



Spring 2021

# OFF THE WALL WC&C

An Industry Publication by the Wall Ceiling & Carpentry Industries of New York

## National Stand-Down

To Prevent Falls in Construction

# MAY 3-7, 2021

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*From the  
Executive Director  
John DeLollis*

## **Victory Is Just Ahead**

The future is just around the corner and it looks bright. Major efforts are being made to quickly vaccinate all Americans and Victory over COVID-19 and its variants is moving closer.

But even as we encourage friends, family and co-workers to take advantage of the now widespread availability of vaccine, we may still need to inspire our workers. Citing a recent study, online publication Construction Dive reports construction workers are among the least likely to get the COVID-19 vaccination. This means construction employers might have their work cut for them if they plan on either mandating or trying to persuade employees to get the shot.

It's in our interest to be proactive and united against COVID's invisible menace. We need to continue the protocols; especially masks, hand washing and spacing but we need to do more to influence workers. Think about it. Be creative. Get legal guidance. Motivate.

Congratulations to Lee Zaretsky and Ronsco for being awarded the BTEA - SAFEBUILD Award for Best Practices and Safety Culture for the creation and implementation of their COVID-19 Safety Program, procedures and protocols that improve overall company safety standards.

Along with the focus on safety brought about by fear of the COVID virus, we also need to continue to protect our jobsite workers against the dangers beyond COVID. Falls are still the most deadly occurrences construction workers face every day. Prevention needs to be vigorously promoted. To this end, the National Safety Stand-Down to Prevent Falls in Construction will be held May 3rd through 7th. I urge everyone to participate. There is information on page 31 of this issue of Off The Wall along with an internet address to get full details.

While the pandemic has necessitated social and technical changes, many aspects of our industry are being reshaped. Virtual communication has thrived and is sure to continue in some form. Working at home may have generated a new approach to the daily effort and to office space requirements. We've adjusted in many cases. Technology has helped us.

The "new norm" is here and together we've continued to be productive.

We're ready to move ahead. I'm happy to announce our association is in the process of finalizing plans for our 2022 convention. More information will be coming. Meanwhile stay safe and stay profitable.

- John

# **WC&C Is Now Accepting Applications For Our 2021 — 2022**

## **SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

**The Association of Wall Ceiling & Carpentry Industries of New York, Inc. remains committed to helping students access a high-quality college education. As such, the Association is pleased to again this year sponsor the WC&C Scholarship Program for deserving students meeting the following requirements:**

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- United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America
  - New York City District Council of Carpenters or
  - North Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters
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-AND-

- Has worked for a WC&C Contractor Member for a minimum of four weeks in the 2020 calendar year to be eligible.

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**Application Submission Deadline  
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## *From the President Michael Weber*

### **PPP Round 2**

There is another round of economic relief to businesses still battling the pandemic as they work to adapt and protect their employees. Businesses are able to apply for either a first or a second loan through May 31, 2021. To qualify for the second draw you must have used all your first PPP loan funds, have fewer than 300 employees, have suffered a drop of at least 25% gross income and been in business since on or before February 15, 2020. Furthermore, businesses will receive an employee retention tax credit. To be eligible for this tax credit, businesses must have suffered a partial or full business shutdown because of a COVID-19 shutdown order, or at least a 20% reduction in business compared to the same quarter in 2019. The impact of COVID-19 on our lives, our work and our activities has affected us all. Stopping a pandemic requires using all the tools we have available—wearing masks, staying at least 6 feet from people, avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces, washing your hands frequently, and getting vaccinated.

Vaccine Awareness Week in Construction, April 19-23, 2021, is a campaign to raise awareness of the safety, effectiveness, and benefits of COVID-19 vaccination among construction workers. The CDC recommends that all workers get vaccinated as soon as they are eligible to end the pandemic and help people return to their normal lives. Employers certainly have had to take on new safety challenges – from establishing new ways of working to tackling developing issues like employee mental health. Employers are doing so much to help their workers stay safe, but there is always more to learn and share in enhancing the safety, health and well-being of the workforce. Let's all do our part to help end the pandemic. We can all look forward to the warmer weather and spending time outdoors where we can more easily socially distance.

Please stay tuned for updated information regarding tentative events and happenings with WC&C at [wcc-ny.com](http://wcc-ny.com). Stay safe and enjoy the warmer days ahead.

–Michael Weber

# \$17B Freed Up For Major NYC Projects

A raft of city-led major construction projects will restart this year across New York City in a massive revitalization effort.

About 1,700 capital projects, from affordable housing to school expansions, will be unpause this year, Mayor Bill de Blasio said.

De Blasio announced the city will free up \$17 billion for capital projects ranging from school expansions to affordable housing to street safety.

The effort is part of de Blasio's "A Recovery For All of Us" initiative — his final-year program to equitably bring the city back from the coronavirus pandemic.

"We are comeback artists for sure and we're going to show it again," he said.

More than 1,700 city projects will receive a green light by the end of March, said Lorraine Grillo, the city's newly appointed "recovery czar."

Hiring and procurement on the projects will help construction workers, engineers, architects and others

affected by the pandemic get back to work, Grillo said.

"This is exactly what's needed to bring this city back and make this a recovery for all of us," she said.

The projects will focus on increasing school capacity and continuing efforts to build and preserve affordable housing, de Blasio said.

He said the city will "double down" on fighting against climate change's effects by focusing on coastal resiliency projects.

"Improving our city streets creating safety, Vision Zero — deepening our efforts there," he said. "And, of course, one of the places we've come to love even more during the pandemic — our parks — continue our investments in our parks. So that \$17 billion is going to make a huge impact in helping New York City come back strong." •

## 19,439 Hotel Rooms Under Construction in City

Building Design+Construction reported 19,439 hotel rooms under construction in New York City as of January 1, 2021, according to Lodging Econometrics. The Big Apple leads the nation in hotel construction activity, with 108 projects and 19,439 rooms in the works.

While COVID-19 has decimated the hotel market, New York City is one of four cities that continued to add to their hotel construction pipelines in the fourth quarter of 2020 with 17 new projects accounting for 2,700 rooms. —BD+C



# It's The Law

By Mark A. Rosen

Mark A. Rosen is legal counsel to the Association of Wall-Ceiling & Carpentry Industries of New York, Inc. He is a partner in the firm of McElroy, Deutsch, Mulvaney & Carpenter, LLP. Mark practices in the areas of construction and contract law, public contract law, arbitration, surety, and general commercial litigation. He can be reached at mrosen@mdmc-law.com.

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## A COVID-19 EMERGENCY STANDARD HAS BEEN PUT ON HOLD BY OSHA

Secretary of Labor, Marty Walsh, has put the release of a temporary emergency standard for COVID-19 by OSHA on hold. President Biden had set a deadline of March 15<sup>th</sup> for OSHA to issue such a standard if it determined that COVID-19 posed a grave danger to workers. It was expected that the standard would require employers to develop and implement infection control and prevention plans that follow guidance from the CDC and would also address other issues such as paying workers if they are forced to quarantine and ensuring that workers could return to their jobs after such an absence. Secretary Walsh reviewed the materials concerning the proposed standard and determined that they should be updated to reflect the latest scientific analysis of the state of the disease including information about vaccinations and variants. Some are arguing that given the rising numbers of workers that are vaccinated, such a standard is unnecessary.

## BIDEN ADMINISTRATION IS PREPARING A NEW JOINT EMPLOYER RULE

The U.S. Labor Department is developing a new

regulation on joint employment aimed at undoing the Trump administration's business-friendly approach to the issue of shared liability among multiple companies. The new regulation would address the issues of when more than one employer can be held jointly responsible for failing to pay minimum wages and overtime to workers.

The Rule issued by the Trump Administration was a more narrow, business friendly standard. It adopted a four-part test to assess whether one business is a joint employer of another company's workers. That standard considered all factors collectively and probed whether the potential joint employer hires or fires an employee; supervises or controls work schedules; sets pay rates; and maintains employment records. It also required an employer to exercise one of the four factors to qualify as a joint employer, rather than merely having the ability to do so.

That standard was vacated by a Federal District Court. That decision is on appeal.

The new regulation under consideration may return to the Obama DOL's broader view that corporations often are accountable for the labor standards at companies with whom they do certain business. In the construction arena, it could affect liability for the conduct of subcontractors, staffing firms, and other affiliated companies.

# The Trust for Governors Island and the School Construction Authority Announce Expansion of Urban Assembly New York Harbor School

**Trust for Governors Island**  
President & CEO Clare Newman and Nina Kubota, President and CEO of the New York City School Construction Authority, announced plans to expand the Urban Assembly New York Harbor School on Governors Island into Building 515, located adjacent to the school's existing facility within the Governors Island Historic District.

Located on Governors Island since 2010, the Urban Assembly New York Harbor School offers a unique career technical education curriculum built upon New York City's maritime experience, environmental stewardship, and careers on the water for over 500 high school students. The 60,000-square foot expansion into Building 515 will add 18 classrooms in addition to the existing school building, adding approximately 400 seats to the Harbor School. The planned expansion will also include a pool and a gymnasium, supporting the school's water-dependent maritime programs. Council Member Chin and Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, long-time advocates of the school and its unique curriculum, have committed capital funding to support the expansion and the construction of a new pool.

The expansion comes at a transformational moment as the Trust moves forward with plans to attract a leading center for climate solutions, which will expand partnership, learning and training opportunities for students on Governors Island.

"The Harbor School has been a key partner of Governors Island for over a decade, and I'm thrilled that it will be able to nearly double in size to support their

innovative curriculum focused on marine and environmental work," said Deputy Mayor Vicki Been. "This expansion dovetails perfectly with the City's ongoing work towards creating a climate hub on Governors Island — we look forward to Harbor School students' involvement in this critical field for years to come!"

"The Harbor School holds a special place in our school system, giving students unparalleled exposure to our local bodies of water and hands-on experience with environmental stewardship. With this expansion, even more New York City children will have the opportunity



to experience on-water educational programming and access state-of-the-art facilities for generations to



come,” said Schools Chancellor Meisha Porter.

“The Urban Assembly New York Harbor School exemplifies the unique promise of Governors Island – a place of historic significance at the center of New York Harbor, with unprecedented opportunity for learning and engagement with our waterfront,” said Clare Newman, President and CEO of the Trust for Governors Island. “This new facility will expand access to this unique curriculum to even more New York City high schoolers, and we thank Mayor de Blasio, Council Member Margaret Chin, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and our elected officials for their ongoing support of the school’s community. We look forward to expanding partnerships and educational pipelines with the Harbor School as Governors Island continues to grow as a hub for learning, research and public engagement in response to the climate crisis.”

“At the SCA, we are thrilled at the opportunity to add more seats to the Harbor School and expand access to this wonderfully unique maritime learning institution to more New York City students,” Nina Kubota, SCA President and CEO, said. “This project embodies our core mission at the SCA to design and

construct safe, attractive and environmentally sound public schools for children throughout the many communities of New York City.”

“This expansion is exciting news for future of the Harbor School,” said Manhattan Borough president Gale A. Brewer. “I’m pleased to support The Harbor School and to help provide more opportunities to students with the addition of 18 classrooms and 400 seats, as well as the construction of a new pool, which will be appropriate for certification for marine diving and lifeguard training.”

“When I first visited the Harbor School for its ground-breaking in 2010, I could see that this educational institution is truly special. I am so happy to see the long-awaited expansion realized after so many years of hard work and collaboration with the Trust for Governors Island and the School Construction Authority,” said City Council Member Margaret Chin. “The school’s development includes a gymnasium and inground pool, and will allow the Harbor School to welcome hundreds of new students who are currently on a wait-list. Two years ago I committed \$1.2 million of my own capital funding for this project and I

cannot wait to see its construction completed. Maritime students will now be able to scubadive in their own facilities; this place is truly the only school of its kind in New York City. I am so proud to have secured this next chapter in the Harbor School's environmental stewardship of Governors Island."

"I am pleased that the Harbor School will finally get their long-awaited pool and gymnasium," said Senator Brian Kavanagh, who represents Senate District 26, which includes Governors Island, Lower Manhattan, and parts of Brooklyn. "For nearly 20 years the Harbor School has offered unique educational opportunities to a diverse student body. Learning marine biology, sailing and other

watercraft skills, and participating in the Billion Oyster Project all prepare students for careers engaging with and being good stewards of our natural environment. The aquatic center will allow students to take full advantage of the school's maritime-themed academics. I am glad that the school will be expanding, giving more students the chance to experience this exceptional education on Governors Island. Thank you to the Trust, the School Construction Authority, Principal Jeff Chetirko, the Harbor School PTA, and the other dedicated advocates who helped make this possible."

"I am thrilled this long overdue expansion to the Harbor School is finally taking place," said As-

semblymember Yuh-Line Niou. "When the conversion of Building 515 is complete, the Harbor School will have 18 brand new classrooms and additional multi-use space. That's enough capacity for more than 400 new students, and makes the Harbor School an even more flexible space to meet the growing educational needs of our community. In its past life, Building 515 served New Yorkers as a hospital. It's reassuring to know 515 will continue bettering our lives and our community as a place of learning."

"Urban Assembly New York Harbor School is grateful to the Governors Island Trust, Councilmember Chin, Manhattan BP Brewer and the School Construction Authority for



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their support of the school's unique career and technical education programs in marine science and technology," said Jeffrey Chetirko, Principal of the Urban Assembly New York Harbor School. "By providing equitable space and resources to our New York City public school, it will enable high school students from all five boroughs to acquire the skills and experience to successfully navigate through post-secondary opportunities and swim to the top of the maritime industry candidate pool after graduation."

"The Urban Assembly New York Harbor School integrates academics and career readiness in a way that exemplifies the kind of innovation in public education that the Urban Assembly has built

its reputation on," says David Adams, CEO of the Urban Assembly. "We couldn't be more excited about this expansion. The fact that more students in New York City have the opportunity to learn hands-on about the City's marine systems and environmental technology at the Harbor School is truly monumental. Congratulations to Jeff Chetirko and the entire team at Harbor."

"We were thrilled and deeply grateful to hear that the long-promised pool, including a gym and additional classrooms, for the Harbor School has at last become a reality at site 515 on Governors Island," said Tammy Meltzer, Manhattan CB1 Chairperson and Tricia Joyce, Chair of Manhattan CB1's Youth and Education Committee.

"We understand the challenges sustained in prioritizing this important infrastructure. We want to thank all of those who made this happen, especially CM Margaret Chin, Gigi Li, Clare Newman, Sarah Krautheim, Lorraine Grillo and the NYC School Construction Authority, Dept. of Education, as well as MBP Gale Brewer, Senator Brian Kavanagh, AM Yuh-Line Niou and all of our other elected officials and the families from the Harbor School led by Nan Richardson, who wrote, called, tweeted, and attended all of our CB1 meetings. We look forward not only to opening day, but to all of the rich opportunities this pool will create for the students of this cherished and unique program at the Harbor School. The world will be watching."



## Castellano, Korenberg & Co., CPAs, P.C. has joined forces with MARCUM

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"Brooklyn Community Board 2 is pleased that the Trust is able to extend their support for the good work of the Harbor School," said Lenue H. Singletary, III, Brooklyn CB2 Chairperson. "Although the School is not geographically located within our boundaries, a large percentage of their students live in our District and benefit from the unique maritime and ecological studies that their curriculum affords."

"The PTA is thrilled and grateful that after parent advocacy for a decade, and help from many well-wishers, especially Margaret Chin and her chief of staff Gigi Li, the Trust for Governors Island President Clare Newman and VP Sarah Krautheim, the School Construction Authority and

Lorraine Grillo, the Department of Education, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, Senator Brian Kavanagh, Assemblywoman Yuh-Line Niou, Speaker Corey Johnson, CB1, especially Tricia Joyce, and all of our other elected officials," said Nan Richardson, President of the Urban Assembly New York Harbor School PTA. "The Harbor School will finally get the space and facilities needed to fulfill this unique school's mission. As our city faces many challenges with climate change, our students trained in marine and maritime science hope to help meet that future with imagination and now will have the skills and tools to do so. We look forward to the realization of this dream."

"The Harbor School expansion is

a huge step in Governors Island's growth as a year-round resource for our city," said Merritt Birnbaum, Executive Director of the Friends of Governors Island. "From its very first days, the school has breathed new life into the historic district and helped reinvent the entire Island as a place for learning and discovery. In addition to using their surroundings as a real-world classroom, Harbor School students are valuable contributors to our organization, with many serving as summer interns in our visitor services department where they share their passion for Governors Island with the public each summer. We are so excited to continue working with the growing student body and faculty for years to come." •

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# Construction Technology 2021:

# 5 Trends to Watch This Year

By Zach Mortice

*This article originally appeared on Autodesk's Redshift, a site dedicated to inspiring construction, manufacturing, engineering, and design leaders.*



*Image composite by Michelle Likens*

**As the pandemic marches on, pressure is increasing to create ways for people to experience and understand spaces virtually in order to keep safe distances. Sharing data more intuitively and intimately also top the “want” list for innovation.**

So for this list of five construction technology 2021 trends to watch, it is clear that builders are also looking for creative ways to keep people safe under current conditions, removing them from physical sites while accelerating their understanding of what goes on there.

## 1. Pocket LIDAR

LIDAR is the most precise, efficient way to verify that what has been built on a construction site matches the digital BIM (Building Information Modeling) model. Existing laser-scanning hardware is bulky and awkward, and most are uni-taskers. But that's changing, led by two giants of consumer technology: Apple and Google.

The Apple iPhone 12 Pro and the newest Apple iPad Pro come with LIDAR scanners, which use nanosecond-long laser pulses to measure the distance from objects. This data can be aggregated to create 3D maps of incredible depth and complexity.

Similarly, Google is working on a radar-based system that operates as an advanced motion detector. For consumer smartphones, LIDAR systems will primarily boost augmented-reality applications such as Apple's ARkit, integrating synthesized environments and characters onto existing ones. That can be a great help on construction sites, too, for transposing BIM



*The Apple iPhone 12 Pro has LIDAR technology built into the device. Courtesy of Apple.*

personnel flow across sites, LIDAR can document each stage with unparalleled precision in near real time. It can also be used to maintain and repair large infrastructure, especially across places that are too vast—such as power grids—for a pair of human eyes and a CCTV channel.

Indoors, LIDAR can detect small cracks or imperfections in walls that could become safety risks. Construction safety also benefits from more detailed, up-to-date circulation guidance and a reduced need for in-person inspections of dangerous places. Apple is currently investigating head-mounted LIDAR sensors, ideal for workers who need to go hands-free while using tools or driving heavy machinery.

## 2. Charging Up the Construction Site

As batteries get bigger, going electric on construction sites means cleaner, more sustainable operation. Heavy construction equipment is following the rechargeable trend. Excavators, cranes, drilling rigs, and heavy trucks are becoming just as carbon-neutral and efficient as their power source—which could be solar, wind, or geothermal.

Driven by plummeting battery costs, Gammons Construction has deployed shipping-container-size lithium-ion batteries, creating construction sites free of diesel fumes. Beyond the smaller carbon footprint, these units (which can be purpose-built or retrofits of diesel engines) are more dependable and require less maintenance. The decrease in noise and pollution also allows construction to go on longer in residential areas.

Many of these units still require power cords, but that could also become a thing of the past. San Francisco-based startup and Autodesk Technology Centers resident PHION Technologies has developed a

models onto the site, flying the finished building's circulation routes, or detecting use patterns before the drywall cures.

Bringing pocket-size LIDAR capabilities onto construction sites is an ideal way to manage the extreme dynamism of these places. As materials and personnel flow across sites, LIDAR can document each stage with unparalleled precision in near real time. It can also be used to maintain and repair large infrastructure, especially across places that are too vast—such as power grids—for a pair of human eyes and a CCTV channel.

prototype over-the-air wireless power and data system that can reach nearly a dozen feet to recharge devices, no power cords or charging pads required. The ultimate goal is scalable power across a 30-foot radius that also delivers position-tracking functionality for construction robots and aids wireless network connectivity.

## 3. Eyes on (or in) the Site From Anywhere

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a crash course in remote collaboration for everyone. But even before the pandemic struck, some companies had been researching how construction software and hardware can better facilitate collaboration over distance. Resolve is one example. It allows designers and builders to inspect BIM models at different scales, looming over them like a giant or at ground level, going floor-by-floor. Using the Oculus Quest wireless headset and operable with Autodesk BIM 360, Resolve translates complex models into immersive virtual-reality environments, makes speech-to-text annotations, and lets colorful avatars measure and sketch within virtual models.



*Resolve translates BIM models into immersive virtual-reality environments, where designers and builders can inspect projects in real time. Courtesy of Resolve.*

Autodesk Technology Centers resident ZEITdice, from Canada, takes a different approach to remote collaboration using high-definition, time-lapse cameras instead of digital models. By sorting through endless hours of footage of construction sites, ZEITdice uses machine learning to recognize patterns and anomalies, generating reports on efficiency and safety improvements and providing thermal and infrared imaging.

The hardware bringing this sort of data into the

field is hands-free and intuitive to operate. Vuzix's smart glasses contain a GPS sensor, 3-axis accelerometer, a speaker, a microphone, and a 4K video camera for seamless audio and visual communication. For those



*The DJI AGRAS T20 has the ability to spray up to 23 feet. Courtesy of DJI.*

wanting to get their hands involved, Microsoft's HoloLens 2 is responsive to touch and motion, allowing users to manipulate virtual images with a swipe or a wave.

#### 4. Hardhat Drones

The first generation of drones for construction sites were there to look, not to touch. Their photogrammetry applications saved time and money—and boosted jobsite efficiency and safety. The new generation of aerial drones are getting their landing struts dirty, programmed to take the most dangerous or difficult jobs out of human hands.

Emerging from the Georgia Institute of Technology, Autodesk Technology Centers resident Sky-mul is developing a drone system that can tie rebar intersections, one of most tedious and physically taxing jobs on a construction site. It uses machine learning to map rebar connections autonomously. Likewise, Terra Drone has been experimenting with using drones to drop seismic sensors across vast mountainous terrain.

And UAV giant DJI just released a new agricultural drone with powerful spraying capabilities that could be applicable to construction sites. The DJI AGRAS T20 has a sprayer payload tank that can carry up to 44 pounds with nozzles that project 23 feet. Its omnidirectional radar can track objects from all horizontal directions,

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*The DJI AGRAS T20 has the ability to spray up to 23 feet.  
Courtesy of DJI.*

and its software and hardware monitors crop health and generates variable treatment procedures. For orchards, it can generate routes simply by examining the shape of trees. This weighty payload capacity could also work for construction sites, as drones are called on to apply paint or adhesives, to water a green roof, or other uses.

## 5. Contact Tracing for Safety and Efficiency

The COVID-19 crisis has made it clear that contact

tracing across a construction site is critical for workers' health and safety. Construction sites are heavily trafficked, complex, and constantly changing—an ideal place for an airborne contagion to spread.

Several companies are focusing on how to track health and circulation data across sites to keep people safe while they build. The WakeCap system uses helmet-mounted units that communicate with a receiver, using signal strength as a proxy for distance, and thus location, on a site. These units can be powerful aids for site workflow and social distancing, tracking circulation choke points and mapping the most accessible locations for toolsheds and break rooms.

Whereas WakeCap has prized ease of use, the wearable-sensor company WorkerSense has opted for more complexity. It offers helmet-mounted sensors that detect temperature, humidity, light levels, and motion across nine axes. Its software platforms monitor crew locations, manpower composition data, cost codes, personal protective equipment usage, certification enforcement, incident logs, and environmental conditions. Nokia is developing automated thermal-detection systems accurate to within 0.3 degrees Celsius. •

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# New Trimble Alliance Working to Make Construction Robots Smarter, Safer and More Productive

*Companies are advancing LiDAR, camera and GNSS data to continuously update reliable site maps so autonomous machines will operate dependably in changing work environments*



Trimble and VayaVision have announced an alliance that will integrate VayaVision's raw data sensor fusion and perception software platform with Trimble's existing machine control technology to enable intelligent automation in complex work environments. The companies expect to provide a hardware and software portfolio that improves autonomous machine performance in the construction, agriculture and mining industries.

VayaVision, a LeddarTech company, offers a leading environmental perception solution that encompasses raw data fusion with up-sampling, AI and computer vision, and has inherent redundancy that is required for functional safety. Trimble Autonomy is currently developing solutions and services that enable the next generation of autonomous functionality to improve productivity and safety.

The alliance between the two companies is focused on advancing data fusion for multi-sensor systems such as LiDAR, cameras and GNSS. These sensors are used to produce reliable environmental mapping, which is critical for autonomous solutions. The result is

expected to enable improvements in the performance of autonomous machines operating in challenging work environments or when supporting safety-critical applications.

Both companies will collaborate to advance autonomous development and adoption with a customizable portfolio that can potentially benefit construction, agriculture and mining professionals in several ways by:

- Improving operational efficiency, decreasing labor costs and reducing project timelines
- Helping customers scale their automation efforts—from driver assistance features to fully autonomous solutions
- Offering a flexible, customer-centric approach to product engineering and implementation
- Reducing customer development costs and accelerating time to market with machine automation
- Augmenting or replacing human control to create a safer work environment through path optimization, obstacle avoidance and situational awareness
- Improving sustainability by optimizing vehicle functionality and utilization with automation to reduce idle time, fuel consumption and environmental impact

“Our business model is to collaborate with strategic partners to integrate our core technologies into their platform products which, in turn, can be used across multiple end applications. The alliance positions Trimble to deliver a highly capable path planning and autonomous system for the agriculture, construction and mining industries,” said Youval Nehmadi, director of Perception Engineering of LeddarTech, Israel. “Our LeddarVision perception software delivers advanced, flexible and robust 3D environmental solution for off-road and passenger car applications today.”

“Trimble has been connecting the physical and digital worlds with our best-in-class automation technologies for more than 20 years — whether it is in agriculture, construction or mining,” said Finlay Wood, business area director for Trimble’s Autonomous Solutions Division. “We see the demand for operator assistance, autonomous machines and workflow optimization accelerating dramatically and alliances such as this are a critical part of how we will bring added value to our customers in all levels of autonomy.”

The BIRD Foundation, a bi-national research and industrial development fund that promotes cooperation between U.S. and Israeli companies, is supporting the alliance.

## Exoskeletons Move From Science Fiction to Reality to Aid Worker Safety

*Exosuits and exoskeletons are helping to combat worker fatigue, strain and other risks that lead to musculoskeletal disorders.*

By Matt Marino



*Exosuits aid in lifting, bending and reaching.*

AS TECHNOLOGY HAS DRASTICALLY CHANGED WHAT MODERN WORKDAYS LOOK LIKE, MORE AND MORE COMPANIES HAVE OPENED TO THE USE OF EXOSKELETONS.

Some may still picture exoskeletons as something from a sci-fi movie – suits of armor bristling with weapons. The reality is, there is a new class of modern exoskeletons that are lightweight, practical and simple to use devices that stay out of the workers' way while aiding them in mission-critical industries, like building and construction. Today, exosuits and exoskeletons help

employers across the globe combat worker fatigue, strain and other risks that lead to musculoskeletal disorders.

### AN ADOPTABLE INVESTMENT IN PEOPLE

A driving force behind the growth of exosuits (which are “soft shell” exoskeletons) is that they’re now approachable and adoptable in nearly every medium- to large-sized operation.

Major corporations have been using this new class

# Product News

of unpowered exoskeletons to help create a safer workspace and combat the costs associated with over-exertion and repetitive motion injuries. That rise in interest has been a result of exosuit manufacturers' ability to create proven, physics-based suits in a simpler, more practical fashion.

Technology has advanced so it's possible to have modular, custom-fit exosuits designed for all workers regardless of gender, age and size without breaking the bank. Plus, there are manufacturers with strong customer support, training and implementation programs designed to help any organization make the most of their new technology adoption. With processes similar to orthopedic insole sizing or measuring for a custom-tailored garment, a company can have their team "sized up" and equipped with exo technology in weeks, often without a site visit from the supplier.

Exosuits are becoming a wise investment, especially considering the detrimental cost of the problem the technology is helping address. The CDC reported that back pain is the most prevalent work-related health problem, and OSHA estimates that employers pay nearly \$1 billion per week for direct workers' compensation. On the other hand, back-assist exosuits can provide a custom fit suit that can take 30% of the load off a worker's back for as low as \$1,200 per suit.

Exosuits don't mean we can abandon NIOSH's Hierarchy of Controls. Instead, they are a significant boost in the personal protective equipment (PPE) portion of that inverted pyramid. If all other steps can't adequately eliminate risk, exosuits provide workers a safer system in which the risk of injury can be reduced, all with a piece of equipment that can be put on and taken off inside of 30 seconds.

## THE TRUTH ABOUT EXO TECHNOLOGY

Because exosuits are still relatively new to the market, there's some common misconceptions around them — that they are bulky, limit range of motion or cause muscle atrophy. That might be true of an Iron Man-style exoskeleton, but in actuality, modern pas-

sive exos on the market are lightweight and practical.

When it comes to weakening the muscles, it's important to remember that modern exosuits are not turning workers into human forklifts. Exosuits, especially passive ones, actually aid in lifting, bending and reaching. Workers will still be lifting 25-lb. boxes or tools all day. However, exosuits might make it feel like they're lifting 15 lbs., which makes a significant difference over the course of a workday.

Muscle atrophy can actually occur when there is too little or too much muscle activation, meaning over-exertion can lead to muscle atrophy, as well. Exosuits can help workers stay in that healthier "sweet spot."

## HELPING ACTIVE WORKERS KEEP UP

Technology has forever changed the way work is done, but two things will remain true — there will always be demand for construction projects and there will always be active workers lifting, bending and reaching. While workers sweat to keep up with demand, it's important to not lose sight of the technological advancements that can help provide a safer and more ergonomic work environment for them.

Those images of exoskeletons allowing people to jump tall buildings or giving them superhuman strength are great for Netflix. However, the reality is there are exosuits on the market that are actively being used to help workers do their job safer, longer and more efficiently. And those benefits aren't just realized on the jobsite. Workers are able to head home after a shift feeling better, with more energy for whatever it is that keeps them going outside of work.

To put it simply, exoskeletons don't only help workers do their jobs better. The truth is it's never been easier to implement exosuits to help businesses succeed and help workers live better.

*Matt Marino is director of ergonomics and human factors at HeroWear. This article previously appeared in ForConstructionPros.com*

# Product News

## Milwaukee® Announces the MX FUEL™ CARRY-ON™ 3600W/1800W Power Supply

Milwaukee Tool powers more on demand with efficient, quiet, and portable power anywhere with the MX FUEL™ CARRY-ON™ 3600W/1800W Power Supply. Part of the new MX FUEL™ Equipment System<sup>\*</sup>, the power supply provides the best temporary power for the job. Supplying 3600 peak watts/1800 running watts of pure sine wave energy, the power supply powers everything from high demand 15A tools to sensitive electronics.

"Historically, generators have been a frustrating jobsite nuisance. Not only do they have to be operated outdoors due to excessive noise, but users must also worry about dangerous emissions, hazardous extension cords, gas prices, and engine repairs. Additionally, users who are reliant on shared power sources such as spider boxes are often met with the frustrations of tripped breakers, extension cords, and voltage drops" said Andrew Lentz, Director of Product Marketing for Milwaukee Tool. "The MX FUEL™ CARRY-ON™ Power Supply is not only safer than gas-powered generators, but it can also be used indoors, eliminates the need for gasoline and extension cords, and doesn't require engine maintenance, thus reducing downtime and allowing users to get jobs done faster!"

The compact size, zero emissions, and quiet operation of the power supply allow users to safely operate the unit in confined, indoor spaces and a roll cage provides durability for outdoor jobsite use. With a push button start, users can start it in seconds, get-



ting up and running faster than ever before by eliminating the repetitive motions of pull starts.

The MX FUEL™ Power Supply delivers enough power to run one 15 Amp tool and one lower wattage device simultaneously and can be powered by a single battery or two batteries for double the run-time.

As an added benefit, ONE-KEY™<sup>\*\*</sup> provides the ability to track the power supply with community tracking and alerts, complete inventory management, and industry leading smart-equipment technology to secure the user's investment.

Milwaukee Tool will remain unwavering in their commitment to delivering disruptive innovation by working alongside trade professionals to identify challenges and provide solutions that are unparalleled in enhancing jobsite safety and productivity. The future of the jobsite is cordless.

\*The MX FUEL™ Equipment System: This groundbreaking cordless system revolutionizes the light equipment market by delivering the performance, run-time, and durability demanded by the trades without the hazards associated with emissions, noise, vibration, and the frustrations of gas maintenance. Each of the solutions on the MX FUEL™ System go beyond the limitations of gasoline and power-cord units and operate off one completely compatible system all on the same battery. This is Equipment Redefined.

**MILWAUKEE TOOLS**  
[milwaukee.com](http://milwaukee.com)

# Product News

## M18 Fuel SAWZALL Reciprocating Saw Also From Milwaukee

Milwaukee's M18 FUEL SAWZALL Recip Saw 1 Battery Kit is the next generation of legendary performance and durability, designed for the toughest applications on the job site. The Milwaukee M18 FUEL SAWZALL is the fastest cutting reciprocating saw in its class and leverages a POWERSTATE Brushless Motor to provide you with 3,000 SPM and a 1-1/4" stroke length for faster material removal. REDLINK PLUS electronics ensure maximum performance under stress as well as protection from overloading, overheating, and over-discharging. The included M18 REDLITHIUM XC5.0 Battery Pack delivers you up to 2.5X runtime and provides more work per charge and more work over the life of the pack than competitive batteries. The M18 FUEL SAWZALL Recip Saw is designed to perform in the most demanding applications and is our most durable cordless reciprocating saw yet. A



wear-resistant blade change, anti-corrosion blade clamp, and metal reinforced battery rails provide longer component life and stand up to the toughest jobsite conditions. The M18 FUEL SAWZALL Recip Saw is lighter weight than the previous generation and features an adjustable shoe, integrated LED light, and a hanging hook for convenient storage on the job.

**MILWAUKEE TOOLS**  
[milwaukee.com](http://milwaukee.com)



### Bosch Self-Releasing 1/4 In. Collet Chuck

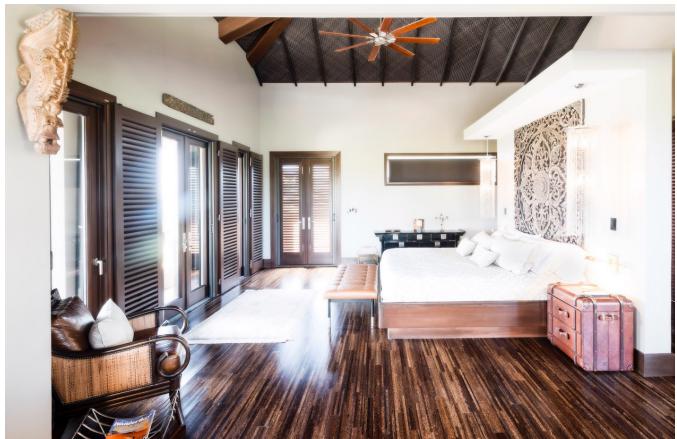
The Bosch PR114 Self-Releasing 1/4 In. Collet Chuck is a precision-machined one-piece collet-and-nut assembly that works with the Bosch GKF125CE and GKF12V-25 Palm Routers. The chuck is designed for enhanced robustness and longer life. It allows for quick, secure changing of router bits, and helps to prevent bits from getting stuck in the router. The PR114 works with 1/4 In. shank router bits.

Note: The PR114 is not compatible with the Bosch PR20EVS/PR10E Palm Routers.

**BOSCH TOOLS**  
[milwaukee.com](http://milwaukee.com)

# Product News

## Relaunched Decopalm Flooring in Wide Plank Format



*Following on the Heels of Six New Durapalm Flooring Products Released this Year, Deco Palm Flooring Emerges Again in a New Dimension, in Stock Spring 2021.*

Smith & Fong Co. announced the introduction and re-engineering of their popular Deco Palm flooring style in a wider, longer plank for 2021.

Comprising a thicker India black palm face veneer with a denser, strand-bamboo substrate, the new Deco Palm flooring will be sold in planks that measure 9/16" x 6" x 72". The new substrate provides greater hardness and dimensional stability.

"The Deco Palm look is one of the more visually dynamic styles among our floor offerings," Smith & Fong founder and CEO Dan Smith said. "The new Deco wide plank in 72" lengths will provide a versatile option for interiors that call for deep, rich, organic textures and patterns that seek to balance modern design with the tropical exotic."

**SMITH & FONG**  
[Plyboo.com](http://Plyboo.com)

## Skil Introduces New 10in. Jobsite Table Saw



The SKIL TS6307-00 10 IN. Jobsite Table Saw has a 25-1/2 IN. (64.77cm) Rip Capacity and is equipped with a 15-Amp motor, integrated foldable legs, rack & pinion fence rails, and a dust port elbow to keep your jobsite clean. The 15-Amp motor quickly rips

through hardwoods with ease, while the rack & pinion fence rails make fence adjustments fast, smooth, and accurate. With its 0-45° bevel capacity, the quick release lever allows for cuts between two positive stops at 0 and 45 degrees, and its 4x4 cutting capacity allows for swift 90-degree cutting. The integrated foldable legs seamlessly form into a folding stand to provide portability and convenience, while the dust port elbow systematically redirects dust to a container for easy cleanup. This large coated cast aluminum tabletop saw comes equipped with a 10 IN., 24-tooth carbide blade. The parallel blade alignment allows for ease of blade adjustment along the rip fence and miter slot, for precise accurate cuts. This table saw features a safety anti-restart switch in case of power outages.

**SKIL**  
[skil.com](http://skil.com)

# Product News

## INTRODUCING New Foamular® NGX™ (Next Generation Extruded) Insulation Reduces Embodied Carbon And Supports Sustainable, High-Performing Commercial Buildings From Owens Corning

Owens Corning's efforts to achieve a higher level of sustainability in rigid foam building materials predate this latest regulatory moment. More than six years of research and development and the evaluation of over 100 blowing agent formulations support the introduction of FOAMULAR® NGXTM. In developing the new insulation, research and development teams sought to reduce the blowing agent's GWP without sacrificing the material's many performance attributes including high R-value per inch, a wide range of compressive strengths, superior moisture resistance and durability.

Manufactured with patented Hydrovac® technology, FOAMULAR® NGXTM is highly resistant to moisture and retains its high R-value even after prolonged exposure to moisture and freeze/thaw cycling. FOAMULAR® NGXTM is available in many compressive strengths, up to 100 psi, and is well suited to applications across the enclosure, from load-bearing vegetative roofs and foundational supports to wall

assemblies. And as a further measure of confidence, FOAMULAR® NGXTM is the only XPS on the market with a limited lifetime warranty guaranteeing a minimum 90% of R-value for the life of the product.

Environmental Product Declaration Qualifies for Option 2 Optimization Credit in LEED 4.1 The sustainability profile of FOAMULAR® NGXTM is validated by a third-party verified Environmental Product Declaration and Optimization Report. A greater than 80% reduction in GWP qualifies FOAMULAR® NGXTM as 1.5 products towards LEED 4.1 points for Options 1 and 2 under the Materials and Resources: Environmental Product Declaration (EPD) – a feat achieved by very few building products. As a widely recognized standard of sustainability, the EPD can provide even more incentives to integrate sustainability features into the commercial enclosure, such as vegetative roof assemblies or below-grade use. Specifying and installing FOAMULAR® NGXTM can help builders achieve U.S. green building program certifications including LEED, the Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR®, and the National Home Builders' National Green Building Standard ICC 700-2008.

The manufacturing process and material content of FOAMULAR® NGXTM also support sustainability. Manufactured with 100% wind electricity, FOAMULAR® NGXTM is GREENGUARD Gold certified, reusable, and certified by Scientific Certification Systems to contain a minimum of 20% recycled polystyrene.

**GWP Reductions in Context** The potential for this innovation to reduce environmental pressure on the



# Product News



planet can be more fully appreciated when viewed through the lens of more commonly discussed energy metrics. Owens Corning's sustainability team used an environmental calculator to evaluate how switching

from a competitive XPS product could reduce GWP. The reduction potential is dramatic. For every 1 million board feet (BFT) of FOAMULAR® NGXTM consumed versus the leading competitor, CO<sub>2</sub> levels are reduced by 6,966 metric tons on average.<sup>1</sup> To put the savings in context, that's like taking 1,500 cars off the road for a year.<sup>2</sup>

FOAMULAR® NGXTM is Underwriters Laboratory (UL) Listed and Factory Mutual (FM) approved. Retaining its same, iconic PINK® color, FOAMULAR® NGXTM is now available to order. More information is available on the Owens Corning FOAMULAR® NGXTM resource page.

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# Product News

## Hilti Introduces Industry's Most Powerful SDS-Max Combination Hammer Drill

Hilti North America expands its rotary and combination hammer tool portfolio with the next generation TE 70-ATC/AVR, the most powerful SDS-Max combination hammer in its class. The new and improved tool will help commercial contractors and tradespeople drill up to 40% faster in reinforced concrete and demolish more concrete than the competitors in its class.

Understanding the importance of worker safety on a construction jobsite, the SDS-Max combination hammer includes Hilti's exclusive Active Torque Control (ATC) technology, which stops the tool body from spinning uncontrollably if the drill bit jams.

"We know how powerful Hilti tools are so, as we continue to deliver solutions to our customers, safety and productivity remain top of mind," said Eric Hollister, Senior Director of Electric Tools & Accessories at Hilti North America. "The tool provides users with the lowest vibration in its class while maintaining best-in-class performance. This will reduce the risk of potential injury during application and help increase daily productivity." The tool is also equipped with Hilti's Active Vibration Reduction (AVR), a technology that makes it less tiring to use.

The TE 70-ATC/AVR is strong enough to take on the most challenging applications, without sacrificing performance or ergonomics. With the fourth generation, Hilti customers will experience a premium performance – a hard-hitting, faster drilling tool that will help get the job done quicker than ever before. Users will unlock the full power of the SDS-Max combination hammer with the optimized durability and exceptional strength of Hilti's TE-YX bits and new TE-YPX flat and pointed chisels designed specifically to withstand the power of this new tool. The state-of-the-art wave



design, polygon construction, and self-sharpening technology of the TE-YPX (SDS Max) chisels offer high break resistance, virtually no sticking or jamming, and less stopping to sharpen or change broken chisels.

The SDS-Max combination hammer also comes with a universal detachable power cord that fits eight other Hilti tools. The detachable power cord feature makes for quick cord changes and reduces repair downtime caused by cut or frayed cords. It also includes a brushless motor, which will increase the tool's life, performance, and requires less service work compared to other brushed tool models on the market.

The TE 70-ATC/AVR is available now throughout the U.S. and Canada. For more information, contact Hilti Customer Service. From the U.S., call Hilti, Inc., at 1-800-879-8000; from Canada, call Hilti (Canada) Corporation at 1-800-363-4458.

**HILTI USA**

[hilti.com](http://hilti.com)

# Product News

## Introducing Reliable Streaming & Camera Control with RIDGID® SeeSnake® CSx Via™

RIDGID®, part of Emerson's Professional Tool group, introduces a flexible, bring-your-own-screen inspection solution, the RIDGID SeeSnake® CSx Via™. It provides a convenient means to stream, capture and share inspection images using an iOS®, Android™ or Windows device, giving end users another great inspection option in addition to the RIDGID full line-up of monitors.

CSx Via enables reels with an interconnect port to be Wi-Fi enabled and utilizes the free RIDGID HQx® Live app to remotely control the camera functions and features. Simply dock in the CSx Via Wi-Fi control device to unlock a world of flexibility, convenience and camera operations with just your mobile screen. Remotely control all functions and features of your camera reel, including TruSense®, distance counter, sonde and more.

Multi-reel compatibility provides maximum flexibility. CSx Via connects with the RIDGID SeeSnake microDrain™, microReel™, nanoReel™, Compact C40, Compact M40, Compact 2 and the rM200 camera reels. It is also compatible with TruSense® SeeSnake systems and will enable TruSense features in the app.

Purpose-built for jobsite durability and protection, CSx Via can be paired with the RIDGID HQx Dock to hold and protect personal devices. The RIDGID SeeSnake HQx Dock is designed to deliver a flexible, convenient way to mount your tablet when using the SeeSnake HQx Live app. Featuring a spring-loaded tablet holder, double ball and socket arm, and pivoting kickstand, the HQx Dock can hold most tablets and is adjustable for optimal viewing at the jobsite. Use as a free-standing unit or mount onto any RIDGID SeeSnake Compact Series reels for fast, easy setup.

"The ability to turn any personal device into a monitor with a tool that fits in your hand is not only convenient, but also offers flexibility and convenience for inspection pros with multiple reels to custom configure their tools for various jobsite situations," said Amy Moneypenny, global product manager, underground technologies, RIDGID. "User fatigue is also reduced, and jobsite efficiencies enhanced as there is less weight to carry to and from a jobsite."

All RIDGID Underground Technology tools, including the CSx Via, come with the RIDGID Full Lifetime Warranty.

To purchase or learn more about the CSx Via or other underground technology tools, visit [RIDGID.com](http://RIDGID.com), or call toll-free: 1-800-4RIDGID.

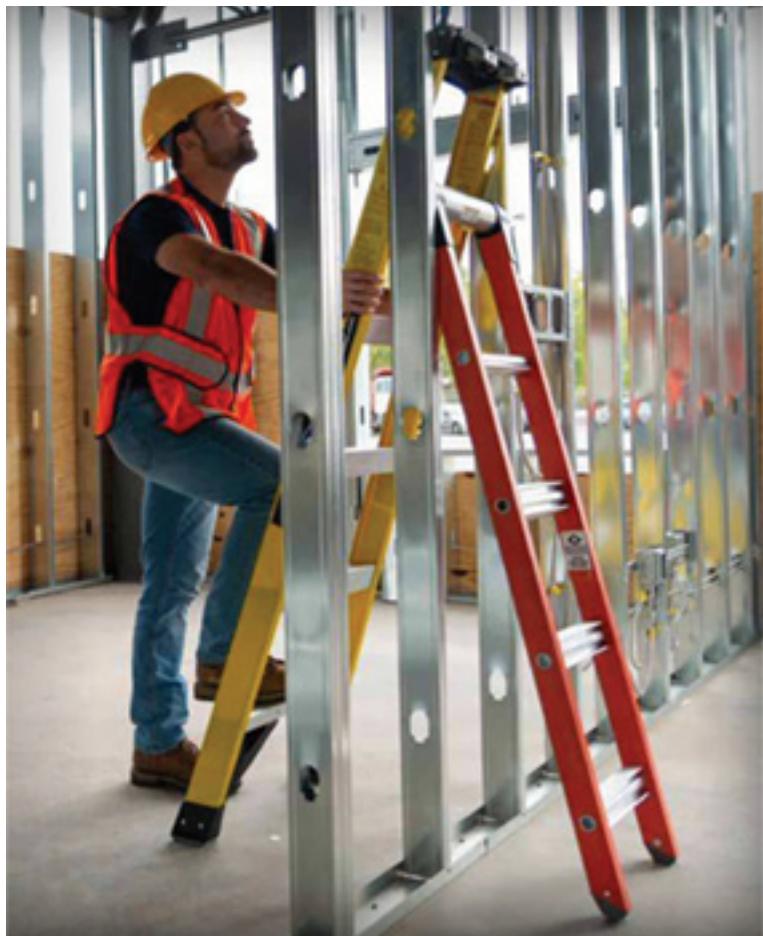


**RIDGID TOOLS**  
[ridgidtools.com](http://ridgidtools.com)

# Product News

## Werner Introduces the Aluminum LEANSAFE X3 Ladder

Werner, the world leader in ladders and the manufacturer of climbing products and fall protection equipment, is extending its versatile line of LEANSAFE® X3 ladders with a new aluminum model. Perfect for professionals including residential contractors, painters and facilities maintenance personnel, the



lightweight Aluminum LEANSAFE X3 packs the functionality of three useful ladders into one OSHA-compliant package. In addition to convenience, the Aluminum LEANSAFE X3 offers stability and durability thanks to Werner's innovative engineering.

"Non-conventional stepladders continue to gain traction in the industry because of their focus on ladder

versatility and convenience," said Kelly Markle, product manager at Werner. "The Aluminum LEANSAFE X3 is incredibly easy to use, aids in productivity, and helps worksites stay safe and compliant in a wide-range of use cases. It's a product that will help pros accomplish more at a great value!"

### Increased Worksite Productivity

With the Aluminum LEANSAFE X3, one ladder can easily adapt into three different setups: for use as a step ladder, straight ladder or leaning ladder. At six feet tall, it is simple to store and transport, in addition to providing a maximum reach height of about 13 feet. Ergonomic one-handed levers and the all-in-one ladder top allow for seamless position changes, without the need for additional adjustments or buttons.

Thoughtfully designed for working pros, it can be used against corners, studs, poles and other vertical work surfaces. Non-marring rubber feet and leaning pads ensure that using this three-in-one ladder does not damage floors or walls; while the compact rear rails fit between standard framing studs, bringing users closer to their work. The Aluminum LEANSAFE X3 top also has a magnetic tool tray and a paint hook, keeping important materials secure and close at hand.

### Iconic Stability and Durability

Werner's track record of building long-lasting aluminum ladders is unrivaled for a reason, and the new Aluminum LEANSAFE X3 will only add to that legacy. With the solid construction and a simple hinge mechanism, the Aluminum LEANSAFE X3 can support 300 pounds (including the user and materials) in all three of its positions. Slip-resistant Traction-Tred® steps provide reliability and confidence to pros working off the ground.

The Werner Aluminum LEANSAFE X3 multi-purpose ladder is now available nationally at a retailer near you.

#### **WERNER LADDERS**

werner.com



## US Department of Labor Encourages Industry Employers, Stakeholders To Join OSHA's National SAFETY STAND-DOWN to Prevent Falls in Construction

# MAY 3–7, 2021

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration announced that it has scheduled the eighth annual National Stand-Down to Prevent Falls in Construction for May 3-7, 2021. OSHA encourages construction employers and other stakeholders to join the event to promote awareness and training to address one of the industry's most serious dangers.

"Workers suffer serious and fatal injuries from falls and have a devastating impact on families and businesses," said Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health James Frederick. "This important collaboration with the construction industry encourages employers to learn how to better control fall-related hazards and improve their safety and health programs."

OSHA developed the fall prevention campaign, as part of the national safety stand-down and in partnership with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, National Occupational Research Agenda, and The Center for Construction Research and Training. Since 2014, this collaboration has helped train nearly 10 million workers on fall prevention.

OSHA encourages everyone to use *#StandDown4Safety* to promote the event on social media, and to share feedback after their events and obtain a personalized certificate of participation. •



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