

# Sphere 1 Circular

“News and Views That Are Out Of This World”

Spring 2021  
Vol. 21 No. 1

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**In This Issue:** In keeping with the spirit of what we started last fall - our Spring 2021 edition features educational content focused on **Residential Construction** provided by four Sphere 1 Suppliers. With this segment of the market booming throughout the country, we want to help Sphere 1 Members understand all of the opportunities they have to grow with their customers. Though this issue only features four of our Suppliers, we hope this stimulates some thoughts amongst the membership to explore every product opportunity they have with their customers.



## New Trends in Construction and Remodeling Sealants and Adhesives

Sealants and adhesives are critical tools for residential construction projects and on the job site. As builders look for better sealant and adhesive solutions for their remodeling and construction projects, several new industry product trends are emerging. DAP, a leading manufacturer and supplier of caulks, sealants, foams, adhesives, and patch and repair products, offers tips and trends for professional contractors and remodelers to improve productivity on the job site.

### Polyurethane foam adhesives are on the rise.... especially in subfloor.

The use of polyurethane foam adhesives continues to see steady growth in a variety of building and construction applications, including subfloor installation. Significantly higher yields, faster application, and superior bond strength are all contributing to a more efficient (and profitable) subfloor installation project for our customers. The unique collapsing foam formula provides significant polyurethane bond strength and when applied with a foam gun, product can easily be reused on



*SmartBond® is a high strength polyurethane foam adhesive that is faster and easier to use than traditional cartridge adhesives.*



*Kwik Seal Ultra is an advanced interior sealant specifically developed for kitchen and bath applications.*

the next install.

When making the product selection, contractors should look for polyurethane foam adhesives that offer superior adhesion strength and strong warranties. Select a product that bonds all types of wood, plywood, osb and moisture resistant osb panels and bonds to wet, frozen and treated lumber.

One product developed specifically for subfloors is SmartBond® from DAP, a high strength polyurethane foam adhesive that is faster and easier to use than traditional cartridge adhesives. A single can of SmartBond equates to 8-28 oz. traditional cartridges, providing 8x the coverage, so you can do more, with less. SmartBond is compatible with the Touch N' Seal 46" applicator gun that reduces reaching, bending over and walking on joists for 25% faster application.

**Water repelling, water-based sealants? They are for real.**

Water-based technology is getting more and more advanced as contractors demand sealants with superior performance matched with ease of use, paintability and VOC requirements.

As technology advancements in sealants increases, users can get higher performance characteristics in easy to use water-based latex formulas which include features such as the ability to repel water, dirt and stains so the sealant is easier to clean. Some of the latest technologies from DAP includes sealants that are both water and rain-ready in only one

hour. This technology ensures that the sealant works quickly after application.

Superior polymers create sealants that allow water to 'bead' up on the surface of the sealant and won't allow water to settle. This feature provides a 100% waterproof seal that helps prevent the growth of mold, mildew, algae and stains.

Dynaflex Ultra™ Advanced Exterior Sealant from DAP, for example, features innovative Weather Max™ Technology for long-lasting, all-weather protection. Ideal for sealing windows and doors, this premium latex sealant provides exceptional UV, mold, mildew and algae resistance, as well as a durable, 100% waterproof seal that stands up to the elements. It stays permanently flexible to endure expansion and contraction caused by sun, heat, cold, wind and rain.

Another product from DAP, Kwik Seal Ultra®, is an advanced interior sealant specifically developed for kitchen and bath applications and formulated with innovative ultra-hydrophobic technology that repels water, dirt and stains and offers a lifetime mold and mildew resistance guarantee so the sealant stays looking clean, fresh and new.

**What are 'hybrid' sealants and adhesives and how can they help me?**

Silicone and polyurethane adhesives and sealants have been on the market for years, but as pros know, these products can have limitations. Hybrid technology has been developed to fill these perfor-



*DynaFlex Ultra Advanced Exterior Sealant features innovative Weather Max™ Technology for long-lasting, all-weather protection.*

mance gaps.

Typically, ‘hybrids’ today are a sealant or adhesive that takes elements from both silicones and polyurethanes to create an exceptional performing sealant that accepts paint and offers excellent durability, adhesion and overall performance. These products are often referred to as “hybrids” or “modified polymers.” While hybrid technology is prevalent in the sealants market, this technology is also becoming much more prevalent in the adhesives market as well. The adhesive advancements deliver even faster bonds, which significantly reduces the amount of clamping and bracing needed on even the toughest and heaviest applications.

To meet the demand for a powerful adhesive, DAP offers DynaGrip® Heavy Duty MAX, a premium hybrid adhesive that delivers 5X faster bond strength for heavier applications where bond strength and cure speed are critical. Offering exceptional adhesion to porous and non-porous building materials, DynaGrip Heavy Duty MAX features a powerful instant grab, along with a strong permanent bond and excellent adhesion on common building materials for both interior and exterior construction and remodeling projects.

For a professional grade hybrid sealant, pros should consider Dynaflex® 800, an advanced, all-weather elastomeric sealant specifically developed for professional window, door, siding and trim installations. The product offers maximum adhesion and flexibility, is 1-hour paint ready and is 100% waterproof and weatherproof.

**Flexibility factors: How companies test and market flexibility, and how to know which sealant to select.**

Professionals understand that there are certain applications or environments that require a sealant with higher levels of elongation, or flexibility. A sealant with more flexibility will help to accommodate expansion and contraction of building materials for different factors including seasonal climate changes or extreme temperatures. A proper sealant will strongly adhere to the surface and stay durable over time without cracking or losing adhesion to the substrate.

Sealant manufacturers test flexibility in many ways, but one way to understand the flexibility rating of a product is to look for the ASTM C920 performance specification on either the label or TDS. Sealants that meet C920 are run through more stringent testing on several different

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*DynaGrip Heavy Duty MAX features a powerful instant grab, along with a strong permanent bond and excellent adhesion on common building materials.*

performance characteristics, including flexibility. It's also important to look at the C920 'class' information, which is a number usually either 12.5, 25, or 35 for residential construction grade products. When the label says C920 +/- 25, that means the sealant has been tested through multiple cycles of expansion and compression by 25% the original gap size. For flexibility, the higher the class number, the more flexible the product. As higher flexibility usually indicates a higher quality and price, it's important for pros to understand the right amount of flexibility needed for their jobs.

**Consumers seek anti-microbial sealants now, more than ever.**

The COVID pandemic has had a major impact on the increasing adoption and use of antimicrobial products in numerous industries, including in the building and construction sector. As a result, manufacturers of sealants have developed products to meet this demand.

Contractors should look for products that offer guarantees supporting their antimicrobial protection claims. One such product is Kwik Seal Plus® from DAP, a premium siliconized adhesive sealant which is formulated with MoldGuard Antimicrobial Product

Protection that fights the growth of stain and odor-causing bacteria, mold and mildew on the sealant. This advanced technology helps neutralize bacterial and fungal growth where it lives and breathes. This means the sealant is easier to keep clean and stays cleaner longer. As noted earlier, DynaFlex Ultra not only provides exceptional UV, mold, and mildew resistance, but also offers algae protection.

When it comes to the use of adhesives and sealants in the construction industry, product knowledge and selection can go a long way in ensuring a project is completed quick and correctly for a long-lasting result. For more information on adhesive and sealant projects and products, visit [www.dap.com](http://www.dap.com) or give us a call at 1-888-DAP-TIPS and we'll be more than happy to provide advice or help on your project needs.

*By Jason Wirth*

**About the author**

*Jason Wirth is Senior Director, Product Manager for DAP, a leading manufacturer and supplier of caulks, sealants, foams, adhesives, and patch and repair products. Wirth has nearly 15 years of experience in the building products industry including more than 5 years with DAP.*

## President's Message

**Rob Moe**  
President and CEO



Dear Sphere 1 Members and Suppliers,

We are disappointed that our upcoming meeting has shifted from an in-person event to a virtual one; however, we have so much for which to be grateful.

I want to thank the Sphere 1 Member community for your patience as we navigated through the process of making this decision. As we crunched the numbers, and with only 45% of our attendees willing to travel to an in-person meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, we felt that this was the best decision. We are saddened that we cannot come together, but we are looking forward to seeing everyone virtually in less than one month.

We experienced something last year that none of us could have expected – but we learned why we believe we can deliver something special for our membership for this year's virtual event. We have recruited a production company that will be working with our Board of Directors and the Management Team to develop an awesome experience for everyone. By now, you have received the schedule that highlights Member and Supplier meetings, a session called "Inside Scoop", and a cutting-edge awards show. Throw in an advanced tabletop selection process that is more focused on your priority selections and the best opportunities for both Members and Suppliers,

and this will allow you to have more productive time together to enhance your mutual value in Sphere 1.

Additionally, I am pleased to share that Sphere 1, despite the impacts of COVID-19 and significant supply chain issues, has had a wonderful 2020 overall. While we did not have a record-breaking year as in the 4 years prior, we held our own with rates of return in excess of 94%. Our platforms, Gateway for Growth and Sphere 1 University, again paved the way for continued growth, and helped sustain our spend during a trying year for everyone. Congratulations to all of you for an outstanding year for Sphere 1.

In closing, please enjoy our upcoming virtual meeting, and invite those in your company to share in the experience that is Sphere 1. Being virtual isn't what any of us want, but we can make the most of it. And please, let the Management Team and I know what you think after you have taken it all in.

"The Speedway to Success; Family, Friendship and Focus" is our theme this year, and is appropriate for Indy, home of the "500". While we aren't there in person, we can still "drive" our futures based on this theme and mindset, so let's race on together!

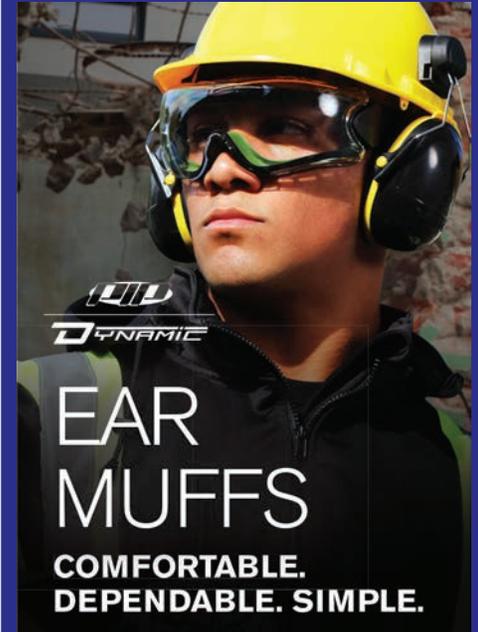
Thank you for all you do for Sphere 1.

*Rob*



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## Improving Energy Efficiency With XPS Insulation



No client wants to deal with moisture in their walls or high energy bills in their new home. By choosing the right exterior insulation, you can dramatically improve the comfort and energy efficiency of your client's home.

Exterior insulation helps slow down or even stop thermal transfer, and when installed properly, can help prevent thermal bridging. It does all this while making the interior of the home more comfortable, thanks to fewer drafts and cold spots. All of these things combined work to improve the energy efficiency of the entire building.

To gain this energy efficiency, you need to create a tight building envelope with no air or moisture infiltration. These two issues can cost your client money down the road, which can give your company a bad reputation.

Choosing XPS for your project's exterior insulation can help you improve energy efficiency, avoid

costly future issues and make the property more comfortable, all at the same time.

### About XPS

Extruded polystyrene insulation, or XPS, is a closed-cell, rigid insulation that allows for fewer air gaps and issues than the more commonly used expanded polystyrene insulation.

The closed-cell structure of XPS makes it strong, durable and long-lasting. It has a compression strength superior to expanded polystyrene insulation and is one of the few products that can provide both insulation and moisture management at once. With just one product to install, XPS helps you get your job done more easily while providing benefits that your clients will see for years.

You'll find XPS in rigid foam board which is easy to install over the exterior of a home, including over

*Continued on page 8*

**Kingspan** *Continued from page 7*

existing siding. XPS boards come in several thicknesses, with some measuring as thin as a quarter inch. This allows you to insulate without adding a lot of bulk to the exterior.

Being able to use a thin board is a huge benefit when you need to install insulation over existing siding. It doesn't dramatically increase the thickness of the walls and has a smooth and level surface, ideal for installing new siding over old siding.

XPS is also considered water-resistive and can promote moisture management in the home's building envelope. Use it alone or with an interior vapor barrier for extra protection. For optimal performance in regions with fluctuating temperatures, you can also perforate the surface for better moisture management.

**How XPS Improves Energy Efficiency**

Continuous insulation is the best defense that any home has against high energy bills. Normally, insulation is only installed in between studs. This can let thermal transfer occur through the studs. However, XPS boards can be installed over studs, providing continuous insulation.

Because the studs make up 25% of the home's exterior, using XPS as a continuous insulation provides superior protection against energy loss than standard, cavity fill insulation.

When it comes to insulating, the R-value of the insulation you choose is equally as important as where you install it. XPS has an R-value of R-5 per inch of thickness, which is better than the more common expanded polystyrene, whose R-value ranges from R-3.6 to R-4.2.

And unlike other forms of continuous siding insulation, XPS doesn't lose its R-value through degradation over time. This means your client will continue to reap the benefits of increased energy efficiency years after they've moved in.

For more information on Kingspan GreenGuard® Residential Insulation please contact **Kevin Cutler** at [Kevin.cutler@kingspan.com](mailto:Kevin.cutler@kingspan.com) or **856.912.7658**.

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## **POLY PRODUCT ADVANCEMENTS FOR RESIDENTIAL SURFACE PROTECTION**

With the ever-changing climate and standards of construction, renovation, and remodeling, it is only necessary to adapt to the dynamic of this industry. This includes pushing product innovation to fit the needs of the jobsite. Poly-based surface protection products are opening new doors to high-impact solutions. See what's new whether the goal of the product is to push the advancement of Fire Retardant protection, increase impact-resistance, or solve a protection challenge of an often-overlooked portion of the jobsite.

### **POLY BOARD**

Poly Board is the newest product to hit the market for Surface Shields & Ram Board. These Fire-Retardant, fabric-backed, polyethylene sheets are 48" x 96" and come with built-in hexagonal support pockets, creating high-compression protection, spreading the load of objects and machinery across the entire surface of the product. The fabric-backing prevents scratches against your finished surface while the textured face is resistant to liquids and warping.

Each ultra-heavy-duty sheet covers approximately 32 square feet and weighs just under 10 pounds.



### **When Should I Use Poly Board?**

Poly Board can be used for virtually any job, but is best suited for projects calling for heavier traffic. It is tough enough to withstand forklift and other jobsite machinery, yet light enough to be used for vertical applications. The product compound opens doors to any job requiring Fire-Retardant product.



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Plasti Shield Pro sheets are designed to suit a wide variety of jobsite-protection applications. These 44" × 93" Poly sheets combine the advantages of lightweight usage with high-impact protection. The ability to quickly cut the sheets to-size with a standard utility knife (or the Ram Board Multi-Cutter®) allows for dynamic protection on floors,

walls, windows, doors, counters, and much more. The sheets are liquid-resistant, reusable, and recyclable.

Each sheet covers approximately 28.4 square feet, is lighter than Poly Board, and is almost 40% stronger than standard Plasti Shield Sheets\*.

**When Should I Use Plasti Shield Pro?**

If you had to choose one product to protect all surfaces of any jobsite, Plasti Shield Pro should be your choice.

The sheets can protect against light machine usage, high-impact drops, liquids, and are perfect for any type of vertical application.

*\* Based on independent lab test results*



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**PLASTI SHIELD® PRO FR**

Plasti Shield Pro FR sheets take all of the advantages of the Plasti Shield Pro product and add a Fire Retardant benefit. Plasti Shield Pro FR has been tested and certified to meet NFPA-701 standard.

This fire retardant, ultra heavy-duty poly sheeting is used in the building and construction industry

as a lightweight alternative to hardboard for floor and wall covering protection, counter top protection, temporary window and door replacement, and temporary clean room applications. Plasti Shield Pro FR is also easily cut with a utility knife.

**When Should I Use Plasti Shield Pro FR?**

Similar to Plasti Shield Pro, Plasti Shield Pro FR suits an extremely wide selection of applications with the added Fire-Retardant benefit.

The sheets can protect against light machine usage, high-impact drops, liquids, and are perfect for any type of vertical application.

*Continued on page 11*

### STAIR SHIELD®

Stair Shield is new on the market as of 2020. This poly product was designed to protect the majority of staircases that are built in residential construction areas. Stair Shield™ protects and covers every part of the stair including the tread, riser, and bull nose while the fluted design offers high-impact resistance to traffic and drops. The adjustable tread-sizing allows for dynamic coverage, protecting treads that are 10.25", 11", and 11.25" deep. The Tread-trac™ technology promotes traction of the product to the stair surface while the two grip strips on top of the product increase traction between the shoe and product. Stair



Shield™ is offered in 34" wide and 40" wide options.

#### When Should I Use Stair Shield?

If you need to protect stairs that fall within the product size, Stair Shield is the answer.

*Continued on page 12*

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**When Should I Use Corner Shield?**

Corner Shield is great to use around finished entryways or any area expecting high traffic



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## How to Grow Your Residential Business

After a tough year, things are starting to look brighter for concrete construction. But while the mammoth \$2 trillion infrastructure bill winding its way through Congress promises to bring a ton of projects back online, concrete fastener and tool distributors are likely looking for additional markets to help boost business in the interim.

While civil, industrial, and commercial construction continues to feel the effects of the pandemic, the housing market has exploded. Low mortgage rates and thin supply are fueling buyer demand, and overall housing starts increased 19.4% to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.74 million units this March, according to a report from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Census Bureau. That's the fastest pace for combined single-family and multifamily residential construction since June 2006.

But homebuilders aren't without challenges of their own. Like other construction sectors, the residential market continues to face severe

labor shortages, and as a result, homebuilders are constantly on the lookout for value-added products and solutions to gain an edge in productivity and efficiency. That's where concrete product suppliers can develop new customer relationships or expand existing relationships for increased sales and revenue.

“In both single-family and multifamily construction, builders are looking to build smarter to account for labor challenges while providing safer, stronger homes that are attractive to new buyers,” says Ryan Kaelin, vice president of concrete construction products at Pleasanton, CA-based Simpson Strong-Tie. “Suppliers that can bring solutions to the jobsite and partner with contractors for ways to build better and faster are often rewarded with additional business and customer loyalty.”

For example, Simpson Strong-Tie has found success in the residential markets by providing

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*Sand Palace: Continuous load path construction methods boost the resiliency of residential structures like this home in Mexico Beach, Florida that survived Hurricane Michael while other homes around it were destroyed.  
Credit: Simpson Strong-Tie*



builders with guidance on meeting complex code requirements or improving construction methods to increase the resiliency of structures during high wind and seismic events. In particular, advocating for a continuous load path has helped builders create homes that can effectively resist wind and seismic forces as a result of being reinforced from the roof to the foundation.

“From earthquakes out West to tornadoes in the South and Midwest to hurricanes on the East Coast, most homeowners are likely to face a significant wind or seismic event at some point, and continuous load path construction methods provide them with peace of mind that their investment has been built strong enough to ride out the storm,” Kaelin says. “Those kinds of construction solutions provide builders with a competitive advantage, and by collaborating together, you become a reliable resource and trusted partner.”

The foundation, of course, is where a lot of the concrete fastener, tool, and accessory business is to be had in the residential market, particularly in single family construction. From anchor bolts to attach wood framing and sill plates to post and base connections, there are multiple opportunities for concrete product suppliers to grow their business with home builders by adopting a partner mind-set and offering time-saving and labor-saving ideas and solutions.

To help builders and contractors choose the right products for specific applications, Simpson Strong-Tie has developed a suite of online apps and web resources like the Fastener Finder, which lets users select from a variety of length, head type, coating, material, thread, and drive types to quickly identify the best fastener for the job at hand.

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*Titen Turbo: Providing innovative solutions to help homebuilders boost efficiency and productivity can unlock residential markets to concrete product suppliers. Credit: Simpson Strong-Tie*

*Continued on page 16*



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“As the homebuilding industry has grappled with labor challenges, easy technologies like web apps have become a popular way for contractors to access quick information on the jobsite or at the supply house,” Kaelin says. In addition to the Fastener Finder, Simpson Strong-Tie offers additional free apps and software like its Anchor Designer for computing anchor design strength, a rebar length calculator, and a code report finder to access up-to-date information on code-listed products and solutions.

“With a lot of resources dedicated to research, development, and testing, we’ve been able to bring code-listed products to market, but we’re also supporting those products with boots on the ground, offering our residential builders smarter ways to build that will speed up the inspection process and keep punch lists and call-backs to a minimum,” Kaelin says.

By providing a wide range of solutions and options while focusing on ways to help residential contractors build safer, stronger homes, concrete fastener, tool, and accessory suppliers can quickly gain a foothold in the homebuilding sector. Multifamily projects from garden-style, walk-up apartments to podium buildings incorporating parking garages offer additional sales and volume to suppliers that can bring a value-added, partnership mentality to the jobsite.

“While residential construction is a bit different in how much growth it has seen during the pandemic, concrete product suppliers are going to find that getting new business from residential contractors isn’t as difficult as it may seem, particularly if you can bring solutions that help them with efficiency, and productivity,” Kaelin says. “Be a partner to a homebuilder, and you just might have a customer for life.”

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