People in practically every industry, profession and trade around the world are constantly seeking better methods of doing their jobs and are, on a daily basis, inventing new products to help them realize their goals. These new products are often more automated, ergonomically designed and operator-friendly than older products and can increase safety, reduce costs, enhance performance and decrease time and effort spent by the user.

As anyone who reads Construction Dimensions’ New Product department every month already knows, this pattern of creation has certainly not eluded the wall and ceiling industry. Often, contractors who have learned the trade the way it’s been done for years suddenly realize that better ways of doing certain things do exist—it just takes someone to come up with the concept and develop it into the actual product. But don’t worry if you’re not the inventive type. Just because you haven’t created any new products doesn’t mean you can’t reap their benefits. All you have to do is keep abreast of the new developments in the industry and seek the ones that will benefit you and your employees. One way to do that is to read this article featuring some of the wall and ceiling industry’s newest tools, equipment, accessories, materials, applicators and various other products designed to make your life easier. And, who knows, if you keep an open mind and continue to search for better ways of doing things, you may be the next person headed off to the patent office.

Drywall and Accessories

Doug Hill, president, Demand Products, Inc., Smyrna, Ga., has developed the DuraRasp, an alternative to paper-coated sanding sheets. The product is made of one of the hardest minerals known to man: Tungsten Carbide. Each Dura-

DuraRasp from Demand Products, Inc.

Rasp is built by applying 11 select grit chips of Tungsten Carbide to a metal plate. The plate is then run through an oven at high temperatures to heat bond the chips permanently. A fiber handle is then attached.

The rasp reduces costs and speeds performance because it elim-
inates the tasks of attaching sanding sheets to aluminum, plastic or wood board and changing the papers when they wear out. Traditional papers are self-adhesive, so removing them from the board can be tedious and time-consuming. It can take anywhere from 10 to 30 sheets or more to rasp a single home. Not in the two years since its creation has a single DuraRasp worn out.

Kevin McCarthy, sales manager for Clinch-On Products, Mountsview, Minn., says his company’s new line of vinyl trim for drywall is a venture from their other systems which are metal. The new “J” Bead, Tearaway “L” Bead, Archway Cornerbead, 1 1/4” Cornerbead, Archway Bull Nose and 90° Bull Nose (with a 3/4” radius) are comparable in quality to other vinyl trim Lines, but priced more competitively. Two reasons the company can offer the prod-

Vinyl Drywall Trim from Clinch-On Products

ucts at reasonable prices are that they manufacture the products themselves and that the new vinyl line can be toploaded with their clients’ normal metal purchases at no upcharge.

McCarthy says that one key advantage to the new system is that vinyl is easier to work with than metal, making this line especially good for the do-it-yourselfer. Vinyl can be cut with scis-
sors and applied with adhesives alone, unlike metal trim which requires screws and/or nails.

Two other products that accompany the new bullnose system are the three-way bullnose corner cap and the two-way bullnose corner cap.

Effective, dust-free sanding of walls and ceilings up to 10 feet is now possible with the Fibatape® Vacuum Drywall Pole Sander from Perma Glas-Mesh, Inc., a Bay Mills Company, Dover, Ohio. The easy-to-use sander requires only a sheet of open-mesh sanding screen and connection to a wet/dry shop vacuum cleaner to put walls and ceilings, as well as narrow and angled areas, within easy reach.

Key features of this product include a telescoping fiberglass pole for lightweight convenience and strength; a threaded locking collar for pole length adjustment from 3 to 6 feet; multi-channel rubber sole plate that allows dust to be drawn from the entire surface, rather than just at the edges; Flex-Lock™ universal joint action that lets the pole pivot in any direction and locks at comfortable angles for firm sanding control; suction control value for adjusting vacuum action.
according to preference or wet/dry vacuum model’s power; and an adapter hose that connects the pole sander to the shop vacuum hose.

Lasco Panel Products, Florence, Ky., introduces Sta-Clean, the newest product in their LascoBoard™ family of interior wall liner panels. The panels’ unique features make them ideal for food-processing and food-preparation areas. They are covered with a new USDA-approved surface coating that will not mold, mildew or rust. They are virtually impervious to stains, and their maintenance-free surface makes cleanup easy. Stains and graffiti wipe away easily. Sta-Clean has much more abrasion resistance than ordinary fiberglass reinforced panels; it will not dent or scratch. The panels come in many standard colors and are also available in custom color combinations.

FGE Backerboard, an new product from the Colorado Springs, Colo.-based company with the same name, makes installing backing to metal studs economical, quick and safe. The factory-approved, code-approved backing can be installed in 10 seconds, providing additional structural integrity and security over conventional site-fabricated backing.

The backerboard eliminates the onsite “carpenter shop,” table saw, bulky sheets of plywood, custom fabrication time and waste involved in traditional backing fabrication and installation. It also eliminates cutting on site, a safety provision that appeals to many contractors. The unique single or double metal clip hanger design allows for quick installation in new or retrofit construction applications.

Hunter Douglas Architectural Products, Duluth, Ga., announces its new Luxalon® Wide Panel Metal Ceiling Systems. This revolutionary ceiling system, which offers long panel lengths up to 19 feet, gives designers the ability to create a clean, sleek and sophisticated ceiling panel. The long spans are available with either a soft beveled edge or a reveal edge. A selection of more than 50 colors and finishes combined with four suspension systems—carrier, lay-on, clip-on and wide C-grip—gives them added versatility and makes them ideal for contemporary offices, airports, hospitals, shopping centers and other retail environments.

In addition to providing aesthetic benefits, Luxalon® systems are easy to install and are designed to improve acoustics and accommodate lighting requirements. They also can be used in certain exterior applications.
Gordon J. Pollock and Associates, Inc. of Rocky River, Ohio, introduces two new products: the INE Acoustical Absorber perforated metal wall and ceiling panels and Acousts-Baffle Noise Control Panel System. The INE panels can be used in industrial plants and other non-industrial settings like gymnasiums and auditoriums. The individual acoustical wall and ceiling panel units can be spaced as required for the purpose of reducing background noises and resounding echoes due to hard reflective surfaces, better known as room reverberation. They can be mounted vertically on walls or suspended from overhead bar joists or beams. All wall and ceiling absorber units are furnished complete with wall support brackets or ceiling hangers. The units are provided complete with heat-sealed fiberglass acoustical fill.

The Acousts-Baffle Noise Control Panel System uses perforated metal absorber panels in conjunction with suspended flexible baffles to acoustically treat areas like gymnasiums, auditoriums and cafeterias. The panels are made of various-density fiberglass or urethane foam hermetically shrink-sealed or sewn in glass fiber, polyethylene or sail cloth facing. Thicknesses of 1 inch, 2 inches, 3 inches and 4 inches are available.

Artex, a new style of ceiling finish that originated in the United Kingdom as a “handyman” product for the do-it-yourselfer, is now being introduced in the United States. The product, which has enjoyed success in Europe, Australia and South Africa, is available in three forms: Artex AX®, the original textured finish; Artex XL®, the washable, ready-mixed version; and Spraytex™, the spray textured finish for use on larger areas. The materials are specially designed, formulated, laboratory-tested and site-evaluated to offer quality, attractive appearance, practical advantages and economic value.

The finishes, which are available in warm- and cold-water mix, are accompanied by a full range of tools manufactured by the same company. They are applied over drywall and are available in four well-defined, specially crafted designs—
Adam, Grecian, Roman and Georgian—which can be used to create classical appeal in homes and commercial interiors. The product also can be used to conceal cracks at ceilings and wall angles and can be repainted for easy maintenance.

**Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems**

Plastic Components, Miami, Fl., introduces STARTER-TRAC™, a new line of products designed specifically for water-management systems. These products are designed with a 3-inch-wide nailing flange, which allows extra room to carry the moisture barrier and ULTRA-LATH™ into the STARTER-TRAC™, and provide a true, water-managed system. The return face flanges have openings and striations for positive base and finish bonding.

The STDE Series STARTER-TRAC™ has a sloped design that allows any unwanted moisture to travel away from the wall and escape through a series of weep holes at the front. The STDE also has a built-in drip edge that lets moisture run down the face and fall harmlessly to the ground.

The ST Series STARTER-TRAC™ is a casing bead designed to be used for terminations at doors and windows and other termination points. It is also available with weep holes.

The Spray Hawk 7E3 and 7E4 spray guns from Binks Manufacturing Co., Franklin Park, Ill., deliver accurate uniform finishes at desired thickness with minimum overspray and bounce-back. Using these lightweight spray guns, applicators can apply EIFS, stucco, aggregate and cement-filled coatings. Little training is necessary to produce finishes that easily exceed trowel work in both time and consistency.

The guns are made of drop-forged aluminum with an anodized surface coating. The pneumatic trigger is designed for operator comfort and balance. Quick-change air and fluid nozzles were specially designed to be removed while material is still under pressure. The nozzles will handle a wide range of highly filled coatings.

Spray Hawk spray guns comprise the heart of 10 fluid supply systems for aggregate-filled materials and are available in circulation and dead-end systems with air-driven pumps or pressure tanks in 5, 10-, and 15-gallon sizes.

Ben Mills, president of Hy-Flex, Cambridge City, Ind., introduces the Spray Buddy, so named because of its operator-friendly features. The Spray Buddy features a unique design in which the hopper is sloped and the drive shaft comes down from the top, eliminating altogether the need for bearings and seals. The pump also has variable speed control, giving the operator precise control over the output: using just his fingers on the speed control dial, the operator can adjust the output from zero to 2 gallons per minute. Cleaning the hopper is made easier because of the clean-out plug located at the bottom of the hopper.

Spray Buddy has a lever-lock feature that allows the operator to lift a lever and remove the rotor/stator in a matter of seconds — *with no tools*. Because of this feature, cleaning and
replacing the rotor/stator take less time than with pumps whose stator tubes are threaded. “Our customers are amazed at the ease with which the rotor/stator is removed. Nobody else in the industry has this friendly feature to remove their rotor/stator in less than 30 seconds,” Mills says. The “optimized” rotor/stator turns slower but produces more efficiently than previous models, increasing its lifespan two to four times. This feature makes Spray Buddy appropriate for doing fireproofing patch work as well.

Another unique feature of the Spray Buddy is its “delayed start-up cycle.” When the operator turns on the air, there is a two- to three-second delay before the pump starts, giving the operator time to spray out the material that gets pressurized in the line each time the
pump is turned off. In the industry, this phenomenon is known as “unloading the blast from the past.”

### Access Doors

Minneapolis-based Cesco Products’ Smoke/Fire-Rated Access Door has been certified by Warnock Hersey for smoke leakage based on the NFPA #105 standard and was tested in accordance with UL #1784 for Smoke-Control Door Assemblies. The SFB Smoke/Fire-Rated Access Door from Cesco Products carries a UL one-and-a-half-hour “B” label fire rating for two-hour wall systems and a three-hour Warnock Hersey rating for non-combustible ceiling systems (one-hour combustible).

The door comes in 16 standard sizes with custom sizes available. It contains 2 inches of fire-retardant insulation. A continuous hinge permits the door to open and close freely without binding or sagging. Mitered corners and a rolled flange provide an architecturally pleasing appearance as well as a tight finish between the frame and finished surface. The door is self-latching with automatic closure and can be opened from the inside with an exclusive interior latch release handle.