

SUMMER 2015

# OFF THE WALL WC&C

An Industry Publication by the Wall Ceiling & Carpentry Industries of New York, Inc.

Cornell's New  
Energy Efficient Dorm  
Could Change How  
We Make Buildings  
—page 20

Golf Outing Photos on Pages 14-19

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DATE	MEETING	TIME	LOCATION
Sept 15 (Tues)	Board Mtg.	4:00 pm	TBD
Sept 15 (Tues)	Membership	6:00 pm	TBD
Oct 20 (Tues)	Board Mtg.	4:00 pm	TBD
Oct 20 (Tues)	Membership	6:00 pm	TBD
Nov 17 (Tues)	Board Mtg.	4:00 pm	TBD
Nov 17 (Tues)	Membership	6:00 pm	TBD
Dec 8 (Tues)	Board Mtg.	4:00 pm	No. Hempstead
Dec 8 (Tues)	HOLIDAY DINNER	6:00 pm	Country Club (Bd Mtg & Dinner)

## WC&C OFF THE WALL

*Off The Wall* is published through the Promotional Fund by the Association of Wall-Ceiling & Carpentry Industries of New York for the benefit of the membership. It is distributed to members, associate members, union affiliates, and legislators. Editorial contributions, including pictures and story ideas, are welcome and should be forwarded to the WC&C office, 125 Jericho Tpke., Suite 301, Jericho, NY, 11753.

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*From the  
Executive Director  
John DeLollis*

## Worth It's Weight In Gold

You wouldn't know it from the array of photographs beginning on page 16 of this issue, but our annual Golf Outing was nearly washed out on June 15. The morning began with high wind and rain. But then the sun broke through and a beautiful day ensued. It was a great day for the record number of golfers participating. And the fun continued through a beautiful evening with a fine dinner prepared by the North Hempstead Country Club staff.

The golf outing is just one of the annual events your Association coordinates for our members. The barbecue is another. This year's was held on a day of record-breaking heat, but that didn't deter people. Indifferent to the temperature, more people than ever attended.

Now with summer ending, we are looking forward to the next WC&C annual holiday party on December 8th and the Spring Gala and Dinner Dance in April.

These events bring contractors and suppliers together and the information networking is worth its weight in gold.

Additionally, our monthly membership meetings offer a unique opportunity for gaining insight and information on new products, case histories, techniques and business concepts presented by representatives of our associate members and others. There is valuable material offered at our monthly meetings. And again, information networking is worth its weight in gold. I hope to see you at our next meeting on September 15th.

— John DeLollis

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*From the  
President  
Michael Weber*

## Meeting the Challenges of the 21st Century Construction Company

Technology is evolving at an exponential rate. Recent advancements in technology provide new possibilities for the construction industry. General trends show more builders are using mobile technology and taking advantage of free software like Dropbox, SmartBidNet and YouSendIt. To stay competitive, construction companies need innovation and collaboration.

Today we're seeing a lot of advancements when it comes to adopting new technologies onsite, and many companies are moving towards running fully paperless jobsites. However, while some are adapting quickly, others are finding it more difficult to make the jump. The threat of this growing technological divide makes right now a more important time than ever for construction professionals to pay attention to emerging trends in technology.

Construction projects work best when there is collaboration among all participants, including owners/developers, architects, general contractors and subcontractors. The struggle with all of this technology in the construction industry is the extreme diversity of web based communications. For the most part, each contractor uses a different

website and there is no consistency throughout the industry. Some examples of the websites are iBuild, Textura, Gradebeam, Primavera Unifier (Skire) and PMWeb. These portals are used for sending and receiving drawings, submittals, RFI's, requisitions, etc. They provide a solution for capital planning, project delivery and cost control, from planning and building to operations and maintenance.

Each year we will see more impressive advancements than the last, and the time between a technology being born and its practical application will continue to become shorter and shorter. As an industry, we need to all be on the same page to provide a more streamlined workflow.

I would like to congratulate John Hinson of Marek Brothers Systems, Inc. on his new position as President of AWCI. I look forward to seeing everyone at the AWCI's Industry Executives' Conference & Committee Meetings in Pan Pacific Vancouver this October. For more information or to register for this event, please visit <http://www.awci.org/iec>. Have a safe and enjoyable summer!

—Mike Weber

## Hudson Yards Subway Extension to Open in September: MTA

By Andrew Siff

The long-awaited \$2.4 billion extension that is set to connect Manhattan's far west side and Hudson Yards development with the No. 7 line will finally open in September, MTA officials say, as reported by NBC.

The opening of a station at 34th Street and 11th Avenue is now expected to open on Sept. 13, according to the MTA. The station's opening has been delayed several times in the past few years and had most recently been slated to open by June.

A series of unforeseen delays, including the inability to get funicular escalators, which would ferry straphangers between the surface and the platform 11 stories below ground, pushed back the opening.

The September opening would come nearly two years after then-Mayor Michael Bloomberg took a ceremonial first ride to the new station from Times Square, calling the one-stop extension "something we should all be proud of." Work on the line began in 2007.

Originally, Bloomberg had hoped that the subway would lead to a sports stadium that would host the 2012 summer Olympics. That arena was never built and the games were



awarded to London, but the mayor's fallback vision for the site, dubbed Hudson Yards, is taking shape now.

About 14 million square feet of office buildings, apartment towers and hotels are planned or under construction in an area once dominated by a rail yard, blocks of industrial buildings and an isolated convention center. Close to 9,000 apartments are expected to be built in the next five years. Officials said 40,000 to 50,000 people may ultimately work in the new buildings. •



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# It's The Law

By Mark A. Rosen

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## Prevailing Wage Requirements Extended To Certain New York City Housing Projects That Receive Tax Abatements

New York State passed legislation extending prevailing wage requirements to construction workers on New York City housing projects that receive the so-called 421a Real Property Tax Abatement. That program provides approximately \$1 billion in tax abatements to encourage the building of residential and affordable housing.

The prevailing wage requirement is contingent on unions and the real estate development industry reaching a more definitive agreement within seven months. If a memorandum of understanding is not signed within that time, the law expires.

Under present law, projects receiving the tax abatements only require that prevailing wages be paid to building service workers.

## Plumbing Contractor Violated The Fair Labor Standards Act And Must Pay \$1.4 Million In Back Wages And Damages To 300 Workers

Four related New York plumbing and heating contracting firms were ordered to pay \$1.42 million in back pay and liquidated damages to more than 300 current and former employees based upon violations of the Fair Labor Standards Act ("FLSA").

An investigation by the Department of Labor's Wage & Hour Division found that the contractors paid employees straight time wages rather

than time and one-half for overtime hours. At times separate paychecks were issued from a petty cash account for overtime hours. In addition, at least 25 employees were improperly classified as independent contractors and paid only a weekly salary that did not compensate them at time and one-half for overtime hours.

Under a consent judgment that was entered in the case, the contractors will pay the workers \$710,000 in back wages and an equal amount in liquidated damages.

## NLRB Finds Contractor Committed An Unfair Labor Practice By Calling Police On A Union Official For Filming A Jobsite

The NLRB determined that a nonunion excavation contractor committed an unfair labor practice by calling police on a union member's efforts to film alleged safety violations at one of the contractor's jobsites.

The union member was filming the site from the porch of a residence near the site after obtaining the homeowner's permission to do so. The contractor called the police who filed a report. That report reflected that the union member had not entered the construction zone and the police declined to take any action.

The NLRB determined that the filming activity was protected under Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act. •

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# TRANSFORMATIVE BLUEPRINT FOR CHANGE AT THE DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS

NYC DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS COMMISSIONER RICK CHANDLER HAS ANNOUNCED A NEW PLAN (PDF) THAT WILL FUNDAMENTALLY REFORM THE AGENCY TO ENHANCE PUBLIC AND WORKSITE SAFETY, SLASH WAIT TIMES AND DELAYS, AND MODERNIZE ALL ASPECTS OF THE AGENCY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF A 21ST CENTURY CITY.

The Department of Buildings is responsible for enforcing the New York City Construction Codes and Zoning Resolution on more than a million buildings and construction sites throughout the City. Issuing a record 140,000 construction permits in 2014, the daily operations of the Department impact the everyday lives of those that live, work and build in New York City.

Earlier this year, Mayor de Blasio announced the beginnings of “fundamental reform” at the Department of Buildings, and this action plan delivers on that pledge. With an unprecedented infusion of new resources, including 320 new positions and \$120 million over four years, and significant reforms to internal processes and public interactions, the City of New York will ensure its Department of Buildings is second to none in customer service, public safety and efficient oversight.

“This is an agency that underpins almost everything we do. From spurring new

construction of affordable housing to achieving our sustainability goals to protecting New Yorkers each and every day, this department is a vital pivot that has to perform at the highest level. We need change that makes its operations safer, faster and more transparent. The package of reforms we are undertaking are going to vastly improve the service New Yorkers receive from the Department of Buildings,” **said Mayor Bill de Blasio.**

“The Department’s highest priority is safe and sustainable development. It is with this at the forefront that we have designed a significant set of progressive and measurable reforms, supported by an historic commitment of staffing and budget resources, that will allow the agency not only the ability to operate more efficiently, resulting in reduced project wait times, but also focus on safety and the ability of all New Yorkers to equitably obtain services from the Department,” **said Buildings Commissioner Rick Chandler.** “We are making exciting changes in our safety and development operations, customer service, transparency and our collaborative relationships with other City and State agencies and authorities. I believe these reforms will get projects approved quicker while ensuring safe and code compliant development remains our top priority.”

“The New York City Department of Buildings is charged with the challenging task of ensuring the safe, lawful use of more

than a million properties throughout the city. As the Administration prepares to build affordable housing at an expedited rate, I am pleased to hear that the Department will significantly enhance and expand various areas of oversight, education, transparency and enforcement. I would like to applaud Commissioner Chandler for his leadership on enacting these welcomed reforms and look forward to closely working with the Administration to build upon them,” stated Council Member Jumaane D. Williams (D-Brooklyn), Deputy Leader and Chair of the Council’s Housing and Buildings Committee.

“The de Blasio administration and the Department of Buildings have put together a solid and comprehensive set of reforms, which has the potential to usher in a new era of transparency, efficiency and enhanced public safety to the building approval and inspection process. The City’s upfront investments in new technology and staffing, along with a renewed focus on risk management and construction innovation, will pay huge dividends by increasing the quality of construction work while also reducing the cost and time it takes to build in New York City,” said New York Building Congress President Richard T. Anderson.

Since his appointment in July 2014, Commissioner Rick Chandler has led an effort to identify areas where reforms will improve results in agency operations, and

ensure the Department is equitably supporting development demands throughout all the boroughs. The transformative initiatives provided in this blueprint, which align with the Mayor’s One New York vision, outline significant changes to public safety and integrity enforcement, operational processes, regulatory transparency and customer service. Strengthening and reinvesting in these areas will allow the agency to carry out its core mission of safe and lawful use of buildings and ensure the Department is supporting the creation of a thriving, equitable, sustainable, and resilient 21st century New York.

## Enhance Public Safety and Integrity

The agency is improving enforcement methods in public safeguarding and integrity compliance. These changes are intended to promote best safety practices by the development community and allow the Department to proactively assess and mitigate risks associated with construction sites and professionals that may pose a danger to public. Through proactive enforcement and additional discipline of bad actors the Department is strengthening and reaffirming a commitment to its core mission of keeping New Yorkers safe. Public safety and integrity reforms *include:*

*Create a Risk Management Office to Determine Liability:* The Department has established its first ever Risk Management

Office. This unit is tasked with analyzing the extensive amounts of data maintained by the agency to determine where vulnerabilities exist and devise solutions that eliminate or mitigate risk. Using business intelligence and analytics tools, this Office’s efforts will allow Enforcement and other staff to proactively identify and pursue punishment of “bad actors,” identify buildings that pose a threat to public safety and root out corrupt behavior in conjunction with the Legal and Regulatory Affairs *Division.*

*Release Industry Code of Conduct:* Another first for the Department will be the launch of the Industry Code of Conduct this summer. The document will clarify requirements developers, professionals and other stakeholders that engage the *agency.*

*Enhance Legal Action Against Bad Actors:* The Department will increase its legal resources and incorporate new technology to enhance disciplinary enforcement against applicants, owners, licensees and other construction professionals that repeatedly abuse the Construction Codes.

## Streamline Department Processes

Building in New York City is an extraordinarily complex undertaking, often involving numerous city agencies and requiring transactions with outdated systems and incongruent processes. The Department recognizes the importance of

minimizing bureaucracy to ensure rapid but safe development. In order to support the Mayor’s goal of dramatically increasing the development of affordable housing and reducing project delays across all types of development, the Department is deepening its investment in plan review through technological improvements, and by hiring nearly 200 plan examiners and development inspectors. Process enhancements *include:*

*Redesign Plan Review Process and Online Interface to Reduce Wait Times:* The technology to review online plan submissions will be in use by examiners in all five borough offices by the end of the year, reducing wait times for virtual reviews. As the Department re-designs its online presence, a new public facing web interface, which will replace the current Building Information System (BIS), will allow customers to conduct any transaction online. Customers will be able to manage more robust accounts, where they can make payments, check the status of their project and have virtual interactions with staff. These changes will eventually eliminate the need for in-person visits. A paperless agency that integrates efficient virtual examinations and electronic transactions will mean certain projects can be reviewed in nearly one-half the current time, and some inspections conducted in nearly one-fourth the current *time.*

*Build a Unit to Process Affordable*  
*Continue on following page*



**Housing Projects:** An Affordable Housing Acceleration Unit of thirteen individuals will be tasked with examining plans and performing inspections on affordable housing projects. This team will work closely with other agencies, including the Department of Housing Preservation and Development to mitigate delays in interagency hand-offs. This Unit will reduce plan exam times by nearly half, and inspections times to a quarter of the current wait. This office will enable: Completion of first plan review within seven days of filing

Availability of subsequent plan review appointments within seven days of request  
Development inspections (construction, electrical, and plumbing) within three days of request

Boiler and elevator inspections within five days of request  
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**Implement Online Appointment Scheduling and Optimize Routing:** The Department will launch the second component of the Inspection Ready program. This will allow inspection appointments to be scheduled online and inspectors the ability to conduct more site visits through route optimization and enhanced reporting software. These changes will continue to improve inspection quality and reduce inspection *wait times*.

**Develop an Interagency Working Group to Simplify Development:** The development and construction process is, at times, a complex web of agency checkpoints and hand-offs. A new interagency work group - including agencies and utilities critical to the success of development and construction in New York City - will meet regularly to identify and solve problematic touch-points and reoccurring cross-agency issues.

## Transparent Compliance Requirements

Regulatory transparency and industry outreach and engagement remain necessary for promoting safe and sustainable development. By clarifying existing regulations and building awareness of best practices within the development community, the Department will be better able to ensure industry compliance with regulations, and reduce delays in the plan exam and inspection process. Transparency change *will include:*

**Consolidate the Building Codes to Enhance Compliance:** The Department of Buildings

currently administers multiple construction codes applicable to alterations of buildings based on the code in place at the time of initial construction. Developing a unified code for existing buildings will allow the Department to streamline permitting and simplify regulations governing building upgrades and resiliency improvements for the existing housing and building stock. It will also make it much easier for applicants to comply with the Building Code and reduce the need for unnecessary *intermediaries*.

**Standardize the Plan Objection Process to Reduce Re-examinations:** The Department is currently reviewing plan exam disapprovals to identify the most common objections and standardize them across examiners and project submissions. By identifying common objections by project type, the Department will be able to educate its customers about code compliance requirements and increase the efficiency of the plan review process. This will reduce the number of reviews required to reach approval.

## Commit to Customer Service

The Department, at its core, is a customer service agency. The Department aims to significantly change the way New Yorkers are able to interact with the agency. In addition to the process changes above, the Department will enhance the customer service experience by investing in agency staff and better public offices. Service changes *will include:*

**Offer Project Advocates to Resolve Project Complications:** The Department will hire 10 project advocates over the next two years across the boroughs. These individuals will be a free resource that can help New Yorkers navigate the construction process—something for which many New Yorkers currently hire private ‘expeditors’. Project Advocates will provide a single point of contact within the Department to assist in the resolution of technical and operational issues relating to a project or *property*.

**Provide After Hour Inspection Services:** To best serve the City that never sleeps, the Department will begin offering after-hours and weekend inspections for a reasonable fee. The Department will test this initiative using high-rise inspections in the summer of 2015

and will then expand it further. To receive fast service at the times that work best for them, developers will have the opportunity to request early morning, night or weekend *inspections*.

**Develop an Equitable Fee Structure:** The Department will seek legislative approval for a more equitable fee structure. Under this concept, larger well-funded projects would pay fees at a rate that is comparable to the scale of development they are undertaking, while fees for small business and homeowners would be structured more appropriately to their scope of *work*.

**Redesign Borough Office Public Spaces:** Over the next year, the public spaces in the Department’s borough offices will be evaluated for re-design to enhance service and streamline the flow of traffic with a focus on incorporating those modernizations that will occur when additional online processes are incorporated into the Department’s business model.

“This announcement will begin to bring the agency into the 21st century,” said Building Trades Employers’ Association President Louis Coletti. “From increased transparency and efficient business practices, to a higher standard of ethics and compliance for industry professionals, these are welcome reforms.”

“The General Contractors Association members welcome the Buildings Department **reforms**,” said Denise Richardson, the GCA’s Executive Director. “We applaud the addition of resources for plan examination and inspections and we look forward to the implementation of the customer service improvements that will go a long way toward increasing the efficiency of the permit process. Many thanks to Commissioner Chandler and his team for leading this effort to improve construction safety and increasing the transparency of the entire DOB process.”

“We applaud DOB’s efforts to add people-power and state-of-the-art technology to help build a more efficient and effective agency,” said Thomas L. Hill, RPA, President of the Building Owners and Managers Association of Greater New York (BOMA/NY). “As always, we stand with the Department in these efforts and gladly offer our real world, practical experience in all matters related to building management in New York City to help make these major reforms as successful as possible for both DOB and our members.”

*Source: The New York Department of Buildings  
The complete press release from the DOB is available at:  
[www.nyc.gov/html/dob/html/news/pr\\_blueprint.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dob/html/news/pr_blueprint.shtml)*



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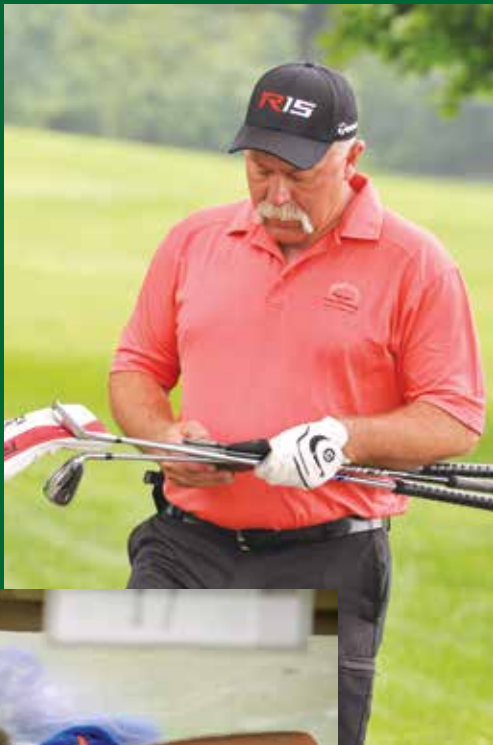
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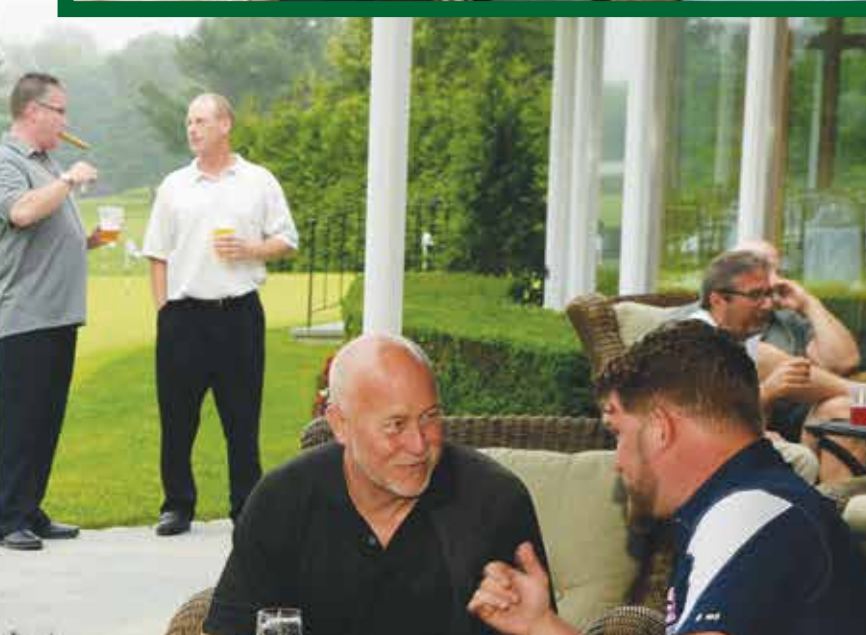
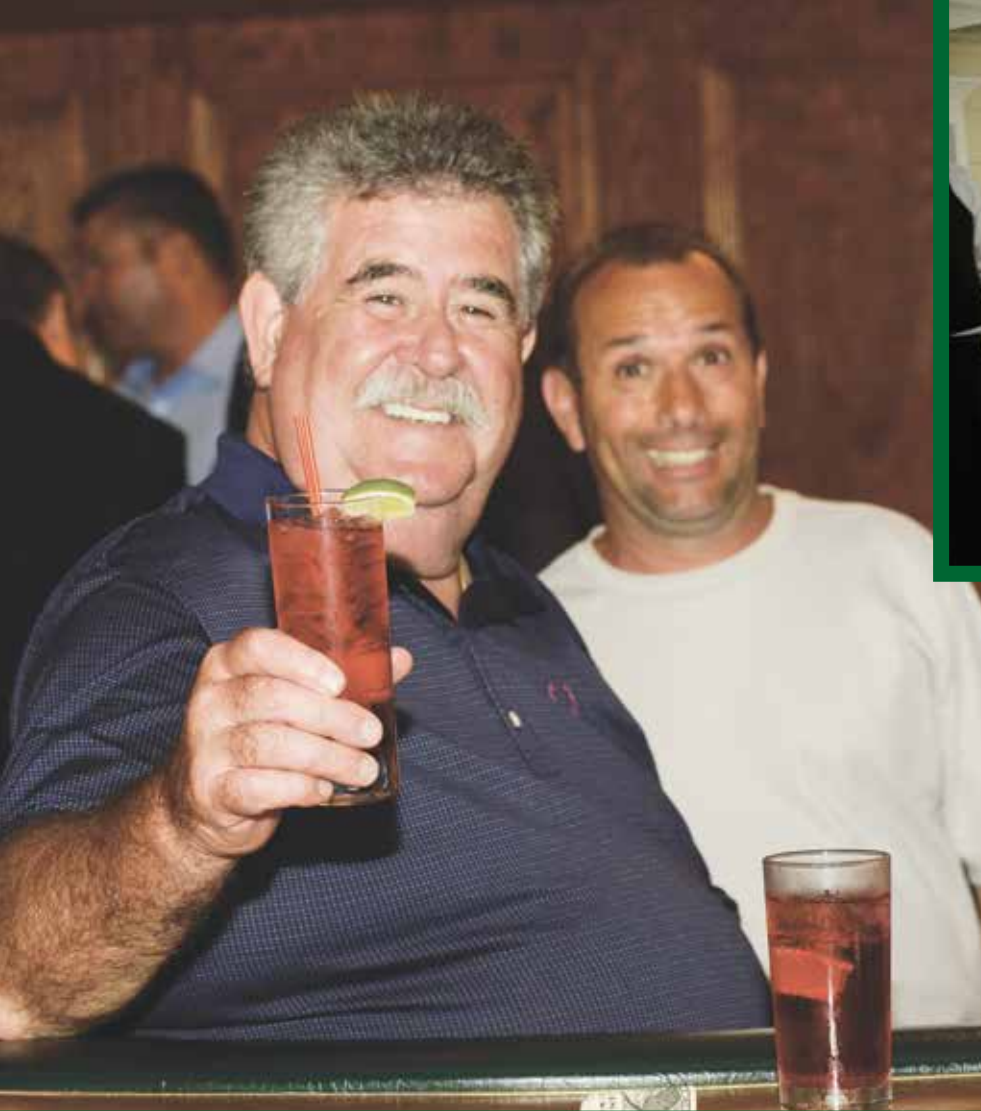
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# Cornell Is Building An Insanely Energy Efficient Dorm In New York City, And It Could Change How We Make Buildings Forever

ARIEL SCHWARTZ/Business Insider

PASSIVE HOUSE BUILDINGS USE LITTLE IN THE WAY OF *ENERGY, HEATING, AND COOLING*. IN ORDER TO MEET THE STANDARDS, “YOU NEED TO HAVE EVERY CRACK SEALED,” ACCORDING TO BLAKE MIDDLETON, A PARTNER AT HANDEL ARCHITECTS, WHICH DESIGNED THE BUILDING. ESSENTIALLY, THE CORNELL BUILDING HAS TO BE COMPLETELY AIRTIGHT TO PASS MUSTER.

Overall, the \$115 million residential building will use 60% to 70% less energy than other similarly sized buildings. It will also cost up to 5% more to develop — but that money will come back many times over in energy savings.

Making the building airtight was a vexing problem, both from a structural and a design point of view. When architects design urban buildings — especially condos — they usually highlight sweeping views with floor to ceiling windows.

In order to make that work from an energy efficiency perspective, a passive house high-rise would need a double envelope, basically creating a building within a building. That’s prohibitively expensive, so Cornell opted instead for

slightly smaller windows.

“There will be well-sized windows that take advantage of views, but they’re not as big as they might be if they were catering to that [condo] market,” says Arianna Sacks Rosenberg, a senior project manager at Hudson, the developer behind the high-rise.

The airtight design, combined with a unique ventilator system that brings in fresh air from outside, means that the building doesn’t need much in the way of a heating and cooling system.

But that ventilator system went outside of New York

City’s building code, so the developers had to get special permission to install it.

*Another challenge: getting builders to seal up the* prefab high-rise to passive house standards. “It requires a much higher degree of care than is traditionally found in sealing up the envelope of a building for more conventional construction,” says Middleton.

In Europe, the passive house standard is used for low-rise buildings, offices, and schools (the Cornell building will beat out a 20-story office building in Vienna, Austria, as the tallest passive house structure in the world). Not so in the U.S, where the standard is generally used only for single-family homes.

Cornell’s high-rise could change that.

As Middleton points out, the environmentally-minded LEED building standards raised eyebrows when they were first introduced two decades ago. Now LEED has been adopted into building codes. In New York City, for example, new buildings on city property have to be LEED Silver certified.

“In a way, it’s like we’re beta testing a new model of a car that everybody already knows pretty well, but there are certain tweaks going on, and components in that car that have to be machined better, to fit more exactly,” says Middleton.

If all of those tweaks add up to a functional high-rise, then Cornell may have paved the way to a more energy-efficient urban future. •



## Cornell’s passive house building /Handel Architects

Cornell University Residences

New York, NY

Handel Architects’ residential tower for Cornell University’s new Roosevelt Island Campus will include 350 residences for students, staff and faculty. The 26-story building is part of Cornell’s 2.1 million square foot technology campus in New York City, a partnership between Cornell and Technion — Israel Institute of Technology. The building is being designed with a focus on sustainability and energy performance, and when complete will help Cornell achieve its goal of a net-zero campus.



# Elected Officials Talk Construction Noise During School

Stephon Johnson /Amsterdam News

The school year may be over, but local elected officials still have the kids in their thoughts.

At the end of June, New York City Council Member and Chairman of the Committee on Environmental Protection Donovan Richards held a hearing on Intro 420, a bill that would mandate that noise from construction sites within 75 feet of any public or private school not exceed 45 decibels during school operating hours. The bill is sponsored by City Council Members Mark Levine and Helen Rosenthal.

“As a parent and a former educator, I’m extremely concerned about loud construction projects occurring near schools throughout the city that jeopardize the safety and learning environments of our young students,” stated Levine. “Noise restrictions set by the School Construction Authority should be no different than what construction companies follow during the school day when they build close to schools. I’m pleased to join a broad coalition of health professionals, legal experts, elected officials, educators and parents across the city who are eager to

move this critical measure forward.”

“Educators are competing with loud noises during their lessons, at the same time children are being distracted by the sounds,” added Rosenthal. “And as studies have shown and were presented in this hearing, this noise can negatively affect education and cognition.”

According to advocates for this legislation, since 2011, construction work has disrupted classroom instruction in at least 10 New York City public schools affecting more than 6,000 students. Currently, P.S. 75 and P.S. 163 on the Upper West Side and the highly regarded middle school, School of the Future, deal with loud noises caused by construction work next to their buildings.

Reports have noise levels approaching nearly 70 decibels on average at school area construction sites. Last year, approximately 800 individual schools were located both within 100 feet of a taxi lot containing a building and within 100 feet of a noise complaint during school hours.

Intro 420 has more than 20 co-sponsors, the support of parents and health and legal experts from the Department of Environmental Protection and Mt. Sinai Hospital. Dr. Lauren Zajac and Dr. Thomas Hays from Mt. Sinai cited a study in the medical journal the Lancet when warning about how noise levels affect children’s learning processes.

The study, which Zajac and Hays spoke about at the hearing, stated that “for every 5 decibel increase in ambient noise measured at the outside surfaces of school buildings, grade-school-aged children experienced a one to two month delay in reading comprehension.” The doctors also referenced the guidelines that the World Health Organization has regarding background noise in schools that are stricter than Intro 420.

“Our school children deserve our protection,” said Josh Kross, a P.S. 163 Task Force for a Safe School member and PTA co-president, in a statement. “Bill 420 helps protect them from intrusive noise. We expect Mayor [Bill] de Blasio to support this legislation, and we look forward to a formal statement from him endorsing it.”

Richards said that students have the right to learn in a noise-free environment.

“Construction companies should adhere to the same noise level restrictions as the School Construction Authority during school hours,” said Richards. “I’d like to thank Council Member Levine for introducing this legislation and advocating on behalf of our children and their health.” •

# Forest City Ratner Companies And The Durst Organization Are Latest Firms To Join Construction For A Livable City Program

Forest City Ratner and The Durst Organization have both joined the New York Building Foundation’s Construction for a Livable City Program to encourage community-friendly construction site management practices.

Construction for a Livable City (CLC) is based on a checklist of twenty-seven common-sense practices that, when adopted by builders, can help lessen construction’s impact on the surrounding community. For example, participants agree to maintain construction fences, sheds and other exterior elements; mitigate noise, dust and other pollutants; maintain open lines of communication with the public; and schedule truck deliveries and other work in a way that lessens their impact on residents and businesses.


The Durst Organization has signed up its new residential project, at 625 W. 57th St. This project will transform a long underutilized commercial space into a 750 unit apartment building that includes affordable housing and incorporates advanced green building elements. The project is currently going through the City’s public land use review process, during which Durst


has emphasized its commitment to being a good neighbor during and after construction. Construction is expected to take 30 months to complete.

Forest City Ratner joins the program as an Underwriter, which gives the company an advisory role helping to refine the CLC checklist, bringing its expertise building large projects in diverse communities to bear, and allows it enroll up to five of its projects in the CLC program. Forest City recently completed work on the first phase of its Atlantic Yards project that featured printed artwork on construction fencing along its construction fence on Atlantic Avenue.

Frank J. Sciamie, Jr., Chair of the CLC Task Force, said, “Forest City Ratner and The Durst Organization are helping to raise the bar for construction site quality. By adopting the CLC Checklist, these organizations are taking concrete steps to be a better neighbor and improve the quality of life for New Yorkers.”

For more information on Construction for a Livable City or to participate, visit the New York Building Foundation website, <http://www.nybuildingfoundation.org/livable-city.html> or call (212) 481-9230. •





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## Employees in Construction Are Among Happiest of All Sectors, Says Survey

Taking pleasure in one's craft is common among people who work in construction, so much so that the industry ranked first in a recent survey of job satisfaction conducted by TINYpulse, an organization that analyzes employee happiness.

According to ENR, construction led the way among 12 industries surveyed; consumer products and services employees and those working in technology and software were ranked second and third, respectively; manufacturing came in last, just after the government and nonprofit sectors. TINYpulse says construction workers expressed satisfaction with colleagues and the job and enjoyed completing projects.

The findings come as no surprise to Greg E. Sizemore, a 30-year industry veteran and now the open shop group's vice president of environment, health, safety and workforce development. "Construction workers take care of one another," Sizemore says.

"Craft professionals who have good helpers working

with them are more than willing to invest their time and energy in helpers as they come up through the industry," he says. "Craft professionals remember the career path they traveled to get to where they are, so they are more than willing to help the next generation along that same path."

Economic forces also play a role, says Brian Turmail, director of communications for the Associated General Contractors of America. "I think there are a couple of factors at play," he says. "From a labor point of view, it's a worker's market. We see a lot of firms increasing benefits and pay, making employment more attractive for their staff. More broadly, there's a satisfaction to being involved in a team environment and taking on different challenges every day. The satisfaction of having built something that's going to last for decades to come."

That rings true for Thomas. "The greatest thing is to go back to the parking lot each day and say, 'There's something I helped to build. My weld is in that place, and my weld is the only thing that's holding that up,' " she says. "When I first get to the site, it's just dirt. Two

years later, when I leave, there's this huge plant."

Aaron Velasquez, an electrician with Anaheim, Calif.-based Sunwest Electric Inc., says, "Taking pride in your work, and being a builder of a city—it's a great experience." For the past two years, Velasquez has been working on a large addition to San Antonio Regional Hospital in Upland, Calif. The future import of his work fuels him with a strong sense of urgency.

"One day, somebody's life is going to be on that receptacle, that emergency power that you're installing," he says. "Or maybe a machine is going to be breathing for somebody who just got out of a car accident. Everything has to function correctly every single time. The install has to be perfect."

### Upward Mobility

That kind of commitment pays off in job advancement in an industry where people can build their skills, master a craft and possibly own their own company.

"In this business, hard work really does show through right away," says Mike Bradley, a journeyman and mechanical insulation installer with Iowa Insulation in Nevada, Iowa. He also teaches the company's apprentices. "If you work hard right away and do your job right the first time, especially in construction, people will take notice **instantly**. And once people take notice, that first impression ... you can only go forward from there."

Drew Golder, a journeyman electrician with Tri-M Group, an electrical contractor in Kennett Square, Pa., emphasizes training and career growth as the keys to employee satisfaction. "I know where I started, about five years ago. I didn't know much of anything about electrical, and looking back, how far I've come. I still have a ton to learn—and, year by year, I can see that ... I've come a long way. And that feels satisfying to know where you were and where you're going," he says.

Golder also stresses the importance of compensation and investment in employees. "The reason why we all work is because we need to pay bills ... I think taking care of [employees] will kind of push them to learn more, stick around, want to be there. They'll feel appreciated. There's a lot of trades where you talk to the employees and the employer doesn't give them raises, tries to

keep their pay scale as low as possible," Golder says. "And then I've also seen companies where they pay their employees, they pay for training, and they show the employees respect and appreciation. And you can definitely tell a major difference in the type of work they do and their appearance and just all-around. I think it looks good for the company, and also the employees are happy that they're being taken care of."

Darrell Bunting, president of Iowa Insulation, believes in good pay, training and advancement and recently created an employee stock ownership plan (ESOP) for his workers.

"The idea [of the ESOP] is to get more of our employees' involvement in what they do, to take more of an interest," he says. "It also helps ... to get their opinions, to get their ideas ... just more engagement, and getting more of their ideas out there is what gets them really committed and involved."

Bunting is hardly alone in his views. Pat Lynch, president of consulting firm Business Alignment Strategies Inc., says employers improve productivity when they enable staff members to voice their opinions about the organization. It is also important for companies to focus on job growth for promising employees.

**The lack of career advancement was among the three biggest sources of employee dissatisfaction in the TINYpulse survey. The other two were unsupportive managers and a lack of tools to get the job done.**

"If you want to build a winning team," says Bunting, "you really need good people, and you keep good people by treating them well and by developing career paths for them and by having your finger on the pulse of where they want to be and how fast they want to move."

For contractors, retaining good employees will become even more challenging over the next five to 10 years. U.S. Labor Dept. statistics project a 24.3% growth in the job market for construction laborers between 2012 and 2022. That's good news for people entering the industry, but it also means company owners will need to work harder than ever to keep their employees safe and satisfied. •

Source: TINYpulse survey/ENR



# PRODUCT NEWS

## New SENCO® SCN63LDXP Designed Specifically for Continuous Structural Foam Insulation Panel

*New Coil Nailer Drives Longer, Deeper, and More Securely*

As building product manufacturers continue to introduce new materials to increase the energy efficiency of commercial and residential structures, tool and fastener manufacturers must provide new and innovative products to enable professionals to stay productive. That is exactly what SENCO has done with the introduction of the SNC63LDXP.

This new 15-degree, 2-3/8 – 2-1/2” coil nailer is a highly specialized fastening system designed to only install continuous structural foam insulation panels. Working with a leading continuous structural foam insulation manufacturer, SENCO developed this unique installation system. What sets it apart from other systems is the driver blade on the SCN63LDXP extends about 1” beyond the safety element in order to drive the nail through the foam and directly into the OSB backer and ultimately, securely fastening into the framing members.

“Continuous Structural Foam Insulation panels are becoming more and more prevalent in industrial wall panel manufacturing plants,” states Eric Bellman, SENCO product manager. “As building codes continue to change relative to home insulation and improved R values, continuous structural foam insulation panels are becoming a popular choice to achieve these new R values in residential homes as well.”

A unique safety foot guide on the SCN63LDXP ensures proper alignment and a large diameter base helps reduce damage to the foam surface when fasteners are driven.

Visit <http://www.senco.com> for more [information](#).



## New Wizard Finishing Handle from AMES Works Magic on the Job

Drywall finishing contractors will enjoy greater control, safety and productivity with the new model 8000



Wizard handle from AMES. Unlike traditional, longer

handles, the Wizard places users’ hands directly over the pressure plate, reducing the effort required to do the job.

The compact handle, 40 percent shorter than similar products, allows for greater maneuverability and control by staying directly in front of the user. Ergonomically and intuitively designed, the reversible front handle will grip securely and comfortably into the user’s hand.

By eliminating standard brake handles, the Wizard eliminates the learning curve associated with them, allowing new users to be as fully productive as seasoned pros. Its small size further simplifies work in tight spots, cutting down on wasted job time.

Learn more at [www.amestools.com](http://www.amestools.com) or call 888-BAZOOKA.



# PRODUCT NEWS

## New Lyra™ High CAC Ceilings from Armstrong Offer Highest Level of Sound Absorption and Sound Blocking in a Single Panel

*Combination of high NRC (0.95) and CAC (42) provides best overall acoustical performance in the industry*



With the addition of new Lyra™ High CAC ceilings to its product line, Armstrong® now offers the highest level of sound absorption and sound blocking in a single ceiling panel.

Lyra™ High CAC combines a high NRC (Noise Reduction Coefficient) of 0.95 with a high CAC (Ceiling Attenuation Class) of 42, providing the best overall acoustical performance of any ceiling panel in the industry.

The combination of sound absorption and sound blocking performance gives Lyra™ High CAC the flexibility to meet the acoustical demands of privacy, collaboration, and focus areas in either open or closed plan spaces. The high NRC helps reduce noise within a space, enhancing speech intelligibility, while the high CAC helps prevent noise from intruding into adjacent spaces, ensuring speech privacy.

### Smooth, Drywall-like Visual

Made from a fiberglass face panel and mineral fiber back panel, Lyra™ High CAC offers a smooth, white, drywall-like visual and is available in 24” x 24” square Lay-in and Tegular panels. The panels are compatible with TechZone® Ceiling Systems and coordinate with Blizzard White suspension systems and Axiom® trim. The panels are washable, scratch-

resistant, soil-resistant, and sag-resistant. They have high light reflectance and carry a 30-Year Limited System Warranty against visible sag and mold/mildew.

The panels are made from up to 59 percent recycled content and are recyclable through the Armstrong Ceiling Recycling Program.

Lyra™ High CAC ceilings are recommended for use in offices, healthcare, classrooms, corridors, lobbies, reception areas, and other spaces where sound absorption and sound blocking are desired.

For more information about Lyra™ High CAC, visit [armstrong.com/lyrahighcac](http://armstrong.com/lyrahighcac), chat live, or call a U.S.-based TechLine™ expert at 1-877-276-7876, press 1.



## WoodTrac Unveils Decorative Wooden Ceiling System

WoodTrac introduces its decorative wooden Ceiling System for commercial and residential use. The system has the appearance of a custom-crafted three-dimensional ceiling. Each ceiling can be individualized with the



combination of different molding profiles and molding and panel finishes. Molding profiles include colonial, cove and tear drop shapes while molding and panel finishes consist of abbey oak, bank alder and paintable white ceiling options.

For a more traditional ceiling appearance, WoodTrac offers an additional panel finish—a knock-down textured surface. Additionally, the WoodTrac ceiling system

has the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Chain-of-Custody Certification. Builders, architects, designers and developers using WoodTrac ceiling systems can earn Leadership in Energy & Environment Design (LEED) points from the U.S. Building Council.

For more information visit [www.woodtrac.com](http://www.woodtrac.com).

## Wizard Compact Finishing Box Handle

The new model 8000TT Wizard handle from TapeTech provides unmatched control, maximum access and eliminates



the learning curve of using traditional finishing box brake handles. The Wizard is the only finishing box handle that places your hand directly over the pressure plate, reducing the effort required



smallest closets or under stairs and is much safer for workers on scaffolding compared to using a finishing box handle of any

while providing superior control. The Wizard fits into the

other length. The Wizard isn’t limited to just tight spaces or scaffolds. The Wizard is the absolute fastest and easiest way to finish any joints, especially horizontal joints. The innovative design, including the ability to reverse the front handle, allows for multiple ergonomic hand positions to reduce worker fatigue and increase productivity. Every drywall finisher needs the Wizard™ in their toolbox!

For more information go to [www.tapetech.com](http://www.tapetech.com)



# PRODUCT NEWS

## BASF launches Platinum CI Wall Systems featuring Neopor® Rigid Insulation Board

*Designed to optimize thermal performance, improve impact resistance and comply with new energy codes*



The BASF Corporation Wall Systems business announced the launch of Platinum CI and Platinum CI Stucco wall systems featuring Neopor Rigid Insulation Board.

BASF's Wall Systems is a leading manufacturer of exterior insulation and finish systems (EIFS), stucco and air/water-resistive barriers.

Platinum Continuous Insulation (CI) systems are exterior wall claddings featuring platinum Neopor advanced insulation technology - the latest innovation in insulation from BASF. Neopor is a patented rigid insulation



BASF Corporation - Wall Systems' Platinum CI wall systems, a continuous insulation system featuring Neopor® advanced insulation technology to optimize thermal performance, improve impact resistance and comply with new energy codes.

board with graphite embedded into the polymer matrix. Graphite reflects

infrared energy, thus decreasing the material's thermal conductivity and increasing its R-value. It also exceeds many ASTM C578 Type II requirements including density, flexural and compressive strength.

"Platinum CI and Platinum CI Stucco wall systems provide an innovative alternative to meeting the new energy standards," said Peter Daechsel, National Marketing Manager, BASF's Wall Systems business. "They incorporate remarkably effective continuous insulation to produce superior

R-value prescribed for high performing exterior cladding systems."

Platinum CI and Platinum CI Stucco wall systems utilize a specially selected, high density (1.45 pcf) Neopor board to optimize thermal performance and improve impact resistance. The boards are available in R-5, R-7.5 and R-10 thermal resistance for ease of design and to ensure energy code compliance. Neopor Rigid Insulation Board is also available in custom thicknesses and shapes.

For additional information about Platinum CI and Platinum CI stucco wall systems, call 1-800-221-9255, or visit [www.wallsystems.basf.com](http://www.wallsystems.basf.com).

## Radius Track's Hand Bendable Hat Channel



Ready-Hat®, the newest addition to Radius Track Corporation's Ready Products family of hand-bendable framing products, drew crowds at the INTEX EXPO. Attendees greeted the newcomer enthusiastically speculating where it would save them the most time and money.

Jeff Snay, President of Pyramid Acoustics said, "Ready-Hat® could be used as cross framing to reduce or eliminate drywall butt joints saving significant labor costs and delivering a better finished quality." When asked how much time Radius Track Corporation's hand-bendable hat channel would save Richard Huntley, President of WeKanDo Construction, Inc., he said the savings were twofold, "In time we could save 10-20% and in material it provides a cost effective alternative to GFRG."

Radius Track's innovative new Ready-Hat is ideal for furring on curved walls, wrapping columns, or to create

coves, barrel vaults, groin vaults, soffits and serpentine ceilings. It has a low profile, is economical and easy to form by hand to the exact convex or concave shape you need on the job-site.

Ready-Hat is available in 7/8" x 1-1/4" 20 gauge material with G60 galvanization in 10'-0" lengths and can be purchased through your local distributor. Ask your favorite distributor for the newest member of the Ready Products® family now 4 profiles strong - Ready-Track®, Ready-Arch®, Ready-Angle® and Ready-Hat®. See for yourself why framing curved surfaces has never been simpler or easier!

Learn more at [www.radiustrack.com](http://www.radiustrack.com)

# PRODUCT NEWS

## New Milwaukee® Jobsite Organizer

Milwaukee Tool continues to grow its line of durable storage solutions with the introduction of the new Jobsite Organizer. The most versatile of its kind, the new unit was meticulously designed for increased productivity and



has up to 20% more capacity than the competition.

Designed with the needs of the professional tradesman in mind, the new organizer includes (8) small and (2) large removable bins that can be mounted on common jobsite materials by utilizing the integrated screw slots. A seal around the perimeter of each bin prevents small items from migrating from one bin to the other, and the convenient 4"x4" size of the small bins allows them to be easily swapped out with a common electrical box.

To allow users the option of carrying multiple organizers at once, the Milwaukee Jobsite Organizer contains innovative side clips, that not only allow the units to be attached together, but provide full access to each when they are stacked on top of one another. For added durability, the new unit features a reinforced rib for strength and an integrated weather seal gasket to prevent water intrusion.

Go to [www.milwaukeetool.com](http://www.milwaukeetool.com)

## Graco Launches New Small and Midsize Electric Airless Sprayers

Graco Inc. has announced the launch of new small and midsize electric airless sprayers that revolutionize the professional spray equipment industry! Designed to deliver unmatched



productivity, these new sprayers are loaded with features that make work faster and easier.

"Graco is completely changing the game in the small and midsize electric sprayers market with the new ProConnect™ Pump Removal System," says Jeff Jackson, Global Product Marketing Manager for Graco's Contractor Equipment Division.



"When combined with new complete replacement pumps that will be available at any authorized Graco distributor, no other brand gets contractors back to work this fast so that they continue to make money."

The ProConnect Pump Removal System makes swapping a pump lower on the job site fast and easy. In three simple steps and without the use of any special tools, the end user can remove and replace the pump with a spare, available from any Graco distributor.

No more time wasted driving to a repair center or waiting for the pump to be repaired. No more money lost to labor charges on pump repairs. No more wasted time on the job site, and no more delayed project completion dates. With a spare pump at the ready, contractors will have significantly fewer down days.

Hand in hand with the ProConnect system and its replacement pump lower is Graco's Endurance™ Now Program. With this program, when customers purchase a replacement pump lower at any Graco distributor at the time they purchase a sprayer, they will receive a mail-in coupon for a \$25 rebate and a free pump repair kit.

New models include the 390™ PC, Ultra® 395 PC, Ultra Max II 490 PC Pro, Ultra Max II 495 PC Pro, and Ultra Max 595 PC Pro.

For additional information on Graco's new small and midsize electric airless sprayers as well as other Graco spray equipment and accessories, visit [www.graco.com/contractor](http://www.graco.com/contractor)

## Plexxis Construction Management Software Now Includes Interconnected Material Management

Plexxis has raised the bar in the wall and ceiling industry again through material management tools that are interconnected with the Drywall ERP estimating, construction management,



accounting, and mobile app solution. The enhanced material management provides purchasers, project managers, foreman, warehouse managers, administration staff, and owners

*continued on following page*



# PRODUCT NEWS

individual tools that enable them to manage and track materials throughout the lifecycle of commercial, residential and high rise jobs.

Jeni Mitchell, Sr. Consultant and Director of Implementations says, “The amazing thing about our material management is that not only tracks materials as they move around between locations and jobs, but it provides real time visibility to every department simultaneously so key people can make immediate decisions, with accurate information, without having to contact other people or verify data.”

Chad Pearson, Director of Business Development adds, “Everything we do is focused on making contractors perform their best and our material management is simply another game changer. All materials and their relevant codes, pictures, safety data, dimensions, properties, locations, inventory levels, pricing, job special pricing etc. is available to all key people in real time. We are delivering the visibility contractors have wanted for decades.”

Plexxis specializes in construction management and accounting software with full estimating and mobile app integration, made specifically for wall and ceiling contractors. Wall and ceiling

contractors seeking the highest levels of efficiency and performance are invited to view a demonstration of the Drywall ERP to learn what is now possible in the trade.

For more information visit [plexxisconstructionestimatingsoftware.com](http://plexxisconstructionestimatingsoftware.com).

## Hyde Tools Introduces X2 Dual-Blade Carbide Scraper

Hyde Tools, whose putty knives and scrapers are iconic to paint professionals, has introduced a patented new paint scraper that features 2 tungsten carbide scraping edges in one tool.

The HYDE® x2 Dual-Blade Scraper was designed to give users a single, multi-functional tool that avoids the need to search out and carry secondary scrapers or other tools. This heavy-duty scraper has a reversible head that lets you switch quickly and easily from a 2-1/2-inch blade to a triangular 7/8-inch blade when scraping channels or other areas where the wider blade won't fit.

The x2 Dual-Blade Scraper features tungsten carbide blades, which last 10 times as long as carbon steel blades. It also has a knob that's used as a handhold

**HYDE** for exerting pressure with two-handed scraping. A Hammer Head® end on the knob allows you to reset popped nails as you go – once again, avoiding the need for other tools. The knob is removable for tight-access spaces.

“We visited worksites to talk to painters during the design of this tool,” noted Corey Talbot, Vice President of Marketing and Public Relations. “What we heard from professionals was annoyance at having to carry multiple tools while scraping, or having to climb up and down a ladder for a second scraper. Fairly simple improvements make a big difference to users.”

In addition to these primary benefits, the HYDE® x2 Dual-Blade Scraper has a lightweight, angled handle that keeps your knuckles safely away from the scraping surface. It is Acme-threaded on the end and can be attached to poles for added reach.

Contact your Hyde Tools sales representative, email [custrelations@hydertools.com](mailto:custrelations@hydertools.com) or call (800) 872-4933.

## Bosch Lightweight SGH182 18V EC Brushless Screwgun Drives Up to 3400 Screws on a Single 4.0 Ah Battery Charge

Bosch cut the cord for commercial drywallers with the new Bosch SGH182 18V EC Brushless Screwgun that delivers the performance of a corded model without the limitations of a cord.

“Mobility is essential for professional drywallers – especially when they're working on commercial jobsites or lifts. In those situations, traditional corded screwgun power cords are constantly rolled over

and destroyed,” said Jim Stevens, product manager, Robert Bosch Tool Corporation. “The SGH182 offers pros complete and much-needed freedom of movement, which will result in a more efficient and productive job.”

Exceptional cordless tool runtime is gold to every tradesman, but none more than the drywallers. Combining the state-of-the-art, high-efficiency Bosch EC brushless motor with the BAT620 4.0 Ah 18V lithium-ion battery, the SGH182 drives up to 3400 screws on a single charge, according to internal Bosch lab tests – more than twice the number of competitors. The tool promises to drive even more screws per charge with the

new BAT621 5.0Ah 18V battery, which is sold separately.

“The SGH182 is compatible with all Bosch 18V lithium-ion batteries as part of the brand's Flexible Power System, which allows pros to utilize their existing batteries and complementary tools, such as impact drivers. We've added performance without adding weight or size, so drywallers can work for many hours with minimal fatigue, even overhead,” said Stevens. To learn more about the SGH182 Cordless Screwgun or to find a local dealer, visit [www.boschtools.com](http://www.boschtools.com) or call 877-BOSCH-99. Check out [www.bethepro.com](http://www.bethepro.com). •

## OSHA Unveils New “It’s the Law” Poster

To help ensure that workers have a voice in their workplaces and the protection they deserve, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration has unveiled a new version of its “Job Safety and Health - It's The Law!” poster. The poster informs workers of their rights, and employers of their responsibilities.

The newly designed poster informs workers of their right to request an OSHA inspection of their workplaces, receive information and training on job hazards, report a work-related injury or illness, and raise safety and health concerns with their employer or OSHA without being retaliated against.


The poster informs employers of their legal obligation to provide a safe



workplace. In addition, it has been updated to include the new reporting obligations for employers, who must now report every fatality and every hospitalization, amputation and loss of an eye. It also informs employers of their responsibilities to train all workers in a language and vocabulary they can understand, comply with OSHA standards, and post citations at or near the place of an alleged violation.

OSHA's “It's the Law” poster is free and can be downloaded. Employers must display the poster in a conspicuous place where workers can see it. Previous versions of the poster do not need to be replaced.


For more information, visit [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov). •



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