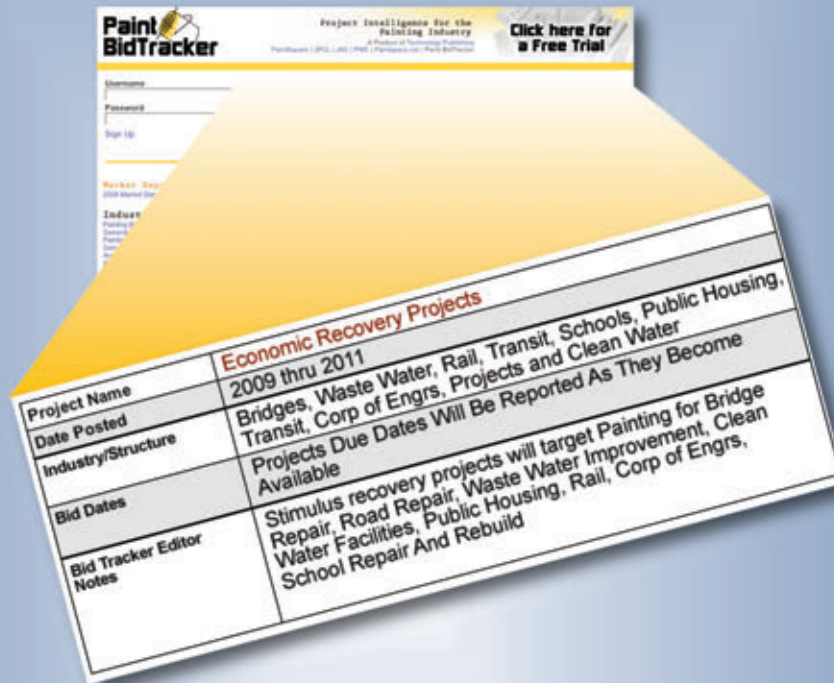


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GREENER PREP... *and more*

Eco-friendly strippers, cleaners, tools and sundries can make the whole job safer.

by Mary E. Chollet-Lordan

If prep is truly half of the job, it should carry half of the responsibility for making the project green. And indeed, “eco” echoes everywhere on the job these days.

Manufacturers have developed safer, healthier options for the toxic strippers, cleaners, sealants and other prep products of old. Some may be new to you, but many have extensive performance records. Sundries and tools also come in eco-friendly options. Here are some to consider.

This page, top row, from left: EcoPro by Purdy, Warner tools, Trimaco EcoDrop, SMART Wall Prep & Repair. Second row, from left: Green Glue, Krud Kutter, Zinsser Magic Strip, EcoPrazi Paint Brush Storage Lid, Earth2Earth Cotton Drop Sheet. Third row: ADP cleaners and strippers. Bottom: Wooster ECO. Opposite page, top row, from left: DAP 3.0 sealants, Eco-Strip Speedheater, TriViro VitroGrit, Universal Minerals MaxxStrip. Bottom row, from left: UGL prep line, Mess-X Paint Shields, Winning Colours cleaner.



Paint removal

Green and *abrasive* have not historically gone hand in hand. Today, they're teammates. Two companies offer environmentally friendly abrasive products that assert they are even tough enough for industrial work.

Maxxstrip, from Universal Minerals, is made from natural minerals that can wash safely into the soil. Non-sparking, pH neutral, water soluble, and with no free silica, Maxxstrip can be used without shutting down operations. It is suitable for residential, commercial and industrial settings.

TriVistro Corp. has been developing innovative recycled glass products since 1996. Among them is **VitroGrit**, an abrasive blasting media made from crushed recycled glass. Recommended for industrial use, VitroGrit replaces silica sand and slag for any process normally done by sandblasting. It has no toxic heavy metals or crystalline free silica.

For non-abrasive removal, Zinsser Brands, Rust-Oleum Corp., has three breathable offerings. **Zinsser Paint & Finish Remover with Soyzol**, formulated with a soy derivative, is a qualified product with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's "Design for the Environment" Program. **Magic Strip Paint & Varnish Remover** is a low-odor, non-flammable remover that says it can strip up to seven layers of most paints and varnishes in one application. **Magic Strip Citrus-Action Gel**, for indoor use, is methylene chloride-free and has no harsh fumes. Each product comes in two sizes.

United Gilsonite Laboratories (UGL), meanwhile, has just introduced a new line of nonflammable, professional-strength, green remover products. **Fastrip Paint & Varnish Remover**, with a semi-paste formula, is recommended for all types of paints and polyurethanes. **D-Gloss Liquid Sander & Cleaner** prepares surfaces for recoating by removing contaminants and slightly "etching" the surface. **UG Brush Cleaner** is a water-based product that UGL

says can clean and restore even hardened brushes as well as trays, roller covers and other equipment.

Want to avoid liquids completely? Eco-Strip LLC offers the **Speedheater Infrared Paint Remover** with accessories. Available in the U.S. since 2002 and in Europe before that, the Speedheater uses low heat rays (400-600 degrees) to prevent air-blown lead vapors. Once the paint is softened, it can be softly scraped, minimizing dust and simplifying containment of waste. UL-certified, the 15-amp, 115-volt Speedheater weighs just 4.4 pounds and has shock absorbers on the infrared bulbs.

Cleaners

Environmentally friendly cleaners have been available for many years, giving suppliers plenty of time to tweak performance and features.

Krud Kutter, from Supreme Chemicals of Georgia, may be the granddaddy of green cleaners. A fixture since 1980, Krud Kutter is water-based, biodegradable, non-toxic and recommended for "the toughest stains and everyday messes that most 'all-purpose' cleaners can't touch." It is designed for all painting applications, including industrial and decorative finishing, as well as wallcovering installations.

Another environmental veteran is **American Deck Products**, which makes a complete line of exterior, eco-safe cleaners for wood, composite, concrete and even roofs. The products are highly concentrated; users add their own water, minimizing packaging and shipping weight. The American Deck Products line includes **Concrete Cleaner**, **Deck Brightener**, **Deck Stripper**, **Deck Wash** and **Roof Wash**. All products come with a 30-day free trial period.

Toronto-based Winning Brands Corp., maker of **Winning Colours Stain Remover**, is another company that specializes in high-performance eco-friendly cleaning

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products. The stain remover cleans paint grease, grime and glue residue, yet it is free of phosphates, nitrates, enzymes and chlorine, making it suitable for cleaning textiles and other delicate surfaces.

Sealants and adhesives

For 40 years, family-owned Gardner-Gibson has manufactured a full line of roof coatings, waterproofing coatings, pavement sealers, caulks, wall repair patching and wallpaper adhesives. The company's new zero-VOC, fast-drying **SMART Wall Prep & Repair** products are suitable for residential, commercial and institutional applications. The line includes **caulk/sealant** and **Wall-Fix spackling compound**.

Meanwhile, DAP Products has released **DAP 3.0 Advanced Sealants**, a line of quick-dry sealants for kitchen

Also doing double duty (in content and function) is **Green Glue**, a viscoelastic, eco-friendly noise-proofing compound. Green Glue is applied between layers of dry-wall during new construction or remodeling, dampening sound transmission through walls, ceilings and floors. The product is water based, non-toxic, non-carcinogenic, and very low VOC. One case of 12 29-ounce tubes covers 100 to 200 square feet. Green Glue is made by a subsidiary of Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics Corp.

Sundries

Green doesn't stop at compounds. Sundries are going greener, too, incorporating recycled and sustainable materials as well as less packaging.

Take drop cloths, for example. The **EcoDrop Biodegradable Plastic Drop Cloth**, from Trimaco LLC, is made of a proprietary plastic that will biodegrade into simple nontoxic materials, as described in ASTM D6954-04. Suitable for residential or commercial use, the 9-by-12-foot cloth is 2 mil thick.

Meanwhile, **Earth2Earth** has released a new **Recycled Cotton Drop Cloth**. Available in two sizes, E2E cotton is naturally biodegradable and made of 90 percent post-consumer recycled cotton. The lightweight, soft cotton is washable and reusable.

Some products serve an environmental purpose with conventional materials. Ideal Industries' new **Mess-X Snap-on Paint Shields**, for example, protect decorative light switches and outlets from drips and overspray without the need for masking tape. The shields are reusable, eliminating waste and adhesive residue.

Then there's the **Paint Brush Storage Lid** from EcoPrazi, which keeps a paint brush fresh in a one-gallon bucket of paint, eliminating the need for daily washing. The company estimates that it takes two gallons of water to clean one brush. The Storage Lid promises to keep any size paint

brush fresh "for days or weeks."

Brushes and tools

Greener tools are everywhere, boasting sustainable materials and recycled content. Multi-packs have become more popular as a way to minimize packaging.

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Buyer's Guide

Product or Company	Web site
American Deck Products	www.americandeckproducts.com
DAP 3.0 Advanced Sealants	www.dap.com
D-Gloss Liquid Sander	www.ugl.com
Earth2Earth Recycled Cotton Drop Cloth	www.reavesdrop.com
EcoDrop Biodegradable Drop Cloth	www.trimaco.com
Eco-Friendly Tools	www.warnertool.com
ECOKit	www.woosterbrush.com
EcoPro by Purdy painting tools	www.purdycorp.com
Fastrip	www.ugl.com
Green Glue	www.greenglue.com
Krud Kutter	www.krudkutter.com
Magic Strip Citrus-Action Gel	www.zinsser.com
Magic Strip Paint Remover	www.zinsser.com
Maxxstrip	www.universalminerals.com
Mess-X Paint Shields	www.idealindustries.com
Paint Brush Storage Lid	www.praziusa.com
SMART Wall Prep & Repair	www.gardner-gibson.com
Speedheater	www.eco-strip.com
UG Brush Cleaner	www.ugl.com
VitroGrit	www.trivitro.com
Winning Colours Stain Remover	www.WinningBrands.ca
Zinsser Paint & Finish Remover	www.zinsser.com

and bath, concrete, gutter and flash, and blacktop and roof, in addition to an all-purpose formulation. The low-odor 3.0 sealants have some of the lowest Volatile Organic Compound content on the market today. Of course, caulking and sealants also improve the energy efficiency of a home—a major initiative supported by the new stimulus aid package (see page 28).

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Purdy Corp., which recently rolled out its first lines of prep tools, has also launched the professional-grade **Eco-Pro by Purdy** applicator series, designed with 100 percent recycled or renewable materials. The paint brushes sport recycled DuPont Tynex filaments and sustainable beechwood handles, while the roller covers are knit with 100 percent recycled materials. Specially marked packages even allow painters to plant a tree through the American Forests Global ReLeaf Campaign.

Meanwhile, **Warner Tools** has just introduced a line of **Eco-Friendly Putty Knives, Paint Tools** and **Paint Scraper**, detailed in its online Green Catalog. Designed for all painting and wallcovering applications, the tools break down in a compost facility and meet Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) standards for compostability (see ASTM 6400 D99 and ASTM 6868).

Wooster, too, is well into the green movement with the **Wooster ECO Kit**, which includes a metal, one-quart tray with biodegradable **ECO Liner** made from recycled materials;

nine-inch cage frame; and two nine-inch **ECO Roller** covers made from 100 percent certified recycled plastic PET (polyethylene terephthalate) bottles. The covers are free of dyes and chemical colorants and are recommended for interior use with flat paints.

These are just a few of the items on the market now; more are on the way. Watch the shelves, check web sites, and talk to store and supplier reps to learn more. Whether your goal is to Reduce, Reuse, Recycle or all three, there's a product for you. **pwc**

Mary Chollet-Lordan is the editor of PWC.

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