

LBM JOURNAL EDITORS' CHOICE

2008

50 HOT PRODUCTS

INTERNATIONAL BUILDERS' SHOW

Were there an official launchpad for new building products, it would most likely be the International Builders Show. Each year, IBS draws tens of thousands of building industry pros from around the globe for workshops, seminars, and more than one million square feet of exhibit space. For builders as well as a healthy showing of LBM dealers, a primary goal of this annual event is to explore the exhibit floor in search of the "next big thing."

Despite the current housing downturn—or perhaps because of it?—innovations were in abundance at the 2008 IBS, held Feb. 13-16 in Orlando. While the levels of innovation ranged from incremental improvement to the creation of entire product categories, one thing was clear: your builder, remodeler and homeowner

customers will have access to better products than ever before.

This year, as we do every year, LBM Journal's editors combed the aisles, met with hundreds of manufacturers, and brought back volumes of new product information to sift through for our "50 Hot Products from IBS" feature. Fifty of the best are featured in the following pages. (Note: The products are listed in no particular order; the numbers don't indicate a ranking. In our view, all are worthy of a closer look.) Incidentally, the title isn't 100% accurate, as we actually feature 51 products this year. The additional one is Dow's new Styrofoam SIS Plus, which is shown on page 12.

—The Editors

16 EZ Stair Stair Technology

The EZ Stair System features patented, adjustable parallel brackets that allow carpenters and tradesmen to build stairs of superior strength and structural integrity up to four times faster than conventional methods.

The company says its adjustable two-stringer stair building system is of particular value in the "modular/factory built" construction environment, due to substantially lower cost, and says 80% of the final trim work is eliminated with its new tongue and groove application. This interior stair system also allows custom home builders to construct and fully install classic knee-wall stairs in three hours or less. A major product development is the use of its brackets for "rail post support code

requirements," with the addition of the rail post support application for risers and treads in stair building for decks. Recent testing conducted by Testing Engineers Inc. (San Leandro, Calif.) showed that EZ Stairs brackets exceed IBC lateral load specified code requirements with minimal deflection. The IBC lateral load rail support requirements are 200 lbs. per 36-in. (residential), 42-in. (commercial), and 500 lbs. (ultimate).

Traditional stair construction usually requires multiple cut 2x12's be aligned and positioned at proper intervals serving as vertical support for various designated spans with or without risers. For this application (without risers), EZ Stairs brackets can be used along

with 2x6 cross blocking and positioned where rail post support is needed.

The system only requires two outside stringers for exterior spans up to 7-ft. wide. www.ez-stairs.com; 866.693.9570

