

Contractor

Service & Industry

Bulletin

April / May 2011



6459 State Highway 23, Oneonta, NY 13820-6550
607-432-8391, Fax 607-433-6284



Otsego Ready Mix, Inc.
2 Wells Avenue
Oneonta, NY 13820
607-432-3400

Builders Lunch Program



Builders Lunch & Information Programs—Thursdays 11 am-2 pm

Lunches will be held at
Port Crane, NY on the 3rd Thursday and
Oneonta, NY on the 2nd and 4th Thursday each month.
Please note the location for each scheduled lunch.

May 19
Port Crane, NY

Techo-Bloc

May 26
Oneonta, NY

**Techo-Bloc &
Wolf Distributing with Decking Products**

June 9
Oneonta, NY

BWI Distributing with Masonite Entry Doors

RAIN or SHINE!

Stop in for burgers, dogs, chips, soda...

Additional suppliers may be added to this list as our programs grow. Stop in for free lunch and new product demonstrations.



What a great day for our first 2011 Contractor BBQ



American Concrete Institute® 2010 Design & Installation Awards



Congratulations to **Lechase Construction**

Presented with a Gold Award for the Cincinnatus
Central School District Capital Improvement Project



Congratulations to **Casler Masonry, Inc.**

Presented with a Silver Award for the
Jennie F. Snapp Middle School Project



Email – Naturally Green

In another step toward 'going green' and in an effort to keep costs down for our customers, we are gathering email addresses.

Please take a moment to **contact us with your email** and get your contractor bulletin emailed to you.

Keep in mind that this and past copies of the Contractor Bulletin can be downloaded from our websites at www.oneontablock.com or www.pickettbuildingmaterials.com

Otsego Ready Mix



Crazing Concrete Surfaces

What is Crazing?

Crazing is the development of a network of fine random cracks on the surface of the concrete caused by shrinkage of the surface layer. They generally develop at an early age and are apparent by the end of the first week.

Why do Concrete Surfaces Craze?

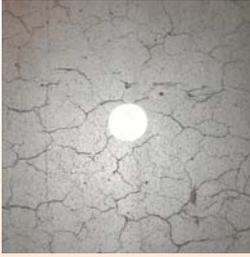
Concrete surface crazing usually occurs because one or more of the rules of 'good concrete practice' were not followed.

Frequent violations include:

1. Poor or inadequate curing.
2. Too wet a mix or excessive floating.
3. Finishing while there is bleedwater on the surface.
4. Sprinkling cement on the surface to dry up bleed water.

How to Prevent Crazing.

1. Start curing concrete as soon as possible. Keep the surface wet.
2. Use moderate slump air entrained concrete.
3. NEVER sprinkle or trowel dry cement into the surface.
4. Dampen the subgrade prior to concrete placement to prevent it absorbing too much water from the concrete.



30' Select Utility Pole

treated .60 lb/ cubic foot

(10-12" base x 6-7" top)

Select Yellow Pine

Now in Stock!

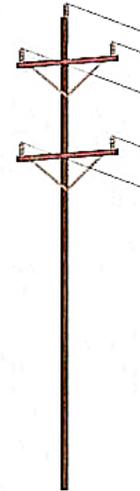
SKU # POLE30

\$199.00

fob Oneonta Yard

Delivery \$ 50.00

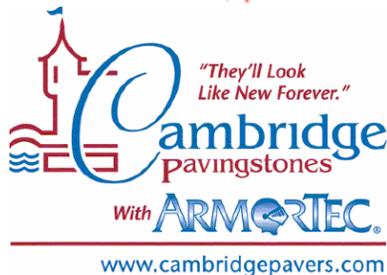
(roll off delivery)



Landscape Report

Products available for 2011

Call us for Pricing, Availability, Brochures



The lasting beauty of a Cambridge Pavingstone with ArmorTec — *after many years of outstanding performance* — is **field-proven over and over**. Because premium ArmorTec pure-pigmented color along with our advanced ArmorTec mix technology are concentrated where it counts — on the top 3/8 inch of "every" Cambridge Pavingstone — **you can be assured of all the value-added advantages** of choosing Cambridge without having to pay more for them.



in-lite®



Complete lighting concept in-lite offers you a complete lighting concept consisting of integrated lighting, above ground lighting, wall lighting and spots with top-quality fixtures for every application and every desired atmosphere.

The in-lite system, which works on low voltage, is simple, safe, and can be installed quickly. The fact that we pay so much attention to making our fixtures technically perfect is reflected in our excellent guarantee scheme.



Top Ten Construction Safety Tips

Each year, there are thousands of injuries and triple-digit numbers of fatal accidents related to machine and equipment operation. A lot of these accidents involve the operator, but over half involve people on the ground - spotters, co-workers, laborers, shovel hands, passers-by and sidewalk superintendents who get too close. And because of the forces and physics involved, these are usually not first-aid injuries; there is often an ambulance and sometimes a coroner called to the jobsite.

A review of OSHA and MSHA Fatality Alerts & Bulletins reveals that practically all of these accidents are preventable. Safety awareness and caution when performing the most routine operation are characteristics of a good operator.

1. Getting on and off equipment

Getting on and off the machine is the No. 1 cause of injury to equipment operators, forklift drivers and truck drivers, any one of whom will readily share their "learning episode." It happens a lot.

First, check your gloves and boots. Clean the mud off before climbing, and use "high grip" gloves for a secure hand hold. Next, use a three-point stance going and coming. Use large size hand and foot holds. Securely engage the entire hand and foot, avoiding a toe-hold or finger-hold grip. Use a step ladder for access when no hand or foot holds are provided. Avoid carrying objects while climbing. If the machine needs additional hand holds or steps installed, do it. Operators come in different sizes. Make it as easy and safe as possible to ascend/descend. Avoid the need to stretch by putting the grab rails where they're easy to securely reach.

When exiting the machine, correct practice is to lower yourself in a controlled manner - never jump!



One of the most common causes of operator injury is slips and falls getting on and off equipment. Be sure to use a three-point stance when climbing into or exiting the machine.

Check in next month for **#2. Loading/unloading equipment**

www.forconstructionpros.com

Defining Your Niche Can Help in Downtimes

By Greg DiBernardo



I specialize in custom decks. I switched to this niche last winter, when my backlog of general remodeling work dried up and I had no jobs on the horizon. The suburbs of New York City, where my business is located, were hit hard by the economic downturn; many GCs I knew were going out of business. The pages of the local paper had become so cluttered with notices for other, equally desperate contractors that my own ad was lost – not a recipe for success.

The only way I could get leads, I realized, was to focus my efforts on one specific type of work. That way, I'd be more than a face in the crowd—I'd be the expert in my field. Instead of dealing with the time-consuming oddball tasks that came with every general remodeling project, we'd be repeating—and perfecting—the same tasks again and again, increasing our efficiency and profitability. The trick was to find the niche that would work best for me and my market.

Choosing a Specialty

I recognized fairly quickly that specializing in custom decks was a good fit.

Since I already had a lot of experience building decks, I was confident that it wouldn't take long for me to become *the* deck builder for homeowners who really cared about quality and aesthetics.

My emphasis on quality led to another important decision: I'd restrict my business to synthetic and tropical hardwood decks.

Using the Internet

Once I'd chosen a specialty, generating deck leads became my mission in life. Advertising in the newspaper was a good start – but today my typical client is using the internet to find everything, contractors included.

Since I didn't want leads from outside my area, Bergen County, N.J. I secured a geographic-specific domain name with the word 'decks' in it – BergenDecks.com – and made sure the website itself contained the names of all the townships where I wanted to work, as well as the kinds of keywords where I wanted to work, as well as the kinds of keywords consumers would be likely to type into a search engine.

Another way I harnessed the internet's power was by making sure I was listed on every single locally available decking manufacturer's website as a qualified installer.

I also made a point from the beginning to frequent online forums geared toward contractors.

Selling Your Expertise

Some kinds of projects are harder to sell than others. I made sure to pick a niche I knew would excel at selling once I'd converted leads into appointments. As a specialty contractor, my goal is to be the local authority on my trade.

The more you do something, the better you get at it. One of the benefits of selling what is essentially the same project over and over is that I can constantly refine my sales techniques.

The Future

The decision to specialize was a calculated risk; to date, it's turned out well. I've been moving smoothly from project to project, with enough leads coming in to keep two to four future jobs under contract.

Greg DiBernardo owns *Fine Home Improvements of Waldwick LLC*, in Waldwick, N.J.

Market Report

Paul Barnhart



By now it's no news that our daily lives are carried out under the influence of a seemingly constant increase in energy cost, particularly transportation fuels. With any luck at all, gas and diesel prices might stabilize and even fall off slightly but will remain volatile for the foreseeable future. At any rate, transportation costs will play a constant factor in the movement of material prices.

Particularly related to the oil market, all asphalt roofing manufacturers are announcing increases to take effect from mid-May to early June. Vinyl siding companies are indicating an increase in early June of 10-12%. ADS plastic pipe is planning a 3-5% increase as well for June 6th. Earlier planned gypsum increases were put off until late May in hopes of strengthening of the market by then. What will actually happen remains to be seen.

As the warm weather seems to be finally arriving here in the Northeast, hopefully so will an increase in construction which will further influence these factors so stay on top of whatever information is available and be prepared to deal with slight fluctuations that generally will be increases, but occasionally might just be the right time for a 'deal'.



Oneonta Block Company

10 Reasons to Choose Concrete Masonry

1

DURABILITY

Masonry is solid and strong. Masonry's higher durability also means less repairs, plus the color and brilliance of masonry won't fade, or discolor from the weather-eliminating painting and maintenance.

2

DESIGN FLEXIBILITY

Concrete masonry units are manufactured and ready for delivery in a short period. And masonry walls can be easily adjusted at any time to suit job-site conditions, even after construction has started, and without production delays.

3

ENVIRONMENTALLY SAFE

Pre-finished masonry units such as splitface, colored, glazed, and units with integral water repellent, provide additional benefits of safety through environmental health because they emit no Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) into the air.

4

SAVINGS ON INITIAL AND LIFE-CYCLE COSTS

With concrete masonry, you can build and finish with one unit and one laying operation. The variety of finishes, textures and colors eliminates the need for additional wall coverings.

5

FIRE RESISTANCE

Masonry won't burn. Concrete masonry fire walls and fire separation walls may be designed to maintain structural integrity for over four hours of exposure. Concrete masonry is also used to protect the structural integrity of steel from fire.

6

STRUCTURAL INTEGRITY

Masonry can be used with all roofing systems, has excellent load bearing capacity, and resists the forces of heavy snows and wind shears. The cavities in concrete block easily accommodate vertical steel reinforcement.

7

LOW INSURANCE RATES

Masonry construction provides better protection from break-ins, fires and severe weather conditions. This helps to keep insurance rates lower than with other types of construction material.

8

BETTER INSULATED

The thermal mass of concrete masonry walls insulate against outside temperatures for constant temperatures inside, therefore reducing heating and cooling costs. There are an array of insulating options for high R values in cavity walls.

9

REDUCED SOUND TRANSMISSION

Unwanted noise is a major distraction in the home as well as the work environment. Because of its mass and rigidity, concrete masonry is especially effective in reducing the transmission of unwanted noise and sound.

10

BETTER RESALE VALUE

Masonry buildings look great and maintain their beauty longer than buildings made of other construction material and provide more building for the money.

Oneonta Block Company is a leader
in Masonry Manufacturing & Distribution

