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Saturday, May 24, 2008

Glenn Haege: The handyman

Brush up on the latest home paint products



The National Hardware Show in Las Vegas from May 6-8 had better products than attendance. Many hardware store owners and buyers stayed home because of the poor economy.

But The Handyman crew was there, and this week, I'll tell you about paint-oriented products and wrap up the rest of the show next week.

For starters, my executive producer, Rob David, found a product that I have been seeking for years.

- A good moisture meter is something that belongs in every painter's toolbox. One of the major reasons for paint or stain failure (especially on decks) is wet wood. A deck, wall or floor can look and feel dry, but the moisture content may still be too high for the paint or stain to hold. Wood, including decks, should never be stained or painted if the moisture content is above 14 percent. Hardwood flooring should be below 6 percent.

Most moisture meters cost between \$150 and \$1,250. General Tools & Instruments, (800) 697-8665, www.generaltools.com, introduced two new, economically priced moisture meters. The simple meter has a LED display that shows from 8 to 22 percent moisture readings and costs \$32.95. The Digital Moisture Meter costs \$54.95. Both are available on the General Tools' Web site and will be sold in many hardware stores soon. (Hint: Either one would be a great Father's Day present.)

- Now that you know that your surface is dry enough to paint, this is a great time to tell you

about Aura, Benjamin Moore's new exterior paint that was introduced at the show. Benjamin Moore's Aura Interior paints were introduced last year. Aura Exterior is being introduced just in time for the spring/summer painting season.


- Color fading, especially of dark colors, is one of the biggest problems with exterior paint. According to Jeffrey Spillane, Benjamin Moore's senior marketing manager, Aura Exterior paint is a 100 percent acrylic hybrid resin system that includes new ColorLock technology that bonds the color to the paint film, making even dark colors highly fade-resistant. Aura comes in 140 matching colors, so you can't get a bad color combination. Aura Exterior is just being shipped and is available in our market at Teknicolors in Birmingham, Shelby Paint & Decorating in Shelby Township and Brighton Paint Co. in Brighton.
- Performance Coatings, (800) 736-6346, www.penofin.com, introduced a new line of Penofin Concrete and Masonry Stains for concrete, fiber cement and stonework. They also are adding Penofin Pro-Tech Deck Stripper, Cleaner and Brightener. The new concrete and deck products are currently being shipped to dealers.
- At least half the people at the hardware show were walking around with light green Frog Tape bags. Frog Tape is a unique crepe masking tape with Paintblock technology. When latex paint comes into contact with the edges of Frog Tape, (877) 376-4827, www.frogtape.com, the new technology creates a micro barrier that keeps paint from bleeding under the tape. If you are a picky painter, you will swear by this new tape. It comes in 1-, 1.5- and 2-inch wide rolls. You'll find it at Teknicolors and many Ace, Pro Hardware and True Value hardware stores.
- Anyone who has ever used a foam-topped bottle of liquid shoe polish is going to want to kick himself for not making this obvious idea their own. Ze-Vo Products Group, (508) 879-3151, www.zevoproductsgroup.com, makes 4-ounce, sponge-top bottles of End Cuts, Deck Cuts and Wow Easy Spot Primer, which are low-VOC. (Many conventional paints emit high levels of VOCs, or volatile organic compounds, which may have short or longtime adverse health effects.) End Cuts is a low-VOC, latex-based white primer for sealing lumber edges. Deck Cuts is a low-VOC, oil-based sealer for deck-wood edges. Wow is a low-VOC, latex-based primer for spot priming repairs. Not sealing the surface of a pre-finished board permits moisture to enter and often voids the warranty. All you do with any of these products is dab it on, and the edge or surface is sealed. Each 4-ounce bottle is good for about 300 board ends. The price is \$9.99 a bottle. It is not in Michigan yet, but you can call the company and buy direct.
- Brush Flush, (877) 501-4200, www.brushflush.com, is a nontoxic remover of oil, latex, varnish and shellac from paint brushes to restore hardened bristles to their original condition. It is biodegradable, nonflammable, contains no harsh chemicals and is odor-free. Brush Flush is not fast-acting, but the results look spectacular. It comes in 8-, 32- and 128-ounce bottles. The price ranges from \$7.95 for the 8-ounce to \$30.95 for the gallon-size containers.

If you have a question, call the "Handyman Show" with Glenn Haege at (866) ASK GLENN from noon-2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. The show can be heard locally on WJR-AM (760) and more than 160 radio stations nationwide. To suggest a question for Haege's

Wednesday "Ask Glenn" column, write: Ask Glenn, Master Handyman Press, P.O. Box 1498, Royal Oak, MI 48068-1498, or e-mail askglenn@masterhandyman.com.

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