

# PRODUCTS

## Uplift-Resistant Porch Columns

Locking bases tie deck to roof



by Scott Gibson

In areas of the country where high winds are a fact of life, a deep porch will remain a welcome refuge from sun and rain only as long as there is a solid connection between porch columns and both deck and roof framing. With this in mind, Railing Dynamics has introduced a newly engineered column base that's designed to work with its line of PVC-wrapped columns to resist wind uplift and keep the porch roof where it belongs — overhead, not in a neighbor's yard.

The company says the system is able to withstand 3½ times the wind load that its previous design could. The Wind Uplift Base Kit consists of a pair of aluminum bases that are pinned to each end of the structural aluminum core of the column. At the bottom of the assem-

bly, a ¼-inch bolt slides through the base and two predrilled holes in the column. After cutting the column and PVC sleeve to length, the installer drills two holes in the top of the column, adds the PVC sleeve, and inserts a "hurricane piston lock" to connect the column and base.

The assembled column is then tipped into place, plumbed, and fastened through top and bottom base pieces to the deck and roof. All that remains is to add trim pieces at top and bottom. Unlike the company's standard column base kit, this one is installed after the roof is at its finished height. The roof does not have to be jacked up and then lowered to allow installation of the column and the base pieces.

If the deck is made from concrete or ACQ-treated lumber, the company recommends also using its preformed PVC gasket to isolate the aluminum base and prevent corrosion.

Kits are available in three versions: a 4x4 column rated for 2,500 lb., a 5x5 rated for 5,000 lb., and a 5x5 rated for 8,500 lb. All are 108 inches long. PVC sleeves come in three colors — white, sand, and earth. Expect to pay between \$180 and \$250 per column and base kit, depending on which version you choose and where you buy it. — *Scott Gibson is a writer in East Waterboro, Maine, who specializes in construction topics.*

■ **Railing Dynamics**, 877/420-7245, [www.rdi-rail.com](http://www.rdi-rail.com)

## Hardwood Deck Stain

Water-based sealant protects composites, too



Wood used outside generally looks better when it's protected by a preservative, but not all woods readily absorb stains and sealers. SaverSystems says it had that problem in mind when it developed Defy Deck Stain

for Hardwoods, a water-based coating designed to penetrate oil-rich woods such as mahogany, cedar, redwood, and ipe. It can also be used on deck composites after they have weathered for a minimum of 12 months.

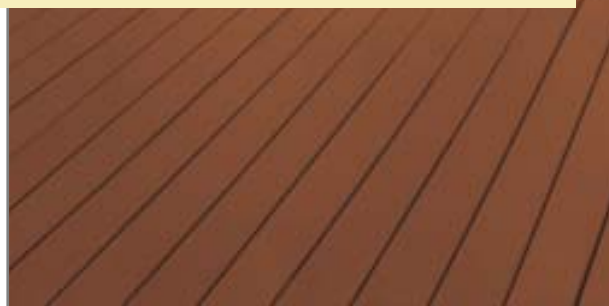
Deck Stain can be applied with high-quality nylon or polyester brushes, pad applicators, or an airless sprayer set at low pressure. It covers between 100 and 150 square feet per gallon. Two wet-on-wet coats are required. Cleanup is with soap and water, and the company says VOC (volatile organic compound) content is less than 250 grams per liter, which allows it to meet the Green Performance Standard of the Master Painters Institute ([www.specifygreen.com](http://www.specifygreen.com)).

Deck Stain comes in three colors: pine, cedar, and light walnut. It's available in 1-gallon (\$38) and 5-gallon (\$190) containers. — S.G.

■ **SaverSystems**, 800/860-6327, [www.saversystems.com](http://www.saversystems.com)

### Composite Decking

CertainTeed's Boardwalk gets a new formulation



If you've made the switch to synthetic decking, you'll find there are dozens of brands and types to choose from — wood and plastic composites, vinyl, high-density polyethylene, and polystyrene among them. Manufacturers look for any advantage in this increasingly crowded field as they try to make synthetics look like the real wood they replace. CertainTeed's newest entry is its Boardwalk Signature HFS line of decking, which is available in three colors: chestnut, cedar, and redwood.

The decking is made from a blend of polyvinyl chlo-

ride (PVC) and recycled natural fibers, just like other Boardwalk products. And like other wood-plastic composites, says the maker, this one won't rot, splinter, or crack. Unlike the others, however, Signature HFS is capped with a resin formulation of PVC and acrylic-styrene-acrylonitrile, which the company says gives it a richer color while providing high scratch, stain, and fade resistance. CertainTeed offers a 25-year transferable warranty with a provision that covers labor as well as product should a manufacturing defect become evident within two years of installation.

Signature's hidden-fastener system (from which the decking gets its "HFS" moniker) consists of clips that are inserted into a groove running the full length of each board and fastened to the top of each joist with a single screw. Gapping between boards is built in.

The new line of 5/4-by-6-inch decking comes in 12-foot, 16-foot, and 20-foot lengths. Contractors can expect to pay between \$2.85 and \$2.97 per lineal foot, depending on where it's purchased. — S.G.

■ **CertainTeed**, 800/233-8990,  
[www.certainteed.com](http://www.certainteed.com)

### Built-in Mold Protection

Composite railing with Microban



Wood-plastic decking composites combine wood fiber with a plastic polymer to enhance long-term performance and reduce maintenance. But because these materials contain at least some organic material they are not immune from mold — just like solid wood. Correct

Building Products' answer is an infusion of Microban, an antimicrobial agent that's already used in a variety of building products, including countertops, bathroom fixtures, grouts, sealants, and paints.

CorrectDeck RapidRailCX is designed to keep mold and mildew — and the stains that go with it — at bay. The antimicrobial won't wash off or wear away with use, according to the maker, because it's incorporated during manufacture rather than applied to the surface.

The new railing line is intended to have the appearance of painted wood, not plastic, with the weight and feel of lumber. Each 8-foot rail section can be put together in 10 minutes or less with 16 screws, the company says, and comes in five colors. The rail comes with a

transferable warranty and costs from \$24 to \$27 a lineal foot. Matching accessories, such as post caps and skirts, are available. — S.G.

■ **Correct Building Products**, 877/332-5877,  
[www.correctdeck.com](http://www.correctdeck.com) ❖