

# HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

## Consider Materials And Maintenance When Building A New Deck

(NAPSA)—As deck season kicks in, many Americans are thinking about building a new deck or sprucing up an old one.

If you are building, consider the type of deck and materials that will best suit your needs before heading off to the local home-improvement center. Everyone knows about wood decks, but more and more consumers these days are choosing composite materials for their aesthetic value, low maintenance and eco-friendly reputation.

### The Value of Composites

It's fun to think about color and other aesthetic issues, but don't forget about maintenance. Proper maintenance of a wood deck means waterproofing every six months and staining the deck once a year to maintain the color and prevent fading. And even before you get to the staining phase, you must clean the deck with chemicals and a pressure washer. Sanding may also be necessary to achieve a smooth finish. In contrast, composite decks are resistant to cracking, warping and splintering. They do not need to be stained or waterproofed.

Composite decks are made from a variety of materials. For example, LP® WeatherBest®, which is available in six different nature-inspired colors, is made from wood flour mixed with high-density polyethylene plastic and then finished with a wood-textured grain to provide the look and feel of wood.

### Cost

In addition to maintenance, cost is another important consideration. Wood decking materials range from inexpensive cuts of lumber to long-lasting woods such as redwood or cedar. Redwood and untreated cedar have the advantage of being resistant to insects and rot, but they aren't impervious and still require the regular



**Compared to wood, composite decking offers easy installation and reduced maintenance.**

maintenance associated with all wood decking products.

Wood prices are generally lower than composite materials, but you need to factor in the extra expense and time associated with maintaining and repairing wood decks for an accurate cost comparison. While the initial price is higher with composite materials, you can actually save money over time through reduced maintenance.

### Maintenance Tips

Once you've installed your new composite wood deck, keeping it looking clean and beautiful is easy:

- Wash down the deck with a garden hose on a regular basis. Pollutants you may not see—pollen, dust, dirt and other airborne particles—will be washed away with regular spraying.

- Scrub off built-up dust and dirt with a common deck cleaner.

- Deal with stains quickly. Don't allow them to penetrate the deck's surface or bake under the sun.

- Clean grease or oil stains with any common household degreaser. Also, keep a splatter guard under your barbecue grill.

For more information on composite wood decks, installation and maintenance, visit [www.lpcorp.com/weatherbest](http://www.lpcorp.com/weatherbest).