

# PRODUCTS

by Scott Gibson



## Seal It

Ready Seal, an oil-based, semi-transparent sealer and stain for wood, comes with a “goof proof guarantee.” According to the manufacturer, it won’t run or show lap marks during application; doesn’t need back-brushing when applied with a sprayer; and doesn’t need sanding or stripping before reapplication. The stain also is guaranteed not to flake, chip, or peel. Ready Seal is available in seven colors and contains less than 100 grams of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) per liter, allowing the stain to be used in all 50 states. It’s available online and at some Home Depot locations; it costs \$39 a gallon or \$169 for a five-gallon container. Ready Seal, 888.782.4648, readyseal.com



## Extra-Wide Wraps

Versatex has introduced a PVC column wrap for 12x12 posts. The new VersaWrap column system has actual outside dimensions of 11 1/4 inches by 11 1/4 inches, is 3/4-inch thick, and comes in 12-foot lengths. Manufactured from a matte-finished cellular PVC, the one-piece, pre-cut post wrap has a full-length friction-fit closure. The new size augments a line that already includes wraps for smaller posts. According to the company, the installer simply adds glue, wraps the post, and peels off the protective tape an hour later. Each post wrap retails for \$375. Versatex, 724.857.1111, versatex.com

## Heavy-Duty Structural Screws



Simpson Strong-Tie says its new SDWH Timber Hex-HDG screw replaces a bolt, washer, and nut and requires no pre-drilling. It’s designed for heavy-duty marine and coastal applications, such as piers, boardwalks, and docks. The screw measures 0.276 inch in diameter and has what Simpson calls a “SawTooth” point—which eliminates the need to predrill—plus an integral washer, which means the installer needs access only to the face of the assembly. The hot-dip galvanized coating meets requirements of ASTM A153. Screws are available in lengths from 4 to 12 inches and come with a 3/8-inch hex drive. Simpson Strong-Tie, 800.999.5099, strongtie.com



## Norwegian Wood

Norway-based Kebony offers its treated pine as an alternative to tropical hardwoods, claiming it will turn from dark brown to gray with exposure to weather, like the real McCoy, but won’t contribute to deforestation. The company says it treats southern yellow, radiata, and Scotch pine with “bio waste liquid” and heat, which thickens cell walls in the wood to make it harder and more dimensionally stable. It comes with a 25-year warranty against rot for above-ground applications; is available in lengths of 10, 12, 14, and 16 feet, and in 5/4 and 2-by thicknesses; and costs 5% to 10% less than ipe. Pine River Group, 855.230.5656, pinerivergroup.com



## Bamboo Composite Decking

Made from bamboo fiber, recycled high-density polyethylene plastic, and additives to prevent mold and mildew, Aboeda’s ZomeTek decking comes in three forms: solid planks; “iBeam” planks, which have four hollow chambers to reduce weight and minimize expansion and contraction; and 12-by-12-inch tiles that can be placed on interlocking plastic grids. The maker says that the high silica content of the bamboo gives it high water resistance and dimensional stability. The decking comes in five colors—coffee, copper, slate, teak, and chestnut—with a 25-year warranty (2 years for light-commercial applications) and costs about \$2.70 per linear foot. ZomeTek, 800.607.2414, zometek.com



### Keeping a Low Profile

Titan's Shadow Rail Connector is a two-piece plastic assembly that attaches a deck rail to a post while leaving fasteners hidden from view. One half of the connector is screwed to the end of the rail, and the other half to the inside face of the post. After assembling a rail section to fit between posts, the installer slides the assembly into place, locking the mating faces of the connectors together. The parts are made from UV-protected polycarbonate, which can be stained or painted to match the rail material. Connectors are sized for 2x4 rails and cost about \$10 a pair. Fasteners are included. Titan, 866.577.8868, titanbuildingproducts.com



### Flat Footing Forms

Cardboard concrete form tubes are light, strong, and relatively inexpensive. Flat-Forms offer the same advantages, but they also store flat—taking up less space for storage and transport. After opening up the form, the installer inserts a center support and places the form in a footing hole. A forming collar that slides over the top of the form helps stabilize it when the concrete is placed, and slits in the bottom allow the form to flare out when filled. Made in the U.S., the octagonal forms are 12 inches wide and 48 inches tall. Prices start at \$14 each, not including shipping, but drop to \$12 each for 10 or more. Flat-Forms, 651.460.3399, flat-forms.com



### Hot Feet

Thermacell heated insoles use rechargeable batteries to keep your feet warm for up to five hours at a stretch. A wireless remote lets you adjust the temperature—without taking off your boots—to one of three settings: off, medium (100°F), and high (111°F). Lithium-ion batteries are housed in the insoles, so there are no external battery packs or wires. Recharge time is about four hours. Insoles can be customized for shoe sizes from a woman's 4.5 to a man's 14. Standard insoles are available online for \$130; the Proflex model, which offers removable batteries and the option of USB recharging, is \$180. Schawbel Technologies, 866.753.3837, thermacell.com



### Prefabricated Stainless Rails

AGS Stainless says its ReadyRail kits can be shipped the same day they're ordered. Two pre-packaged kits are available, for railings up to 20 feet long and those up to 40 feet long, with either top-mounted or side-mounted posts. Packages can be combined to handle larger projects, and components can be trimmed in the field for shorter lengths, the company says. ReadyRail also can accommodate a wood top rail bought from a lumberyard or fabricated by the installer. AGS says ReadyRail is aimed at customers who want the look of a stainless installation but don't need a fully custom system. Prices range from \$1,200 to \$2,300. AGS Stainless, 888.842.9492, agsstainless.com