

Perma-Chink Systems News

Winter Issue

The Log Home Care and Maintenance Authority



There is no time more fitting to say Thank You and to wish you a Happy New Year of health, hapiness and prosperity.

Ordering at www.permachink.com just got easier! Check our new **Virtual Catalog** to browse our products in a familiar format. You can also download and print out the catalog yourself.



In today's issue:

- Thank You for Another Successful Year.....1-2
- Choosing a Log Home Contractor3-5
- The Airplane Ride.....6
- Anatomy of a Tree7
- Announcements and Workshops8

www.permachink.com

Thank You Again for Another Successful Year!

By Terry Hofrichter

We are grateful to all of our customers for yet another successful year at Perma-Chink Systems. Growth was a little tougher to achieve in this past year, but we are able to say that we did it again. 2008 was quite a year for everyone, especially in the various building industries. I will leave out any discussion about IRA's and 401k's – that is for you to have with your investment advisors, but it sure looks to me that it's a good time to be buying those stocks for your retirement accounts, rather than selling them. I personally am looking forward to forgetting much of what happened in 2008.

Personal complaining aside, we accomplished quite a few things during the past year that are important to you - our customers. With the goal of providing better customer service and a solidly better product line to you, we turned much of our attention to tuning and improving some important things: training, product improvements, information accessibility and production capacity. What's new? Read on...

Training: After relocating our sales office in Knoxville at the end of 2007, we continued to improve the space by setting up a customer training area. We conducted 22 log home maintenance training seminars across the



(Continued on page 2)

Issue #1

1

Winter, 2009

Thank You Again for Another Successful Year!

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(Continued from page 1)

country for hundreds of homeowners and log home professionals. In order to expand our training capacity to people who live too far away from any of our locations, we just put the finishing touches on a Mobile Training Van that will hit the road to bring our training sessions to commercial applicators, so that we can expand the knowledge of our network of experienced contractor referrals. At this time, we expect that during 2009 we will be concentrating on contractor training with this new van.

Last year we made significant improvements to four individual products (and subtle improvements to many others.) The first of the notable improvements was changing the consistency and color of *Check Mate* – we changed the name to *Check Mate 2* to prevent any confusion between the previous and the new product. We altered the consistency to allow application in vertical checks and downward facing checks. Additionally, we also updated the color selection and made the color to be more visible while the sealant is still wet. Finally, we increased the stretch of *Check Mate 2*. The improved formula is also more resistant to extremely wet conditions. Try *Check Mate 2* if you haven't yet.

Another product improvement that we made last year was to make *Endure*, our deck coating, a single-coat, rather than dual-coat, application. This change reduces labor during application and makes the weathering characteristics more predictable. The updated *Endure* is fully compatible with the previous version.

Our website www.permachink.com underwent quite a few under the hood upgrades during the first half of last year. We've added the ability to do secure, on-line purchases and developed the first version of a searchable knowledge base. We added a chat service to provide real-time answers to on-line customers' information requests. The volume of on-line orders from our customers proved to us that customers really appreciate the convenience of making secure orders any time of the day.

Other product improvements included a change to our blast media from corn grit to a recycled glass media that provides much better coverage rates. This new media helps to reduce the cost of finish removal when using the *Blaster Buddy* or other blasting system. For our manufacturing and building customers, we made changes to the formulation, packaging and especially the pricing structure of Stack-n-Seal, now called *Stack-n-Seal 2*. Check with your local Sales Representative for more information.

As the year came to a close, we took delivery and installed an additional new mixing system to make sure that we will have the production capacity to meet an increasing demand for our sealants and finishes. Our Knoxville manufacturing plant has been getting busier every year and 2008 was no exception. Our newer blending equipment not only insures that we can meet your product delivery needs, but it also insures that we can meet your higher expectations for product quality.

From all of us at *Perma-Chink Systems*, thank you again for another successful year!



Jack Frost Construction, WA



Choosing a Log Home Contractor

■ Seven Key Questions to Consider...

By Randy Adamson

Are you a real *do-it-yourselfer* when it comes to maintaining your log home? If so, every product we offer is made with you in mind. User-friendly products, common sense labels and application guides, plus our experienced team of customer service and technical support staff – all these are at your disposal. No job is too big or too complicated for any log homeowner who is so inclined. Sorry then, this article's not really meant for you (*hopefully you'll still find it informative!*)

Now, for the rest of our customers – those of you who maybe just don't have the time, physical ability or even the confidence level to do the work yourself – **Perma-Chink Systems offers an extensive referral list of log home contractors from coast to coast.** Most of these contractors are self-employed and none are affiliated with Perma-Chink Systems, so we can't give you any outright recommendations. But most of them are our customers who have experience and training in using our products on log homes.

So let's say you've decided not to do the work on your home and have chosen instead to hire it done. You've gotten a list of several referrals from Perma-Chink Systems or other sources. Now what?

Obviously, you'll want to interview all the contractors to determine their reliability, reputation and experience as well as their procedures that best meet your individual needs. So I am going to suggest to you 7 key questions to ask each one during the bid process.

The First Step – Get Smart

A very important **first step** before interviewing any contractor is to educate yourself (and your spouse, of course!). Perma-Chink Systems can help you better understand the steps and nuances of your project. You can attend one of our free homeowner workshops, read through our literature and application guides or call one of our log home specialists to walk you through the process and related products. Better yet, our website www.permachink.com offers the most detailed searchable log home knowledge base in the industry,

downloadable how-to literature, online ordering of products and free samples, plus live online help with a specialist via chat session, e-mail or phone. The more you know about your upcoming project, the better you can ask the right questions and understand the answers from the contractors. So *please don't overlook this important step!*

The Next Step – The Interviews



Okay, so here's my list of 7 Key Questions you should ask each contractor candidate:

1. What is the full name and address of the contractor's company?

Getting the complete address of the company can be an important factor in determining a company's time in business. If a post office box is given, ask for a full street address as well. Many contractors today have their own websites, making the answers to this and the next few questions fairly easy to find.

2. Does the contractor carry insurance?

A contractor should carry comprehensive liability insurance and workers' compensation insurance to protect you in the event of a job accident. This can be verified by asking to see certificates of insurance. Contractors may carry other kinds of insurance including health, life and auto. Bland assurances of insurance coverage may refer to these. *Don't be confused.* Ask for proof of general liability and workers' compensation coverage for the type of project.

Now, there are also *contractors who do not carry insurance.* They will most likely be cheaper to hire as they do not have the large insurance premiums to pay. Workers' compensation premiums can increase wage costs by about 20% or even higher. Ultimately *it is up to you* to determine if it is worth the risk to hire a contractor who does not carry insurance.

(Continued on page 4)

Choosing a Log Home Contractor

■ Seven Key Questions to Consider...

By Randy Adamson

(Continued from page 3)



3. Is the contractor licensed or credentialed?

Ask if the contractor is licensed by your state and/or city. Not all states require contractors to be licensed. If your state does license contractors, then they might have to pass a written examination in a specialty, though few licenses make this a requirement. A number of cities also require professional licensing. Check with your local licensing authority.

A contractor may also answer this question by telling you they have a business license. However, a business license is a tax requirement only and is not directly relevant to the contractor's competence. Homeowners can view a contractor's credentials as another indicator of their degree of knowledge, professionalism, and dedication to their trade. So ask for copies of all licenses and credentials.

4. How long has the contractor been in business?

Needless to say, longer is usually better. Under three years may signal an unstable business or one low on the learning curve. On the other hand, everybody has to start sometime. Be sure to ask how long they've been doing log home work.

References are helpful to research any business and especially important when dealing with a new business. A newer

contractor may have a great future, but it is only reasonable to be more careful when considering their references. The failure rate of small contractors in the first 3 years is very high.

5. Will the company provide references from previous jobs?

Ask for photos of completed work, if available. Most experienced log home contractors will have a portfolio of past jobs, along with photos and testimonial letters. Request a list of 5 names and phone numbers of recent customers (last 12 months). It is not necessary to check all 5, but you will be able to pick randomly from the list those you do call. So ask for (even demand) current references.

6. What is the contractor's workmanship warranty?

Some contractors typically warrant their workmanship for one year or more. Longer warranties are not necessarily more valuable than shorter warranties. The length of the warranty is less important than the intent and ability of the contractor to stand behind his warranty. That is best evaluated using customer references.

Ask the contractor's customers specifically for information about these four things:

- 1) Did they perform the work in a timely and professional manner?
- 2) Were they accessible and responsive when asked for information and changes?



Choosing a Log Home Contractor

■ Seven Key Questions to Consider...

By Randy Adamson

(Continued from page 4)

3) Did they act as if they cared about the customer's interests?

4) Would you call the contractor trustworthy?

Usually, problems in either workmanship or material show up very quickly. Therefore, the near-term warranty given by the contractor is more important than the coverage during the later years of a warranty. Even if problems of workmanship arise after the workmanship warranty has lapsed, a reliable contractor usually will want to stand behind his work. Likewise, in the rare event of a product performance problem, Perma-Chink Systems will work with you to remedy the situation.

7. What is the contractor's track record for solving customer complaints?

Try to find out how your contractor handles problems when they do arise. Request a referral from at least one job that involved a complaint. Ask the contractor if they have ever lost a job-related court case. Ask if their contractor's license has ever been suspended and why.

Also, in talking to the appropriate authorities, such as the Better Business Bureau and licensing departments, find out if

any complaints have been filed against the contractors whom you have interviewed. Many contractors in business for any length of time have been involved in a dispute. Ask how the dispute was resolved to test your contractor's reputation.

"An Ounce of Prevention"

I wish I could tell you that these few steps alone will help you to choose the perfect contractor every time. But, in fact, there are several more important things to consider as you narrow down your contractor selection. All job bids (if well-written) should contain enough detail provisions and terms to clearly state both parties' expectations. Your contractor's knowledge of local building laws, their schedule to do the work and, of course, the total price they bid for your project, are all part of the equation.

When it comes to caring for your log home, it's reassuring to know that you can choose a contractor on whom you can rely on for good advice as well trust that they're dedicated to providing you with the best results possible. It takes a little more work to do this "homework", but it can definitely be worth it. Hopefully, these first few steps will help you in selecting your contractor. Again, Perma-Chink Systems is happy to offer you all our products and resources to make this process a successful experience.

Testimonials:

"This is to thank you for your persistence with your products. As a Professional Finisher and Chinker, I have used several different products. Some of the products my company used are TimberChink, this I was not happy at all with, Weatherll I felt was OK. Also we used Sashco and I felt some of their products were good. When I met my Perma-Chink Representative I was using a local company out of Boise called Pioneer Coatings. Darrin from Perma-Chink Systems was persistent and to that I am thankful for. It is hard to make changes, especially when you have established reputation with your clients.

What I have come to love about Perma-Chink products is how well the products work on an individual basis but more than that how well they work with each other and as a complete system. The chinking was phenomenal. By using this product, seeing first hand how user friendly it is and how great it stands up (to the environment), it **cut my labor cost by approximately 35%** which enables me to keep more money in the company so that we can continue to grow. Also, the stains apply nice and appear to be very durable.

Thank you for introducing me and my company to your product and I look forward to having many more satisfied customers to come using your Perma-Chink Systems products."

Sincerely,

Glenn Scott / Gem State Log Finishing 208-447-9296

The Airplane Ride



Twelve years ago Jesse Huddleston, son of Tony Huddleston of Perma-Chink, convinced his mother to let him take a ride in a small single engine airplane while they were visiting his grandmother in southern Indiana. That brief experience opened the door to a full time desire to become a commercial pilot, and it was very clear that nothing was going to stand in his way.

From that day on every chance he got he was at the small airport in Knoxville either taking flying lessons or just “going along for the ride” whenever possible. No one believed that he would stick to the task, especially at his age. He developed a rapport with the guys at the Knox County Sheriff’s Aviation unit, and there he was able to learn a great deal about helicopters and law enforcement.

When Jesse turned 16 years old, he was signed off to solo a twin engine airplane, and he followed that up the same day by soloing a single engine airplane. With those privileges approved he started to build time towards his twin engine and single engine certificates. By the time he had reached his 17th birthday, he was signed off to take the private pilot written test and this was followed up with his check ride by the FAA for twin and single engine aircraft.

The next step in his aviation career was to try for his instrument rating so he would have the capability to fly in less than perfect weather and be able to navigate with only the aircraft instruments with virtually no outside references.

Jesse had by then also accumulated enough credits to graduate from Gibbs High School by mid year during his senior term, and he entered the world of work with the Knox County Sheriff’s Department, his work included the intake center, the courthouse and finally the radio shop. While he did like his job with the Sheriffs Department, it was still very clear that he had higher desires to keep flying and he obtained his commercial flight certificate.

So at the age of 19 he set out to see what the world of aviation had in store for someone so young. He applied to a company located near Detroit Michigan and after six weeks of additional training on the aircraft, he is now sitting in the right seat of a Learjet, flying either cargo or Air Ambulance for Kalitta Charters. The Learjet routinely flies at 40,000 ft. and about 450 knots and can be used in smaller airports.

What started out as an innocent airplane ride has provided the fulfillment of skyward dreams for an 8 year old boy who had the desire to stick with it.



The Log Home Care & Maintenance Authority

Company Stores

Washington/Western Division

Redmond, WA 98052
(425) 885-6050
1-800-548-1231

Tennessee/Eastern Division

Knoxville, TN 37914
(865) 524-7343
1-800-548-3554

Sevierville, TN Branch

Sevierville, TN 37862
(865) 774-3307

Minnesota Branch

Rice, MN 56367
(320) 393-3088
1-877-244-6548

Colorado Branch

Rifle, CO 81650
(970) 625-1966
1-800-433-8781

Montana Branch

Stevensville, MT 59870
(406) 642-3544
1-800-479-7090

www.permachink.com

Stocking Distributors

**Canadian Log Home Supply,
Central & Eastern Canada**
1-800-746-7773
www.canadianloghomesupply.com

**Hess Log Home Supplies,
Pennsylvania**
1-800-257-4864
www.hessloghomesupplies.com

**Log Home Center,
Indiana**
1-800-773-6223
www.loghomecenter.com

**Steels Industrial Products, Ltd.,
Western Canada**
1-877-846-7502
www.steels.com

**Timeless Wood Care Products,
Michigan**
1-800-564-2987
www.timelesswoodcare.com

Anatomy of a Tree

By Vince Palmere

Hardwood and Softwoods

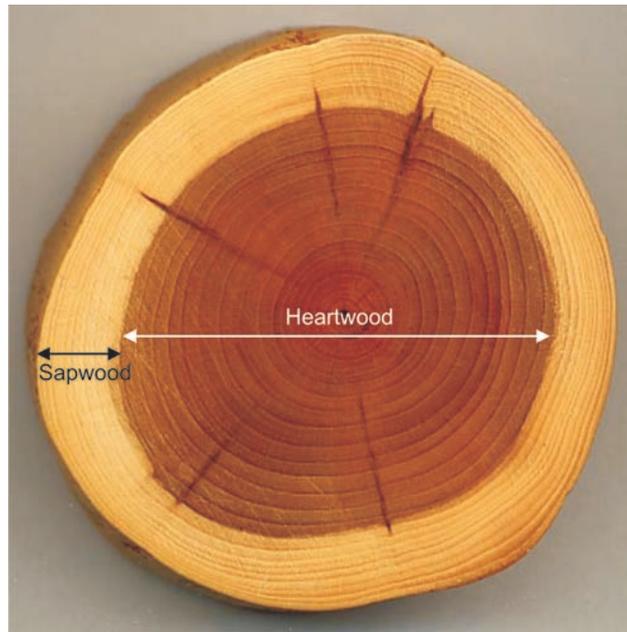
Trees are typically categorized into two major families, hardwood species and softwood species. Hardwood refers to trees like oak, poplar, maple walnut, etc. that have broad leaves which usually drop off the tree in the winter. Softwood trees like spruce, pine, hemlock, fir, etc. have needle-like leaves all year round, the reason they are also called evergreen trees. On average, wood from hardwood trees has a higher density and hardness than that from softwoods but there is considerable variation in actual wood hardness in both groups and wood from some softwood species may be considerably harder than that of some hardwoods. A bit confusing, isn't it?

Bark, Cambium, Sapwood and Heartwood

If we take a look at the cross-section of a tree we can usually see four discernable layers (there are more but four will do for our purposes). The outer layer is the bark which helps protect the tree from injury from fire and insects and helps the tree maintain moisture. Under the bark is a thin layer called the cambium. It is typically green and is responsible for most of the growth of the diameter of the tree.

The bark and cambium layer should always be removed from logs used in the construction of log homes. If left intact they can provide a home and food for a wide variety of pests and their presence hinders the drying process. We next encounter sapwood, the living wood in a growing tree. All wood in a tree is first formed as sapwood. Its function is to conduct water from the roots to the leaves and to store nutrients generated by the leaves. Since sapwood is moist and contains many nutrients, it is the section of the tree that is most susceptible to decay and insect attack.

In the center of older trees we'll find heartwood, wood that is no longer living. Heartwood is typically resistant to decay and insects since it contains a high concentration of naturally occurring fungicides and pesticides. In some tree species it may appear in a cross-section as a discolored circle, following the annual rings in shape. Usually the older a tree is the more heartwood it will contain. Years ago few people constructed a log home using sapwood. They only harvested old large diameter trees and then hewed off all of the sapwood.



That's how the log home "hand hewn" look came about. The heartwood, being naturally resistant to insects and decay, was used to construct the home which is why many of the log homes constructed in the 18th and 19th centuries still exist.

Today, it's virtually impossible to obtain large diameter logs with a significant amount of heartwood. That's why our borate preservatives play such an important role in the preservation of a modern log home. Once sapwood is impregnated with the active borate ingredient it becomes more resistant to insects and decay than even old growth heartwood. Borate treatments to log homes have become so commonplace that few people remember that it was Perma-Chink Systems that introduced the very first remedial borate treatment way back in 1989. Environmental innovation always has been and always will be an integral part of Perma-Chink Systems' corporate philosophy.

Issue #1

7

Winter, 2009

We would like to hear from you!

We welcome your questions & suggestions

Perma-Chink Systems

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Winter, 2009

8

Issue #1

The Log Home Care and Maintenance Authority

Don't Miss Out FREE

Application Workshops/Seminars

Winter/Spring 2009



January 17	Stevensville, Montana
March 7	Rice, Minnesota
March 14	Stevensville, Montana
March 14	Redmond, Washington
March 14	Knoxville, Tennessee
March 28	Prince George, BC Canada

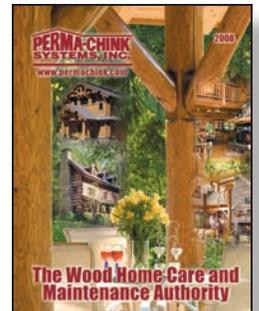
Please check our website for more dates as we update them regularly.

If you would like a referral to an experienced contractor to perform an inspection or to help you with your log home project, contact your nearest Perma-Chink Systems, Inc. location.

Free samples of many of our products are available upon request. Call your nearest Perma-Chink Systems store.

WE SPECIALIZE IN ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRODUCTS!

Perma-Chink Systems Free Product Catalog



order on line at:

www.permachink.com

Come See Us at these Log Home Shows

Winter/Spring 2009

January 23-25	Bozeman, Montana
February 6-8	Dallas, Texas
February 17	Hamilton, Montana
Feb 27 - March 1	Sacramento, California
Feb 27 - March 1	Nashville, Tennessee
March 13-15	Orlando, Florida
March 14	Abbotsford, BC Canada

Visit our website for more information