Sometimes our new product lists are long. This one is relatively short. Sometimes, for the sake of form, we try to give each product an equal space. This time we’ll make it short and concise if we can, but we’ll go longer if needed. Literally we’ll be reviewing products as long as a trailer and as short as a power tool. The rest will be a hodgepodge, including a cement board, a drywall suspension system, a welder, two different kinds of lasers and clothing. Well, let’s face it. This in an industry that requires a hodgepodge of products. So here’s the latest—the long and the short of it. We hope you find something that helps.

**Equipment Trailer.** Here’s a trailer whose entire bed lowers to the ground to facilitate loading, thus eliminating the need to tilt the trailer and risk operator injury when handling heavy equipment. It’s called the WORKFORCE Escalate and is made by bil-jax, inc., Archbold, Ohio.

With a load capacity up to 4,000 pounds, it is designed for safe and simple operations. The bed is
raised through the use of a hydraulic cylinder. One person can easily load equipment while the trailer remains attached to the towing vehicle.

“This trailer is great for scissor lifts,” says Sales Manager Bob Yoder. “These lifts are very heavy and awkward to tilt back and push up ramps, and people have gotten killed trying to load them.” The trailer is also ideal for lifting trenchers, personnel lifts and other heavy equipment. The trailer also has a low center of gravity, which makes for easy towing and features both tie-downs and a heavy-duty powder coat finish.

Cement Board. A new cement board featuring a double-wrapped edge called Edge Tech, has been introduced by the Charlotte, N.C.-based National Gypsum, the second largest manufacturer of gypsum wallboard in the United States.

This product, explains Craig Robertson, product manager, is a glass-mesh reinforced cement board suited for both interior and exterior uses, particularly in high moisture areas. It can be used as an underlayment for exterior soffit panels and other sheathing devices, as well as underlayment or backing surface for tub and shower surrounds, countertops, flooring and other applications.

This cement board, called PermaBase, is made of portland cement, aggregates and reinforcements that can remain unaffected by prolonged exposure to moisture. Durable and impact resistant, his half-inch board has been rated for one- and two-hour fire assemblies.

A special feature, points out Robertson, is that it’s double wrapped at the edges, which allows closer nail or...
screw applications to the edge with much less chance of crumbling.

**Welder.** To meet the demand created by expanded use of core welding wires in construction and other industries, Miller Electric Manufacturing Company, Appleton, Wis., has introduced its Mark VI model, which Ken Stanzell, product manager, describes as “the first multiple arc system in its class with both CC/CV welding capabilities.” To the Mark VI family of traditional Stick and DC-TIC arcs, this release adds flux cored and MIG spray transfer welding capabilities.

A special feature of this tool, explains Stanzel, is that it allows you to run six welding machines simultaneously, with only one connection to the power source. These six interchangeable, independently controlled welding modules are each rated at 250 amps at 60 percent duty cycle. Modules can be paralleled for a total output of 1,500 amps at 25 percent duty cycle. The main benefits of this unit, says Stanzel is that it “increases deposition and
efficiency rates and eliminates the need for additional welders.” It’s also lighter than its conventional counterparts and can fit on a one-ton truck.

**Drywall Ceiling Suspension System.** “A new method of installing drywall ceilings,” is the way Marty Duffy, marketing communications manager for the Chicago-based USG Corporation, describes its new drywall suspension system.

This system is pre-engineered, which means that all its components are designed to dramatically reduce time spent measuring, cutting and connecting flat and curved suspension system components. Main tees snap together, greatly reducing wire tying and screw attachment. Cross-tees snap into the main tee, eliminating all wire tying associated with black iron and hat channel installations.

The system can be designed and installed for virtually any type of drywall ceiling, from flat to curved to negative “space” islands. By using the special design template, practically any ceiling can be created—from elegant curves to sweeping vaults and valleys, to boxed and curved and even serpentine soffits. There are more than 30 fire-rated designs for flat ceilings. Twenty-two standard interlocking curves make drywall vaults and valleys easy to assemble. Duffy maintains that the system reduced installation costs on flat ceilings by up to 50 percent.

**Tools.** The Blue Rage series of cordless drill drivers, introduced by Bosch Power Tools, Chicago, promises to make specialty drilling tasks much easier, says Marketing Communications Manager Sil Argentin.

“These tools are extremely light and compact for the nature of their torque ratings,” Argentin says. The 18-volt T-hand drill driver has a speed range of 0-500/0-1,650 rotations per minute and a powerful 425 inch-pounds of torque. There are also two 14.4-volt models.

The offerings include both the T-handle, which allows the user to get further into a narrow space, as well as the more traditional pistol grip. Other features include a five-planetary metal gear train for durability, a half-inch single-sleeve chuck with a metal nose piece for fast and easy one-hand accessory changes and a compact and balanced ergonomic design with soft-grip handle. The new nickel metal hydride battery technology is both light and environmentally friendly.

**Laser.** “Whereas some lasers have a wire-hung compensator, ours have electronic sensors and serve motors which results in automatic self-leveling,” says Pauline Back, marketing manager, Agatec Construction Lasers, Menomonee Falls, Wis.

“This A410 rotating laser, fully automatic in both horizontal
and vertical modes, is designed for interior applications, such as suspended ceiling layout; setting walls, partitions and raised floors and tiling.

This model offers a choice of four types of visible reference beams—360 degree rotating plane, single point, chalk line or square shot. There are no leveling screws as required in rough leveling. The unit can be set up quickly in the vertical mode without extra accessories and features automatic shut-off if the laser is disturbed. There is remote control capability. The laser can be ordered with alkaline batteries or a rechargeable battery.

**Laser.** Another laser that is automatic, in both the horizontal and vertical modes is offered by Hilti, Inc., Tulsa, Okla. Clay Hamann, product manager, says this model, the PR 15, is designed to replace the conventional chalk line, is fact and accurate, resulting in fewer hours of layout work. Other features include out-of-level shut-off, a pre-attached floor mounting assembly, LED leveling lights, three speeds and an override that allows you to perform both sloped and incline applications. Three D-cell batteries are used for its operation.

**Clothing.** Jim Lowstetter, director of marketing, Master Made, Cleburn, Tex., maintains that his DuPont Corura Plus nylon makes his clothing twice as long as cotton and will last 10 times longer in terms of abrasion or roughing.

The work clothes offered include coveralls, bib overalls, dungarees, coats, jackets, hooded jackets, vests and hoods, as well as gloves. Features include heavy-duty zippers and riveted stress points, with a mega-soft finish to add comfort. These light, durable work clothes feature a DWR facing and polyurethane back coating to make them both water repellent and windproof, yet also breathable.

**About the Author**
Michael J. Major of Anacortes, Wash., is a free-lance writer for the construction industry.