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# BUILDING PRODUCTS

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## The 2011 MVP AWARDS

30 ALL-STAR PRODUCTS  
THAT MAKE BUILDING  
EASIER AND FASTER



PLUS  
PRODUCTS IN PRACTICE  
AN ELEGANT MASTER BATH

SUMMER 2011

# HOME MVP AWARD MOST VALUABLE PRODUCT 2011 RUNS

This year's winners are all-star selections.

BY DIANE KITTOWER

Judging by this year's Most Valuable Product Award winners, a sluggish economy hasn't stopped building product manufacturers from unveiling a slate of innovative products to satisfy and excite a weary market. This year's MVP honorees represent a diverse group boasting an array of valuable attributes—from stunning aesthetics to time-saving technologies to simple solutions for old problems.

BUILDING PRODUCTS challenged our judging panel—made up of pros like you—to single out entries that are most valuable to the contractor, either by reducing installation time, callbacks, and

labor costs; solving a problem; boosting profits; or adding a wow factor to the home. This year's contest recognizes 30 honorees sure to please you and your clients.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** All claims about the winning products come from their makers; the editors and judges could not independently verify the manufacturers' statements. In addition, the winners represent only a small portion of outstanding products that were introduced during the past year. The judges made their selections based on items entered in the competition, not from all products that debuted from January 2010 through January 2011.

## THANKS TO OUR JUDGES!

**Steve Bertasso**  
Senior Associate  
TrueNorth Development  
Northville, Mich.

**Greg Bonifield**  
Partner  
Woodfield Investments  
Ashburn, Va.

**Pete Callejas, AIA**  
Senior Project Manager  
Greenline Architecture  
Savannah, Ga.

**Thomas J. Lifschutz**  
Consultant/Project Coordinator  
Neil Kelly Co.  
Portland, Ore.

**Hela Pela**  
Buyer  
Bruce Bauer Lumber & Supply  
Mountain View, Calif.

 Leaf symbol denotes winner as having green attributes, as designated by the judges.



**CalStar Products.** While the colors of the company's Holland pavers run the usual gamut from brown to gray to red, their advantages in all things green is where the pavers really stand out. Not only is the product made with 40% post-industrial recycled content, the product's manufacturing process also emits 85% less carbon dioxide than the production of clay pavers and uses 85% less energy than the process for clay pavers and 50% less than the process for cement pavers. A judge praised these "great environmental characteristics." The pavers contain neither Portland cement nor clay and meet industry standards and ADA recommendations for slip resistance. They come in smooth and tumbled finishes. Price: \$2.50 per square foot and up. 877.700.9501. [www.calstarproducts.com](http://www.calstarproducts.com). Circle 243.



**Panasonic.** The many features of the Energy Star-qualified WhisperGreen-Lite exhaust fan include a motion sensor, variable-speed controls, and a timer that makes possible both intermittent and continuous ventilation. If necessary, the speed automatically increases to ensure that the fan operates at a constant 80 cfm. A built-in damper prevents backdraft. The flush-mount grille incorporates a 32-watt CFL fixture and a 4-watt nightlight. Price: \$413. 866.292.7292. [www.panasonic.com/ventfans](http://www.panasonic.com/ventfans). Circle 244.

**Kohler.** Designed to offer a stylish-looking alternative to walk-in baths, the Elevance has an extra-wide door opening that allows wheelchair users to get in easily. The sliding wall moves with less than 5 pounds of force; a grab bar is included, and faucetry is within the reach of a seated user. An inflatable seal prevents leaks, and sensors keep the door from opening when the bath is full. The acrylic tub fits in a standard 60-inch footprint. Price: \$8,775. 800.456.4537. [www.kohler.com](http://www.kohler.com). Circle 245.



**TimberTech.** Earthwood Evolutions is the first fully capped composite deck board, thoroughly protected from the elements. An MVP judge noted its 25-year stain and fade warranty, and deck builder Mike Jansen applauded its exotic good looks. "The smooth lines and intricate streaking patterns in these decking planks mimic real hardwoods so closely, it's hard to tell they're not real exotic hardwood boards," said the owner of Mike Jansen Custom Decks in Omaha, Neb. Planks come in two profiles—grooved or solid—and three colors: teak, walnut, and rosewood. They're available in 12-, 16-, and 20-foot lengths, along with matching 12-inch fascia and 7¼-inch stair risers in 12-foot lengths. Price: \$2.90 to \$3.10 per linear foot. 800.307.7780. [www.timbertech.com](http://www.timbertech.com). Circle 247.



**Andersen Windows.** To coordinate with its A-Series, 400 Series, and 200 Series windows, the manufacturer designed a new exterior trim system to snap on quickly, permitting installation on the average house in about half a day—a speed appreciated by one MVP judge. The pieces connect to an attachment strip fastened to the framing after the window is installed. No measuring, cutting, mitering, nailing, or filling nail holes is needed. Factory-assembled surrounds are available for most windows and pre-cut trim kits are also available. The trim, which is made of Fibrex, comes in 11 colors and a number of styles. Price: starting at \$10 per linear foot. 800.426.4261. [www.andersenwindows.com](http://www.andersenwindows.com). Circle 246.