version that would include regional seed mixes as well. The blanket costs about 9¢ per square foot from Conwed Fibers, 1985 Tate Blvd. SE, Suite 350, Hickory, NC 28601; 704/327-6670.

T&G That Drains



A new tongue-and-groove configuration in OSB panels elimi-

nates standing water on subflooring, according to the manufacturer. *Inner-Seal T&G* panels have a 3/8-inch-wide notch every 10 inches along the tongue. Water that would ordinarily accumulate on the deck can escape through the notches because the self-spacing tongue-and-groove leaves a 1/8-inch gap between sheets. To further reduce moisture absorption, the panel edges are coated with an acrylic polymer. The panels come in 4x8 sheets in four thicknesses: 5/8, 3/4, 1, and 1 1/8 inches. For more information, contact Louisiana-Pacific, 111 S.W. Fifth Ave., Portland, OR 97204; 800/547-6331.

Fast-Curing Cement



A gypsum-based anchoring and patching cement called *Rockite* mixes with water to a fluid or plastic consistency, and sets up in 15 minutes. According to the manufacturer, it develops a compressive strength of 4500 psi after one hour and almost twice that after seven days. As it cures it expands slightly, gripping the sides of cracks or drilled holes in concrete, brick, or block, and firmly holding any objects embedded in it, such as bolts or posts. It won't work in standing water and should be protected from the weather, but it can be used in sub-freezing temperatures. It's also suitable as a structural grout under steel column base plates. A one-pound box costs \$1.98, but several larger containers are available at discounts of up to 50%. Order directly from Hartline Products Co., 2186 Noble Rd., Cleveland, OH 44112; 216/451-6573.

Epoxy in a Tube



The premeasured ingredients in *LiquidRoc 400* are packaged with everything you need to mix the epoxy-acrylate adhesive right in the tube. The 12-ounce cartridge fits in a standard caulk gun, and a 7 1/2-inch-long applicator tip lets you apply the epoxy in deep holes. At room temperature, the adhesive has an open time of 30 to 40 minutes, and cures to full strength in 45 minutes. It can be used at temperatures as low as 28°F, and withstands temperatures up to 250°F when cured. The list price is \$35 per tube, and the shelf life for an unopened package is six months. For ordering information, contact Gunnebo Fastening, P.O. Box 1589, York, PA 17405; 800/336-1640.

Low-Maintenance Wood Windows



The traditional look of wood windows is only half the attraction of a complete line of wood windows called *Willguard*. The other half is the 12-year warranty against peeling, cracking, and blistering. *Willguard* windows are electrostatically coated at the factory before assembly, so every piece is treated on all six sides. The three-step process applies a fungicide to increase resistance to rot and prepare the surface for paint, a polyurea primer, and a finish coat of "Flexacron." The manufacturer claims the coating has the ability to expand and contract with the wood, and surpasses aluminum and vinyl in gloss retention. The finish comes in only two colors — white and brown — but it is repaintable with any latex or oil-based exterior paint. For more information, contact Willmar Windows, P.O. Box 99, Station F, Winnipeg, Man. R2L 2A5, Canada; 204/668-8230.

Ventilated Storage



Small objects can fall through the cracks between the coated wires of most ventilated storage systems. But, in a new design from Lee/Rowan called *Tight Mesh*, the wires are just 1/2 inch apart, enough to keep things from falling over or falling out, and to give greater support to large objects as well. The product line includes door and wall racks, basket systems, under-cabinet organizers, and shelving. The baked-on epoxy coating on the steel mesh resists peeling and scratching better than vinyl-coated wire, and because it is almost frictionless, clothes hangers slide smoothly on hanging rods, and baskets glide in and out easily. Special fasteners, brackets, and drilling templates streamline installation. For more information, contact Lee/Rowan, 6333 Etzel Ave., St. Louis, MO 63133; 800/325-6150.

Nails for Soft Stuff



Ordinary nails don't work well with thin or soft materials, like roofing felt or rigid insulation. But the large (1 1/16-inch) plastic collars at the heads of *Plastic-Hed* nails provide good bearing pressure, and the clipped corners won't cut into the materials it's used to fasten. The nails have ring shanks for good holding power, and come in eight sizes from 3/4 to 2 1/2 inches long. The plastic collars are also a lot easier on your fingertips than metal versions. Each 10-pound box of *Plastic-Hed* nails holds 2000 nails and lists for about \$20. The nails are available in hardware stores and lumberyards, or from Maze Nails, 100 Church St., Peru, IL 61354; 800/435-5949. ■