



This beautiful custom job in natural Linoleum was cut by Waterjets Unlimited of Long Island, NY and installed by Alex Shimansky, Carlos Camacho and David Garcia of Floorcraft. Eric Bower of Forbo, who sent us the photograph, described them as "a great example of mechanics in the industry that really stick to fundamentals and end up with great results."

boards on top like plywood or Masonite if there is to be rolling traffic on the floor.

Finally, when the job is done and the building is occupied, make arrangements to get back to the job and take some pictures. Nothing looks better in an installer or dealer's portfolio that photographs of a beautiful custom installed resilient floor. **FCI**

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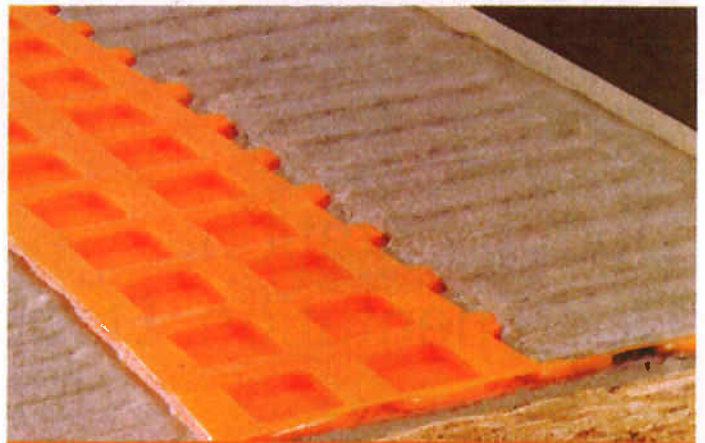


Winner of the 2003 Australian Tile Council's *Best New Industry Product*

CIRCLE 51

# Schluter®-DITRA

The Universal Underlayment for Ceramic and Stone Tile

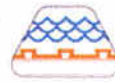


## ADDRESSING UNIQUE CHALLENGES FOR WOOD SUBSTRATES



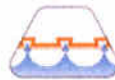
### UNCOUPLING

Protects tile covering from movement stresses from wood substrates due to moisture expansion/contraction and loading.



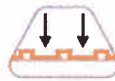
### WATERPROOFING

Protects moisture-sensitive wood substrates.



### VAPOR MANAGEMENT

Open channels allow residual moisture in wood to escape, helping to prevent warping.

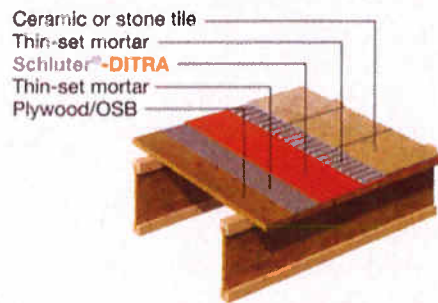


### SUPPORT/LOAD DISTRIBUTION

DITRA is virtually incompressible within the tile assembly and provides adequate support for tile covering.

### WOOD SUBSTRATE DETAILS

- 16", 19.2", and 24" o.c. joist spacing
- Structural plank subfloor
- Existing vinyl



Please refer to the Schluter®-DITRA Installation Handbook for complete installation guidelines and our no-nonsense 5-year warranty. Easy to follow step-by-step installation video also available!

To receive a copy of the Handbook or video, please call our Customer Service Representatives at 1-800-472-4588, or visit [www.schluter.com](http://www.schluter.com).

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CIRCLE 53

industry. He has numerous years' experience as a tile contractor and teacher of industry standards and methods. He will share the main reasons why installations fail with attendees.

**Seven things contractors always ask me:**  
*Charles Vander Kooi*

A fixture at shows like World of Concrete, Vander Kooi combines a

unique knowledge of the contracting trade with an exuberant and lively presentation. He will make you laugh; but he will make you think too. This program is not to be missed if you are a tile contractor.

**A day in the life of a tile industry consultant:**

*Rich Goldberg and Jim Aciri*

As the tile industry has grown, the need for quality consultants does as well. Two of the leading consultants in the industry will share their experiences with the attendees.

**Contractors forum:**

*NTCA contractor members*

Discussion will center on marketing your business, website development and promotion, community involvement, networking and other ideas to promote your contracting business. Audience will be encouraged to participate with questions and comments.

These are just a few of the seminar sessions being offered. Programs geared towards architects and designers, distribution and manufacturing, installation and specification are offered throughout the four days of the show. I urge you to consider attending Coverings simply for the educational value you will receive. In addition, you will be exposed to all that is new in the tile and stone industry. It is an incredible experience. Log on to the Coverings website at [www.coverings.com](http://www.coverings.com) to register and to view the entire Conference Schedule. I look forward to seeing you in Chicago. ■



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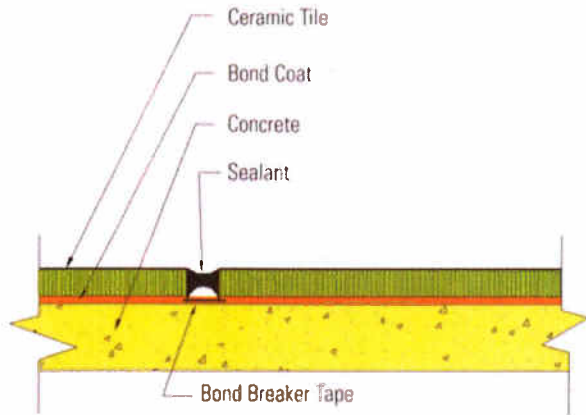
"I dare you to compare my underlayment system with anything else on the market. You won't find another underlayment that will pass all these tests, be cost effective and will let you tile over any sound surface. I am so confident in this product that I put my name on it and offer a 15 year warranty."

*Armen Tavay*

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## Generic Movement Joint



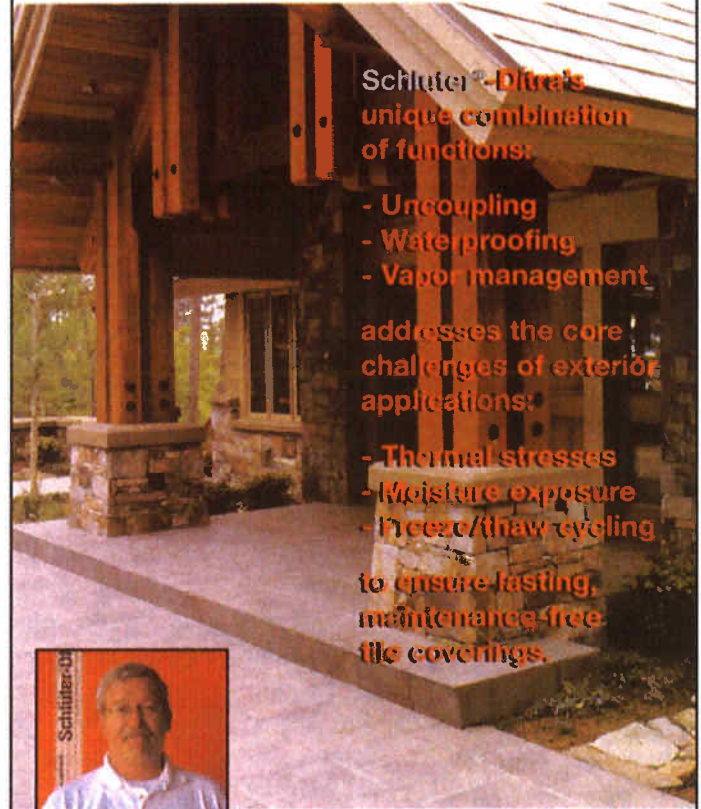
matches the grout joint. Water-cleanable caulks are available to match most grout colors (some are even available sanded to match the texture of grout) These may require more frequent replacement than the other types, but are worth the additional effort and expense if seamless good looks are important.

To use water based caulks, you simply fill the joint with caulk and then compress it into the joint with a striking tool dipped in water (you may have to clean and re-wet the strike as you go. Clean the excess with a sponge, making several passes until the excess has been removed. It is a good idea to check the caulk joint area to ensure that all the excess has been removed. Applying silicones and urethanes are a bit more challenging. You should really tape the sides of the joint to protect surrounding areas from residue, it makes clean up much easier. When tooling silicones or urethanes, a little soapy water will keep caulk from sticking to the tool used to finish the joint. Remove the tape by pulling it over the top of the joint and protect the area until the caulk has cured. Time will vary with product; some take hours, some days. Whatever brand of sealant or caulk you use, follow all manufacturers instructions regarding preparation of the slot, backing, application temperature and humidity, and curing requirements.

When properly made and finished, movement joints provide service for many years. However, because expansion joints move and flex and get abraded and torn, they will eventually wear out. Sometimes, the entire system of joints may need replacement while at other times, only a spot repair is needed. It is wise to make the owner aware that replacement or repair is a maintenance item, not a failure. I would also like to acknowledge I understand the difference between real world and perfect world. In the perfect world, every job would have joints as needed using proper materials. In the real world, there is nothing harder than selling a caulk joint down the middle of someone's dream floor. Likewise, most are very adverse to having joints in doorways or leaving the perimeter of the room with a 1/4-inch gap. All I can say is at that point it becomes a business decision. That the floor is going to move for any number of reasons is a given. Not putting the joints in is a risk. Many get by for numerous years and never have a problem; others are not so fortunate. You make the call. **FCI**

# Schluter®-DITRA

Used both inside and outside, Schluter®-DITRA is a multi-functional underlayment that ensures a long-lasting tile installation.



Schluter®-Ditra's unique combination of functions:

- Uncoupling
- Waterproofing
- Vapor management

addresses the core challenges of exterior applications:

- Thermal stresses
- Moisture exposure
- Freeze/thaw cycling

to ensure lasting, maintenance-free tile coverings.

"About 80% of our tile jobs are done with Schluter®-DITRA, and we don't do any exterior tiling jobs without it. Schluter has the right idea that the uncoupling is what makes a difference, especially here in Montana where there is a harsh freeze/thaw cycle."

Michael Whistler  
Whistler Tile and Stone, Inc.



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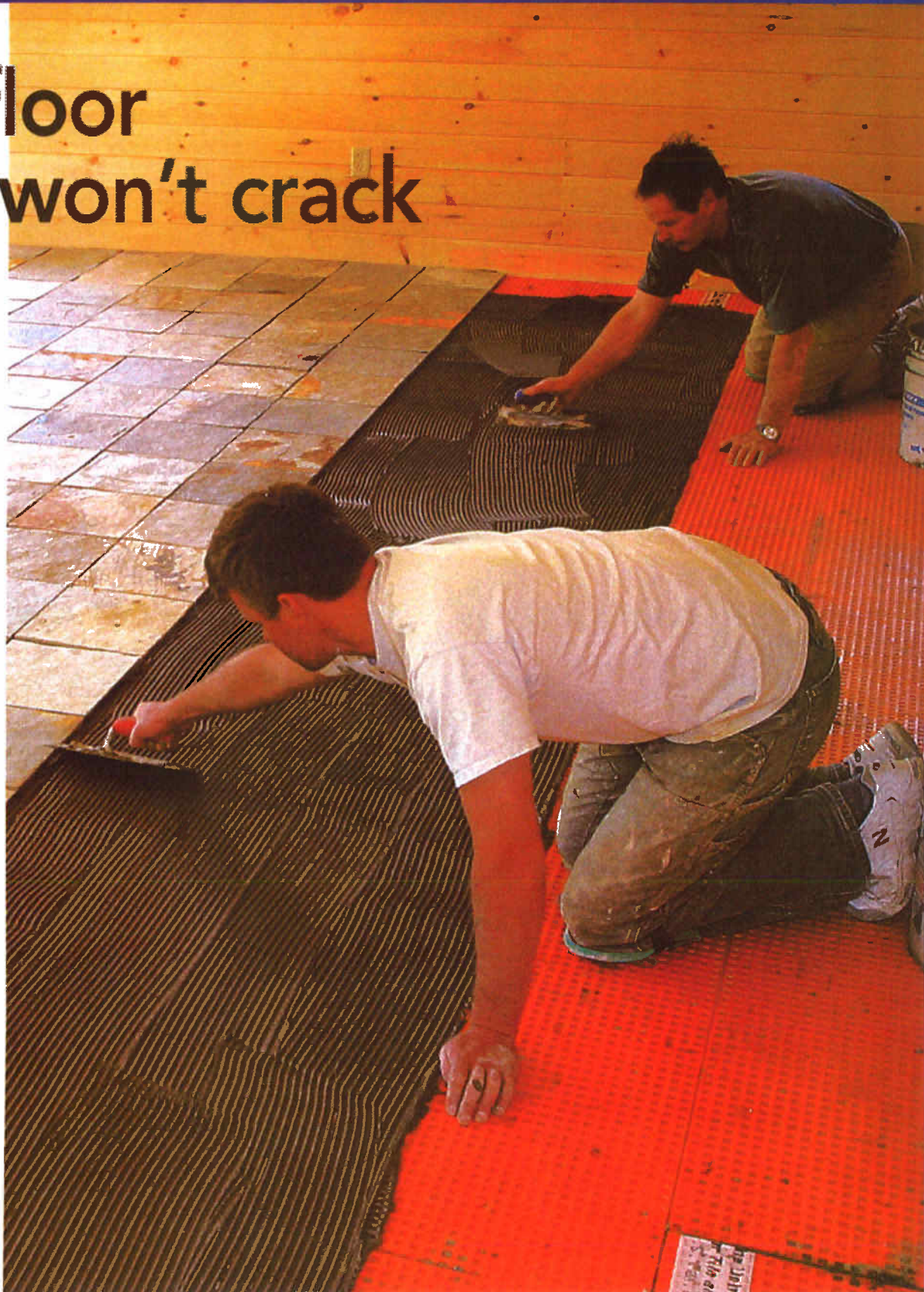
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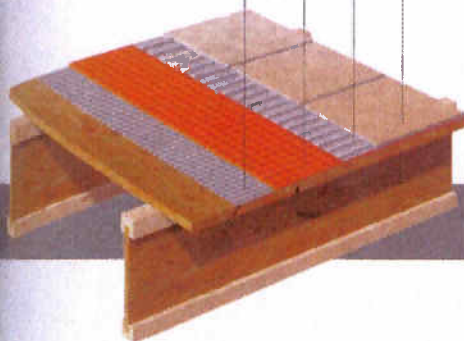
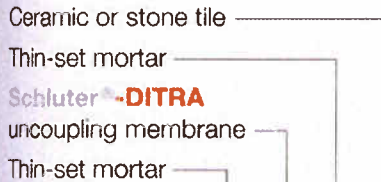
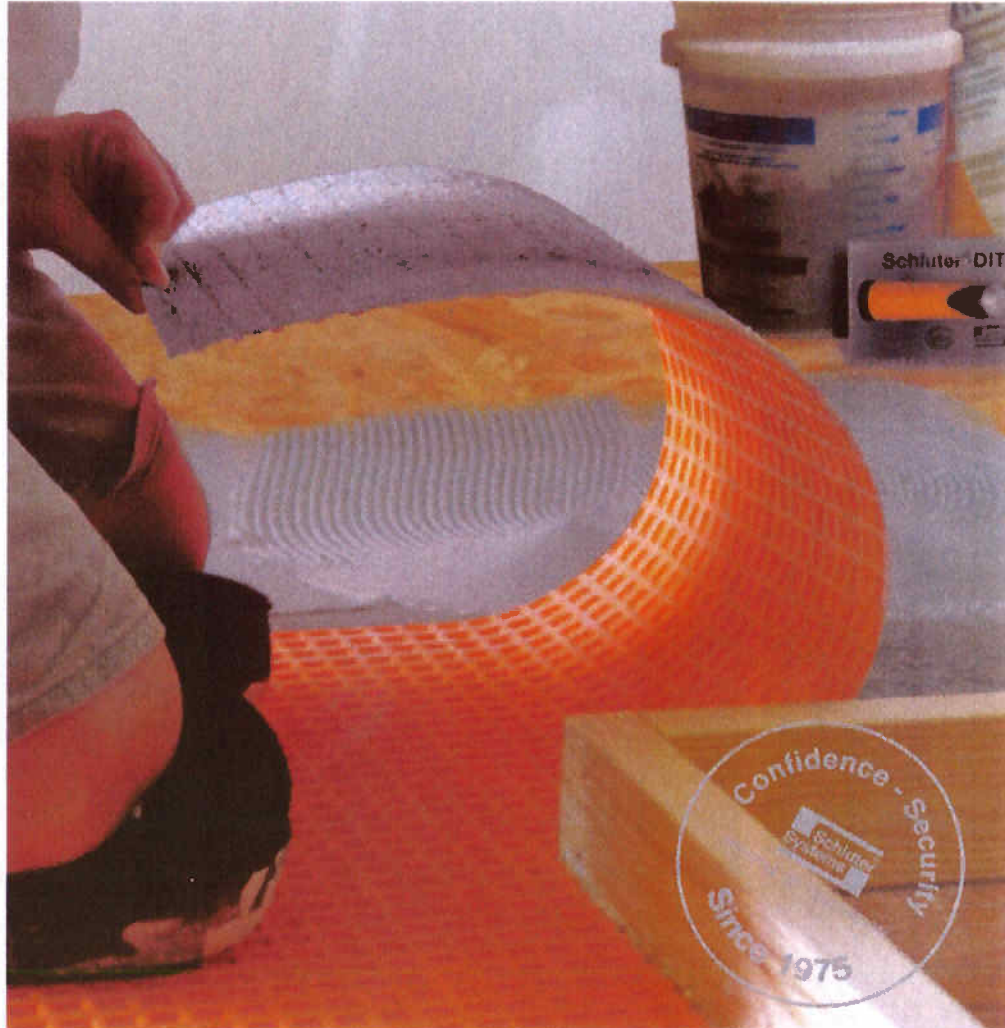


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- Schluter®-DITRA provides uncoupling, which eliminates the major cause of cracking and delaminating of the tiled surface
- Waterproofing protects material beneath the tiles
- 95% lighter than cement backerboard or plywood
- Ideal for use over various substrates, such as plywood, OSB, concrete, gypsum, and existing vinyl flooring; used in both interior and exterior applications
- Only 1/8" thick
- Quick and easy to install: no special tools or fasteners necessary; tiles can be applied immediately after DITRA



### Schluter®-DITRA Installation Handbook

A comprehensive Installation Handbook, which includes 16 separate installation details, movement joint guidelines, our no-nonsense 5-year warranty, and more.

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For more information on Seneca Tiles, call 800-426-4335 or visit their website at: [www.senecatiles.com](http://www.senecatiles.com).

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Schluter®-DITRA prevents the main cause of cracking on a tiled surface

Schluter®-DITRA waterproofs

Schluter®-DITRA allows the substrate to breathe

Schluter®-DITRA provides confidence and security



"DITRA has performed as promised, and has revolutionized our tile business. Stress cracks are no longer an issue like they were with backerboard. Our installers love it because of its light-weight and user-friendly characteristics. Thank you, Schluter!"

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for complete installation  
guidelines and our no-nonsense  
5-year warranty.



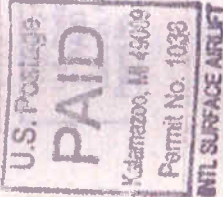
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by the installer, for the installer



National Tile Contractors Association

September 2006

# TileLetter

## ON THE COVER:

Schluter Systems L.P.

Essential water management in tiled showers

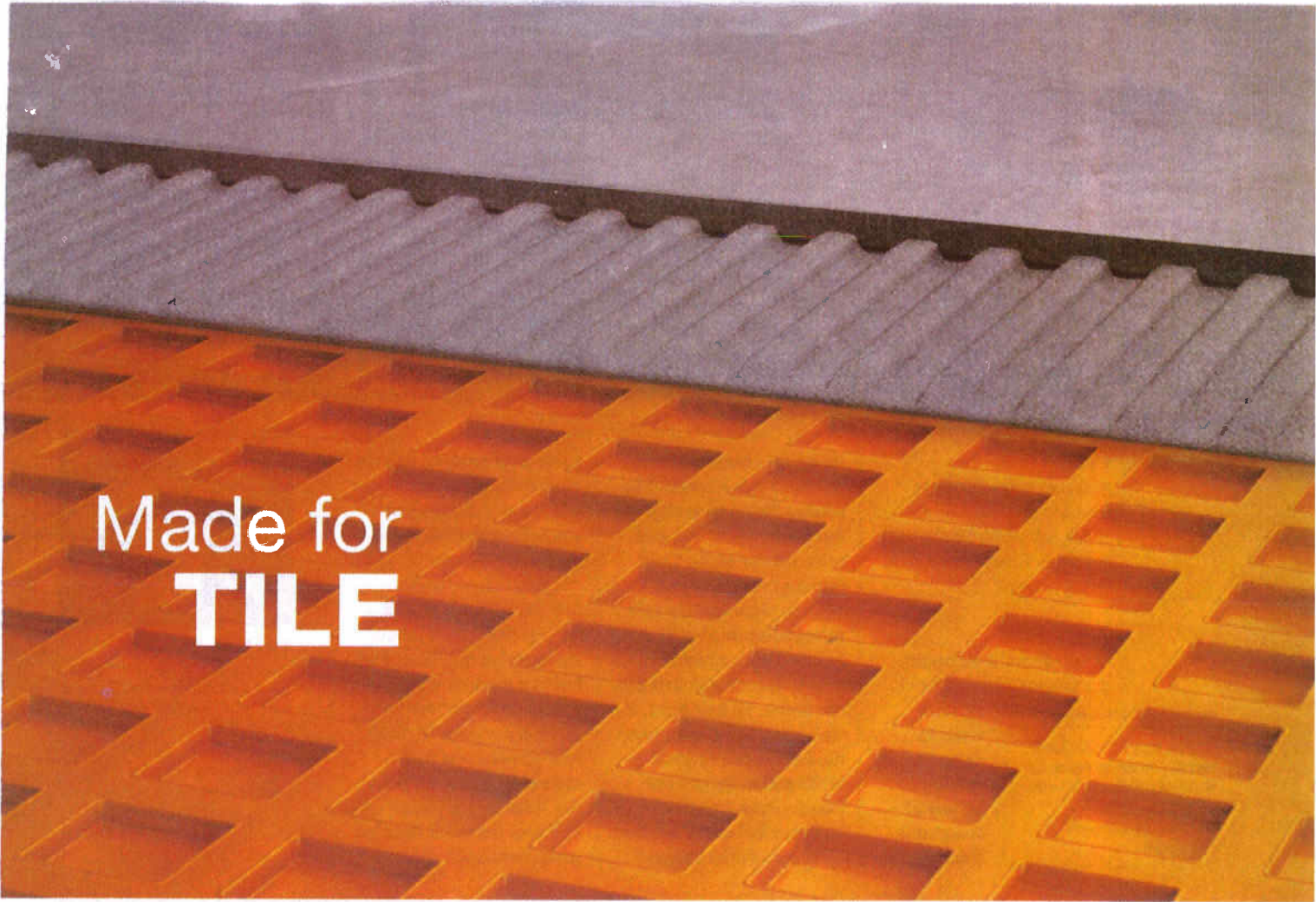
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- Prevents the main cause of cracked tiles
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- Lightweight alternative to cement backerboard
- Easy to handle and transport
- Cuts with utility knife or scissors – no saws and no dust
- Quick and easy to install
- No-nonsense warranty

The **Schluter<sup>®</sup>-DITRA Installation Handbook** is your comprehensive resource for tile installations over various substrates.

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# TileLetter

www.tileletter.com

## COVER STORY: Schlüter-DITRA Used in Beautiful Montana Home

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  - Waterproofing
  - Vapor management
- addresses the core challenges of exterior applications.

- Thermal stresses
- Moisture exposure
- Freeze/thaw cycling

to ensure lasting, maintenance-free tile covering.



"About 80% of our tile jobs are done with Schlüter-DITRA, and we don't do any exterior tiling jobs without it. Schlüter has made a difference, especially here in Montana where there is a harsh freeze/thaw cycle."

**Michael Whistler**  
Whistler Tile and Stone, Inc.

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Is the Smart Money Really All That Smart?

What is Deflection and Why Should You Care?

and solvents designed to remove the cement paste to clean concrete surfaces. This method can also aid in removing trace oils, grease, and detergent. The profile left after acid etching is a very fine profile not suitable for the application of products over 10 mils thick. With the difficulty of neutralizing the chemicals, handling of hazardous materials, disposal of corrosive waste, and amount of water needed, I am not a fan of this process. If you chose to use this method be prepared and take the necessary safety precautions.

#### **SURFACE PREPARATION:**

#### **A CASE BY CASE BASIS**

As you can see there are many methods and equipment available to the contractor to prepare surfaces properly. Each particular job and conditions of that job will determine which equipment or method is best suited. In some cases one procedure is not effective and may involve a multi-step process. Do not make the mistake of "I think the surface is okay; let's put it down." It's much more appealing to fill your wallet then open it up to the infamous

"callback." Callbacks cut profits, waste time, and ruin reputations.

The simple truth is surface preparation is a critical part of application. It does not have to be a mystery or difficult to accomplish. There are excellent tools available that can help make surface preparation easy and profitable. The key is to purchase the correct equipment for your business, saving a dollar up front can cost you thousands later. Using the right equipment, spending the necessary time and effort, and utilizing the correct methods can make the installation of your product easy and quick. It will also reduce that dreaded phone call and the sound of you wallet opening and the bills falling out.

*Virgil Vecasio is the senior sales manager for Innovatech Products & Equipment, based in Everett, Wash. He has 12 years experience specializing in concrete surface preparation and helped demonstrate surface preparation equipment at the 2006 NTCA Total Solutions, held in Las Vegas last September. For more information, visit Innovatech at [innovatechproducts.com](http://innovatechproducts.com) or email Virgil at [virgil@innovatechproducts.com](mailto:virgil@innovatechproducts.com).*

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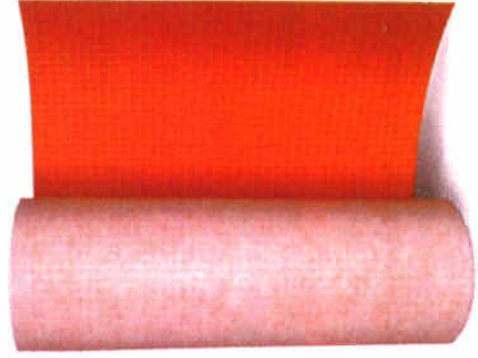
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**by the installer, for the installer**





*from the president*

*Nyle Wadford*



Greetings,

This past month found many of us at the 2011 Coverings show in beautiful Las Vegas, Nevada. This opportunity was yet another example of your National Tile Contractors Association (NTCA) shining among the many facets of the tile industry represented at the show. You could search in many different directions

before, during and even after the show and find many of our members, Board of Directors, and NTCA staff working feverishly to make the show a success.

Your NTCA was involved in many aspects including Board meetings, the ANSI A108 Committee meeting, offering programs, performing in the Installation Design Showcase, participating in CTEF Certified Tile Installer (CTI) certifications, presenting the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual *TileLetter* Installation Awards, greeting new members and of course, being well represented at the various social events throughout the week. Many members and vendors I spoke with were excited about the happenings at the event, and there was much discussion about seeing some turnaround in various spots of the tile industry's economy. All of this made for a great week of learning, viewing new products and renewing old acquaintances.

I would like to especially congratulate the participants in this year's Installation Design Showcase that carried out live tile installations right on the show floor. The owners and staffs of Cox Tile, Aircraft Granite Marble & Tile, Welch Tile and Lambert Tile & Stone did an outstanding

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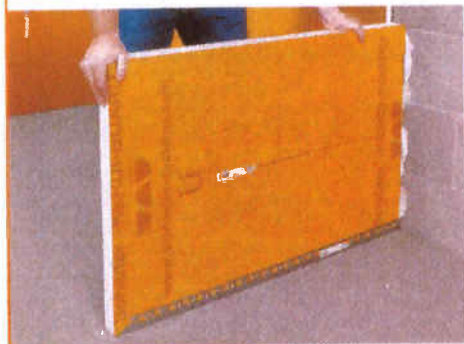
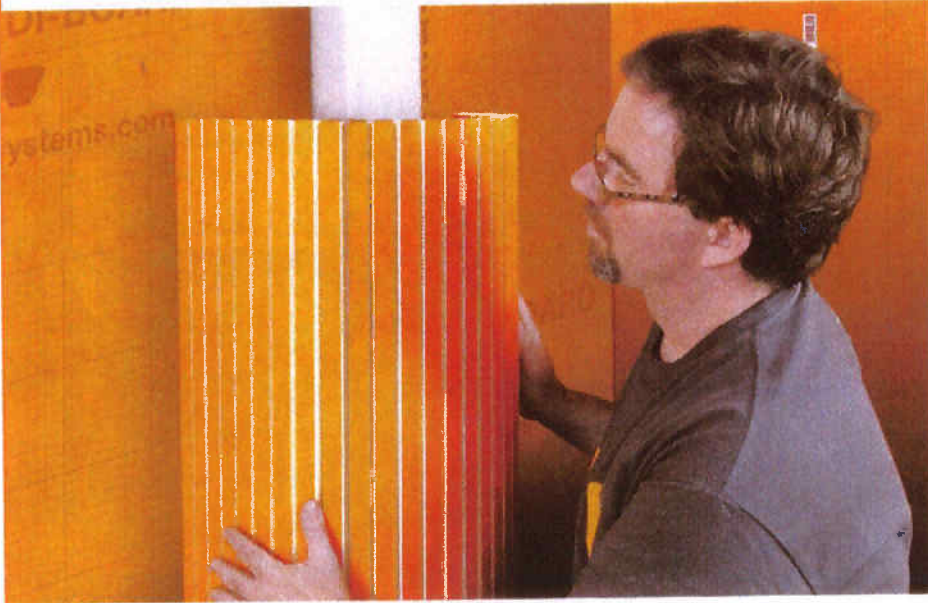
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## MAPEI SUPPORTS GLOBAL RELEASE PROGRAM

During Surfaces, MAPEI staged a press conference in its newly designed, high-tech booth, featuring economic, product and environmental information from company personnel.

Luigi DiGeso, president and CEO MAPEI Americas, announced that all MAPEI Americas facilities are seeking ISO 14001 EMS certification beginning with the Laval, Quebec facility, which has already passed phase 1 and 2 of the certification.

DiGeso also spoke reassuringly about the growth in Canada and that in the U.S., MAPEI "fared better than ceramic and resilient industry. We grew in a down market. We have not closed any plants or offices," DiGeso said, adding "Worry about today, today and tomorrow, tomorrow. We will help get the economy back on track."

CEO Dr. Giorgio Squinzi noted MAPEI grew 7 percent in 2009 over 2008, in part through acquisitions of Polygres and APAC as well as new plants in Dubai, Greece, Poland and South Africa and continuing reinvestment into research and development. "Economic recovery worldwide will only happen when the U.S. starts to grow."

Sam Biondo demonstrated Mapeguard 2 crack isolation and sound reduction sheet membrane, LFT medium bed mortar and Ultrabond ECO 995, a new environmentally friendly urethane-based glue for wood floors and bamboo that has little odor and no VOCs or phthalates. It also acts as a moisture barrier.

Jeff Leone, director of strategic marketing detailed MAPEI's Tile & Stone installation Systems line, using touch sensitive panels that display product information as part of the new booth design.

the company's Muskogee plant to use inkjet technology, promising no repeating patterns. In 12x24, 12x12, 18x18, 24x24 and a 2x4 mosaic in three colors with full trim assortment. Identity Color-Body porcelain offers three different visuals: grooved and fabric in unpolished and light polished finish and cement in unpolished finish. Stratford Place is a value-priced floor/wall combo in 12x12 and 18x18 floor tiles with a 10x14 wall tile that features high/low textures for dimensionality. Daltile solicited customer feedback regarding its Natural Stone Collection, which yielded a collection of stone "stories" – exotics with different finishes and range of sizes; stones paired with mosaics; and vein-cut and cross-cut designs. Colour Scheme, the first glazed porcelain product with OurStand technology antimicrobial technology infused into it for lifetime wear was on display. Information was available for the ProAdvanced Protection Program for stone countertops. Authorized applicators seal stone countertops with a DuPont formula- tion that offers stain and antimicrobial protection and receive a 15-year transferable residential warranty against all stains – or DuPont pays for a new stone countertop and installation.



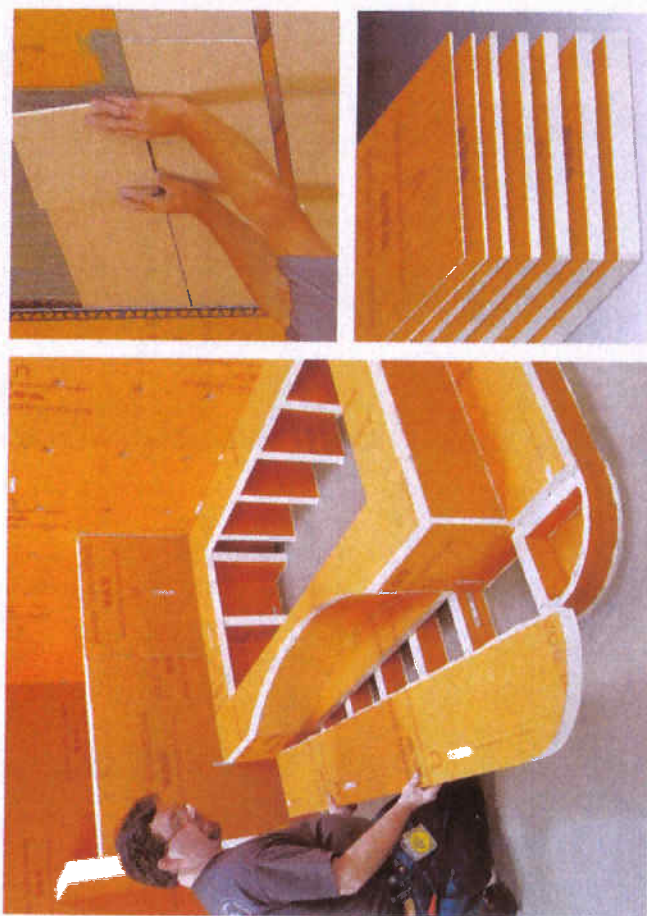
*Daltile's San Michele porcelain is the first Muskogee-made porcelain tile to use inkjet technology.*

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# Schluter®-KERDI-BOARD

## What will you build first?



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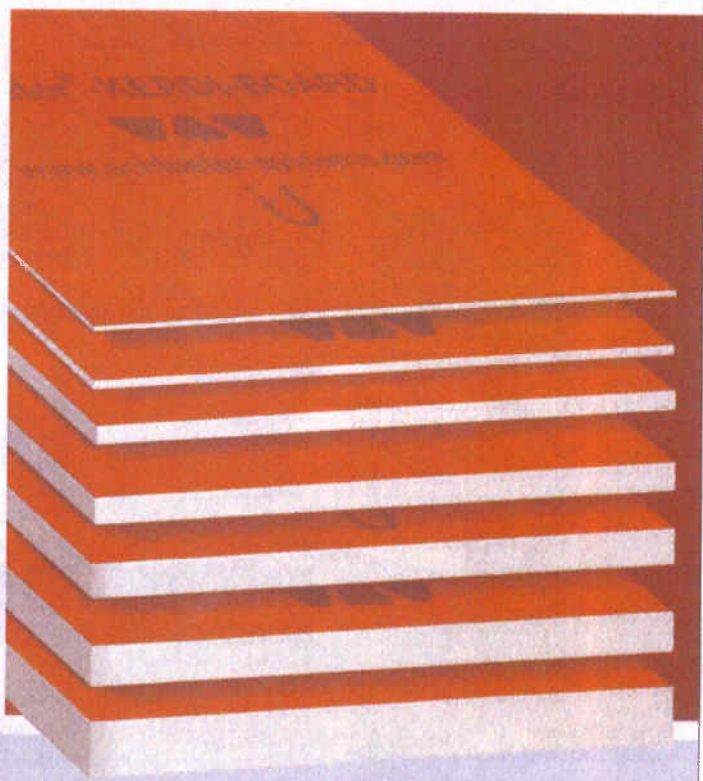
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Substrate, building panel, bonded waterproofing



Whether you work with mosaics or large-format tiles, an absolutely flat, level, plumb, square substrate is essential for creating a perfect tile covering.

## Introducing Schluter®-KERDI-BOARD

- Even, impact-resistant, and rigid
- Waterproof and vapor retardant
- Dimensionally stable
- Thermally insulating
- Lightweight (contains no cement or fiberglass)
- Dust-free and easy to cut with a utility knife
- Printed gridlines for precise cutting
- Suitable for use on any kind of structure



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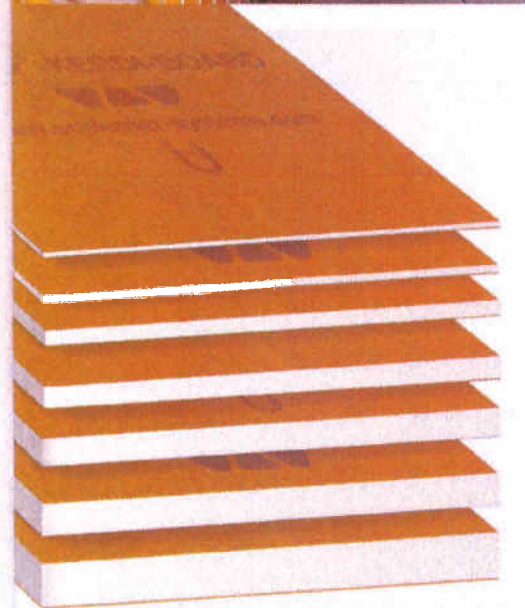
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PROFILE OF INNOVATION

# Schluter®-KERDI-BOARD

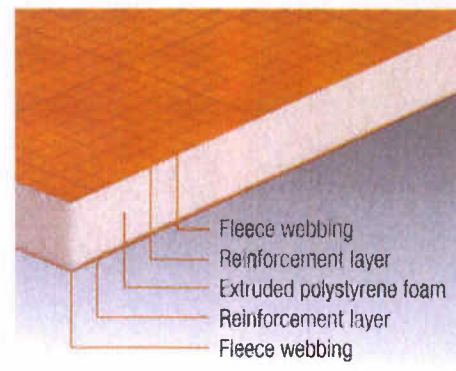
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Salvatori did work while Patitsas pastored St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church in Rocky River, Ohio, outside Cleveland. "He is the highest regarded Byzantine mosaicist in the world today," Patitsas said.

Salvatori, who has been creating sacred, liturgical, commemorative and decorative mosaic and marble works all over the world for more than 40 years, agreed to create mosaic art to fill the 10 recessed niches at St. George here—and then suggested a stunning mural of the Pentecost for the entire back wall of the church, flanked by images of St. George and St. Demetrios on horseback.

The planning of the \$208,000 project began in 2007, Patitsas said. After Salvatori designed the murals and panels, it took seven months for them to be constructed in Italy of Murano glass, including glass tiles that incorporate 24 karat gold leaf, Salvatori said. The 600 square foot project contains more than 10,000 distinct colors, giving subtle nuance and detail to faces and garment folds — and more than seven million individual pieces of tile, assembled in Italy.

"There was lots of variety and care to not repeat colors," Patitsas said. Salvatori explained the images were created face-down in mirror image and glued to a hand-drawn black and white charcoal sketch on paper. Then the paper was cut into sections and shipped from Italy to Albuquerque. Two artisans flew over from Italy to install the mosaics, along with a local helper, where it took three weeks to install the mosaics.



*Murano glass tiles, some of which incorporate 24 karat gold leaf, form the detailed images.*

Salvatori told *TileLetter* that after the wall is prepared with chicken wire, the tile is set in a 1/4-inch mortar of cement. Afterwards, the paper is torn away and the tile — the largest of which is only 1/4-inch — is cleaned with Muriatic acid.

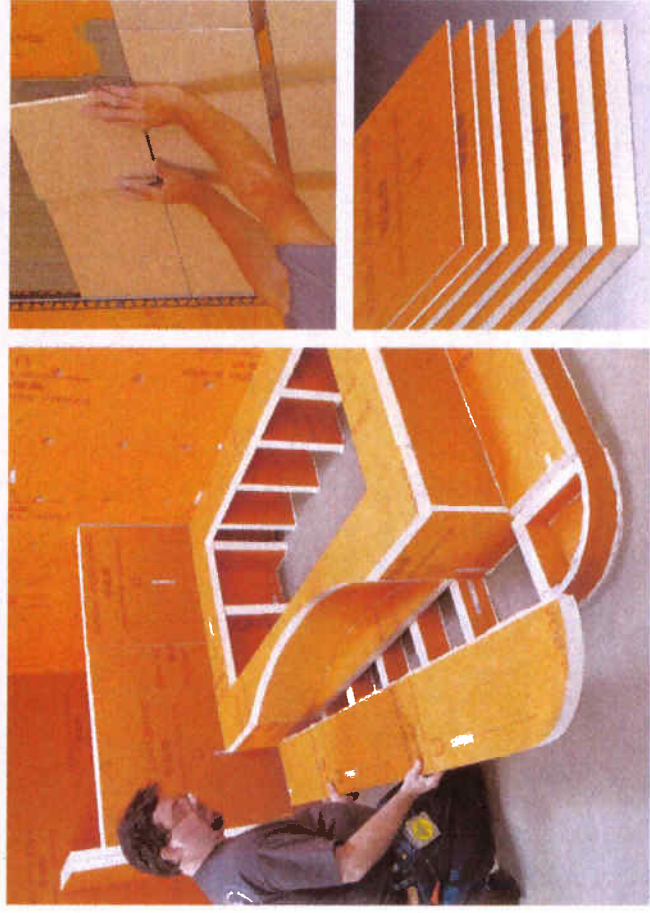
The saints depicted in the mosaics include large vertical panels of St. Nicholas and St. Spyridon that flank the altar, chosen because they were present at the first council. "St. Nicholas was a real person!" Rev. Patitsas said. An image of the Virgin Mary, flanked by angels and holding the young Jesus on her lap decorates the central apse of the altar.

From the beauty of the mosaics, they were worth the wait. St. George Greek Orthodox Church, the largest Greek Orthodox church in New Mexico, now has a collection of luminous icons to reflect the spiritual beauty of the congregation itself.

[www.tileletter.com](http://www.tileletter.com) ♦ July 2010

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David Allen Company transformed the vision of design team Brett Sugerman and Giselle Loo of b+g design, inc. into this elegant master bath. Sponsored by ASCER, tiles were provided by Adex and Tau.



Nexus Tile Service brought to life the design of Fava Design Group in this kid's bath. The clean and luscious tones of blue, green and white were donated by Florida Tile, Trikenan Tileworks and Ironrock.



Artcraft Granite, Marble & Tile partnered with Alena Capra, CKD, CBR, Green AP to create the universal design bath, sponsored by Ceramic Tiles of Italy, Atlas Concorde, Mosaico + and Lea donated tiles.



Jamie Blomquist of Expressive Designs and Cox Tile collaborated on this opulent powder room, sponsored by D&B Distributors. The gorgeous products were supplied by Crossville, Q Seal, Hurok Marble, and Glass Masonry Inc.



The spa vignette, featuring a subtle wave design on the main wall, was designed by Edward Nieto Design and sponsored by Tile Council of North America. Welch Tile & Marble expertly installed the vignette, and Crossville, Emence, Fianatre and OceanSide Glasstile donated the vibrant, elegant tiles.

www.tileletter.com ♦ June 2010

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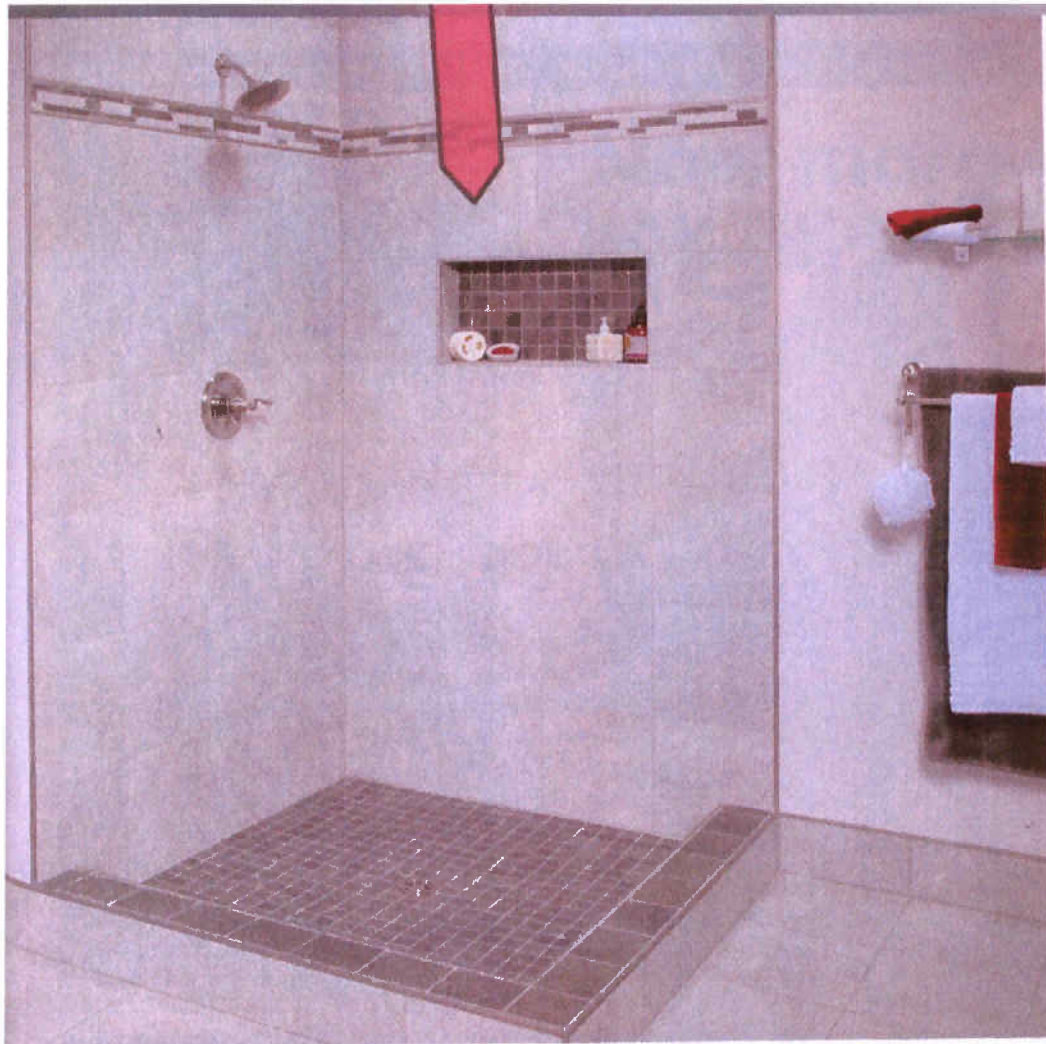
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## Things are "looking up" for NTCA member

*Welch Tile & Marble employs off-the-wall strategy to promote its services*

It's a "banner year" for Welch Tile & Marble, located in Kent City, Michigan. That's because Welch Tile has done some "off the wall" thinking when it comes to promotional material on display in the company's showroom. While walls and floors are filled with displays or samples, owner Dan Welch and his team decided to take its company promotion to the next level and employ unused ceiling space for marketing the company.

"We spent some time with a consultant working on marketing ideas and sales agendas," Welch – who is NTCA's second vice president – said. "After trying several things I heard someone say 'I own the entire building – Why aren't we using the ceiling to sell product?' That got me thinking about the many things I wanted to say including certified tile installers, Five Star contractors, our new vision statement 'People Creating Change', apprentice training and showing our customers why they use Welch tile and marble."

Welch reasoned that "showrooms use the wall space up, and the floors are full of tile mock-ups but the ceiling was unused up to this point. I believe that the consumer will see the craft and the

knowledge using this type of signage and choose a better installer and a better company to install their tile and marble project."

The company had five banners designed. They have been in place for one month so far and have been displayed at several box lunch events to show architects and contractors. "We are currently building our second showroom/design center and will place our signs in that location also."



Welch Tile & Marble made the most of the available space in its showroom and design center to promote aspects of its business that sets it apart from the competition.

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the structure that carries water away from any structures. Most of the time water will drain into a lawn, flower bed or driveway.

Unless code requirements dictate otherwise, walkways should have 3-1/2 inches of compacted rock base under 3-1/2 inches of concrete. This thickness means you can use 2-by-4s for form boards. You may wish to use

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2-by-6 form boards to produce a 5-1/2-inch thick walkway section for areas that will be driven on, such as where the walkway intersects a driveway.

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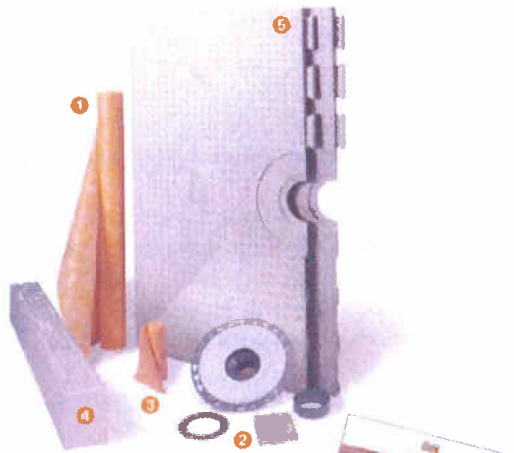
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# TileLetter

from the editor

Lesley A. Goddard

*The greater danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we reach it.* —Michelangelo Buonarroti

It's impossible to encapsulate the entire Coverings show in the pages of a magazine, but this month, we give you a flavor of the show in our Coverings recap.

Coverings offers an endless array of new products. To present as many as possible, we've dedicated our entire New Products section to Coverings products for this issue.

Next year, Coverings returns to McCormick Place in Chicago from April 21-24. Make plans to experience this fantastic show in the fabulous city of Chicago.

Let me take this opportunity to draw your attention to some notable upcoming events for the tile industry.

The August *TileLetter* issue will be our first ever Green Issue. In January, we began our "Keeping It Green" section to provide ongoing information about the green building movement, its impact on the tile industry and how tile contractors and the industry can best position themselves to benefit from it. The August *TileLetter* continues this direction, with the majority of content devoted to education, information, products and projects that reflect green principles. Don't miss it! If you have green products, products with recycled content,

or have participated in LEED projects, please email me information by early July to [lesley@tile-assn.com](mailto:lesley@tile-assn.com)

Though summer has just begun, it's not too early to start thinking about attending NTC's Total Solutions annual conference, this year at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in Prince George's County, Md., situated on the banks of the Potomac River, just 15 minutes away from the heart of the nation's capital. It features an 18-story glass atrium that offers views of the Potomac and Old

Town Alexandria with 2,000 guest rooms (each with high-speed wireless internet), 110 lavish suites, 300 rooms in the v.i.p. tower and a 20,000 square foot spa and fitness center. Come experience the educational sessions, demos, speakers, tabletop event and networking September 18-19. More information can be found in the registration form in this issue and online at [tile-assn.com](http://tile-assn.com). By the way, we mistakenly printed last year's Total Solutions registration forms in April and May – this issue contains the updated 2008 form.



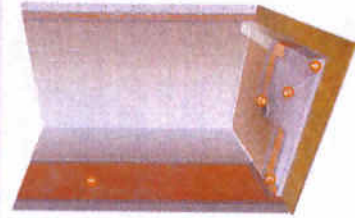
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# NTCA NEWS

## NTCA Winter Meeting: Phoenix in February

The NTCA Winter Meeting of the Board of Directors will take place from

February 17-19, 2010 at beautiful Sheraton Wild Horse Pass in Phoenix, Ariz. ([www.wildhorsepassresort.com](http://www.wildhorsepassresort.com)). Conveniently located 11 miles from Phoenix's Sky Harbor Airport, this 500-room resort and spa evokes the Gila River Indian Community's culture and heritage, celebrating the architecture, art, design and legends of the Pima and Maricopa tribes.

The event will include meetings of various NTCA committees to discuss upcoming initiatives and events, including Coverings and the new Total Solutions Plus conference – a joint event of NTCA, CTDA, TCAA and TCNA planned for November 2010 in Naples, Fla. – as well as the meeting of the NTCA Technical Committee.

For agenda and information, contact NTCA executive director Bart Bertiga at [bart@tile-assn.com](mailto:bart@tile-assn.com) or phone (601) 939-2071.



[www.tileletter.com](http://www.tileletter.com) ❖ November 2009

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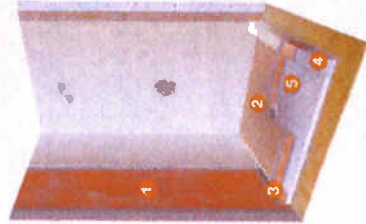


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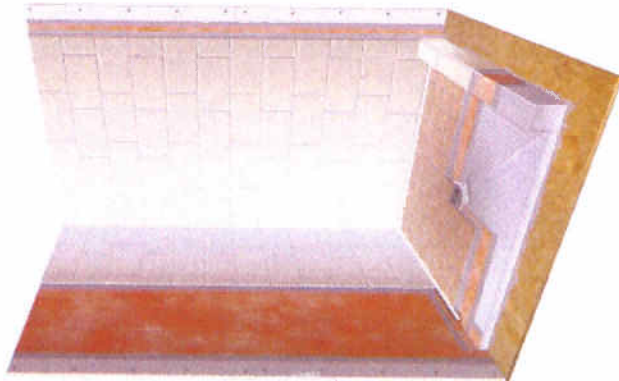
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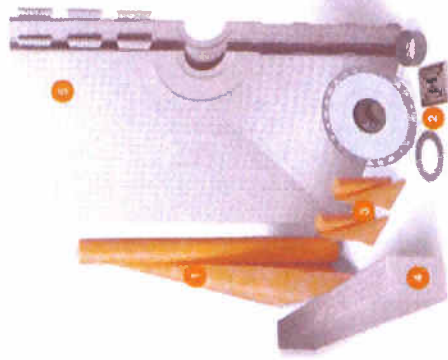
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National Tile Contractors Association September 2007

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