

# PRODUCTS

## Light Caps

Solar post caps made from wood

by Scott Gibson

The Nantucket Post Cap Co. has introduced what it says is the only wood post cap on the market that incorporates a solar cell.

The Bar Harbor Solar Light is made from kiln-dried, vertical grain western red cedar or redwood. A solar cell incorporated into the cap's flat top powers two nickel-cadmium batteries that operate four LED bulbs, one at each corner. The downward-pointing lights will burn for between eight and 10 hours during the summer and from four to six hours during the winter after the batteries have been charged by the solar cell.

The AA batteries are rated for 1,000 charging cycles, the equivalent of about three years, before they have to be replaced.



Caps are available in a number of sizes, in 1/4-inch increments, to fit posts from a standard 3 1/2-inch square up to a 6-inch square. The caps come unfinished and can be stained or painted.

Depending on their size, caps sell for about \$50 to \$65 each. The same style can be purchased without the solar cell.

The company is a Vermont-based manufacturer and wholesaler of furniture and accessories made from cedar and redwood. Products include finials, arbors, benches, planter boxes, gates, and pergolas in addition to its line of post caps. Wood species other than cedar and redwood also are available.

*Scott Gibson is a writer in East Waterboro, Maine.*

■ **Nantucket Post Cap**, 888/758-7678, nantucketpostcap.com.

## PVC Beadboard Panels

Fast installation and low maintenance

CertainTeed has added 4-foot-by-8-foot panels of beadboard to its existing line of Restoration Millwork, a move that should make the installation of traditional-look beadboard porch ceilings a lot faster.

The panels, made from cellular PVC, look and handle much like wood but are more resistant to moisture, warping, and insect damage. Given their weather resistance and need for little maintenance, they can be used in a number of outdoor applications — flower boxes, porch wainscoting, outdoor hot-tub skirts, and deck surrounds.

Panels come with a white finish that can also be painted. Edges have a shiplap pattern so adjacent panels butt together cleanly.

CertainTeed says the beadboard is resistant to yellow-



ing from sunlight, has a Class A flame-spread classification, and comes with a 25-year limited warranty.

Beadboard also is available in 5 1/2-inch-wide planks. The Restoration Millwork line includes trim boards in widths of up to 16 inches and thicknesses to 5/4 inches plus a variety of specialty profiles.

The beadboard panels cost \$140 to \$150 each. — S.G.

■ **CertainTeed**, 800/233-8990, certainteed.com.

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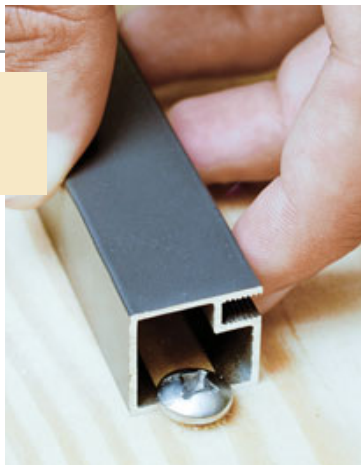
### Low-Profile Screen Track

Can be installed from inside the porch

**S**creen Tight now has a companion to its existing Fast Track screen system, the Mini Track.

The Mini system consists of low-profile  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-by- $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch extruded aluminum channels that are attached at the perimeter of the screen opening with small clips. An installer starts by laying out and attaching the clips, then cuts channel pieces to length and snaps them over the heads of the clips with a rubber mallet.

A spline forced into a groove in the channel captures the edges of the fiberglass screen; excess screen is then trimmed away.



Screen Tight says the Mini system is especially helpful for upper-story installations. Unlike many similar systems, this one has clips, channels, and screen that can be installed from the inside, saving builders the trouble of climbing up and down ladders. That should make installation safer as well as faster.

The Mini is similar to the Fast Track system except that it can't be used to make a railing system.

The powder-coated aluminum extrusions come in lengths of 8 feet, 10 feet, and 12 feet and in a white or a bronze finish. The Mini Track system costs about \$2 per square foot of opening. — S.G.

■ **Screen Tight**, 800/768-7325, screentight.com.

### Stone and Concrete Sealer

Keep stains out of porous surfaces

**C**oncrete and masonry pavers make durable patio surfaces, but their natural porosity makes them susceptible to staining and weathering. Vexcon Chemicals' Paver Renew, a water-based sealer, is designed to keep these problems at bay.

The finish forms a hard, clear, and non-glossy surface that is chemical and slip resistant and helps repel water, according to the company. It can be used on masonry and concrete inside and out and on both horizontal and vertical surfaces.

Paver Renew can be applied with a sprayer or with a roller. It has little odor and dries quickly to form a non-yellowing and UV-resistant finish that increases wear resistance and extends paver life, the company says. The cured finish also protects against alkali stains, deicing salts, oil, and common industrial chemicals.

Because the finish is vapor permeable, it doesn't turn white in the presence of moisture. It's typically applied in two coats, the first at between 100 and 200 square feet per gallon and the second at between 400 and 500 square feet per gallon.

The finish can be applied immediately after concrete



has been finished, as soon as the surface water sheen disappears. Cured concrete or pavers must be treated first with an etching and efflorescence remover.

Paver Renew is available in 1-gallon containers for between \$16.50 and \$29, and in 5-gallon containers for between \$82.50 and \$145. Prices are affected in part by regulations on volatile organic compounds, which vary around the country. — S.G.

■ **Vexcon Chemicals**, 215/332-9997, vexcon.com. ❖