

# Impressions

THE GENERAL SHALE EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

winter 2013



## MESSAGE

FROM MR. GREEN

As we get ready to close out the 4th quarter, it looks like 2013 will go down in the books as a good year for General Shale. Most markets are showing a steady recovery from the recessionary period. For General Shale, our recovery is cautious but stable. For certain, we are beginning to see the positive results of our product development and hard work over the past few years.

The key to our current and future growth can in large part be attributed to the implementation of our seven Success Profile areas. We are offering superior customer service and high-quality product solutions like never before. We are changing the face of the industry with our modern and future-oriented endeavors. This concerted effort has helped to ensure our path toward continued leadership in North America.

We will continue our focus on product development of brick, concrete and thin veneers. We will continue to improve our plants, our distribution and operations at all locations including our corporate office. We are committed to being the leader in technology and will intensify this in order to evaluate our sales performance. Our achievements thus far and in the future are making a clear and positive difference.

As we look back on 2013, I think we should all be encouraged by our progress and resolve to make next year even better. Our future is bright and I expect great things ahead. Thank you for your hard work, your dedication and all that you contribute to the success of our great company.

To you and your family, I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a healthy and prosperous Happy New Year.

Dick Green  
Chief Executive Officer  
General Shale



## Season of Safety

General Shale emphasizes safety not only in the workplace, but also at home for its employees. Brian Ogle, Corporate Manager, Safety and Risk, says that with the hustle and bustle of the holidays, some extra precautions will go a long way toward keeping your family safe this holiday.

### DECORATING DANGERS

If you have a live tree inside the home, be sure to keep it watered. Older light sets not only present a fire hazard but are also energy-consuming "monsters" when compared to today's LED lighting. At least invest time in evaluating the condition of the wires of your existing light set.

Be aware of the hazards presented to your house pet. The lure of the flashing lights and decorations on the tree might cause your cat or dog to pull on the tree and turn it over, or even the risk of shock by biting into the wires. If glass decorations are used, be aware of broken glass to protect not only your pets, but also your children.

Inspect your ladder before you use it to

hang lights. Have a spotter and a steady base when you're on that ladder. And remember the 4:1 rule for safe ladder positioning. "For every four feet of elevation, pull the ladder out from the base one foot," says Ogle. Aluminum is a strong conductor for electricity, so if possible, use a fiberglass ladder when hanging lights and do not energize the light set until you are finished hanging. Stay away from the "electric service entrance" of your home with an aluminum ladder!

And as Brian always says, although brick from General Shale is an excellent product, bricks aren't made to put under your ladder for higher elevation, "nor does taking a six-foot ladder and cutting off a couple of feet make it a four-foot ladder—it makes it a hazard."



*Wishing You and Your Loved Ones a Joyful Holiday Season and a Wonderful New Year.*

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## COOKING WITH CAUTION

If you're thinking about frying that holiday turkey, take it outside, away from your home or any structure. If the oil were to tip over, it could quickly cause a house fire. If the frozen turkey is plunged quickly into the hot oil, it will cause the oil to boil over the edge of the pot, possibly catching fire from contact with the flame and resulting in disaster.

## DEFENSIVE DRIVING

"This is an exciting time of year, and everyone has places to go, but with it getting darker earlier and with those young drivers out of school and on the roads more during Christmas break, it's a good idea to practice some defensive driving skills," Ogle says. "Defensive driving is defined as driving to save lives, time and money in spite of the conditions around you and the actions of others." Also, make sure your vehicle is in good, operable condition

according to the manufacturer's specifications. This means good tires, working brakes, operable headlights, working turn signals and brake lights, etc.

*Remembering these safety tips and using common sense should make for a happy and safe holiday season!*



# BRICK BY BRICK

"It's very extraordinary to see a picture of our brick on the Jumbotron at UT home games ..."



With General Shale's headquarters being located in Johnson City, Tennessee, it may come as no surprise that there are several Tennessee Volunteer Football fans within the Tri-Cities. It's been a rough couple of years for those fans as the UT Football program has struggled the past few seasons.

But just as the construction industry is on the rebound, so is UT football, with new head coach Butch Jones in charge. This past spring, surrounded by reporters questioning how in the world he was ever going to rebuild the once-storied program, Jones replied, "Brick by brick."

"It's a term that resonates well because everyone knows the concept behind it," says Mark Kinser, Executive Vice President of General Shale. "So as this new motto for the UT Football program caught on, we wanted to do what we could at General Shale to take the brick by brick concept even further."

General Shale representatives approached Coach Jones to offer a special brick, made in the Spring Hill, Tennessee, plant and custom-carved by General Shale muralist Johnny Hagerman, that would be a reminder of the task ahead.

Hagerman went to work and created a beautiful framed piece. He carved the shape of the state of Tennessee in orange on the face of the center brick, and then added the Power T in white. The slogan "Brick by Brick" is prominently carved above.

Jones liked the idea so much he asked General Shale to make him 200 individual bricks that he then presented to his coaching staff and players. The presentation was part of a motivational speech the coach gave in the pre-season.

"It's very extraordinary to see a picture of our brick on the Jumbotron at UT home games, and even sports reporters on the sidelines holding the bricks on national TV as they talk about the rebuilding program going on at UT," Kinser says.

When asked if the UT Bricks by General Shale have anything to do with UT finally getting its first win against a ranked opponent in six years, Kinser laughed and said, "If you're asking me, the answer is yes! But either way it was a fun project. The chance to team up with a program with national prominence like this has been a great opportunity for the company."

The bricks used for the project are called Campus Blend—a color that was actually commissioned by the University of Tennessee back in the late '80s to build Gibbs Hall, the athletic dorm on campus. Campus Blend has been used on several buildings on campus since then, including renovations on

Neyland Stadium and a new dorm currently being built.

Given the popularity of the "Brick by Brick" campaign, it's no surprise that there are fans interested in purchasing their own carved

## CUSTOMERS RAVE IN VIDEO TESTIMONIALS

They say a picture is worth a thousand words—but a good video testimonial is priceless! That's what General Shale is discovering by using video clips of customers simply saying what they like about General Shale.

From Knoxville, Tennessee, to Salt Lake City, Utah, General Shale has filmed testimonials from customers, masons and architects. On video, they describe the benefits of General Shale in their own words and have a chance to show off some of their own work.

In Knoxville, builder Bryan Testerman talks of being a General Shale customer for nearly 50 years. He explains that in his experience, spending just a fractional amount more to build an all-brick home is beneficial to both the developer and the homeowner.

Testerman also compliments General Shale on its wide selection of brick colors and styles.

In the video he says, "When you have 96 homes and they're all fairly close together, you want to keep the homes looking as different as possible, and General Shale has a great selection. They have numerous,

UT bricks. Kinser says that's under consideration. "We wanted some separation from what the team was doing and a retail product, but there's obviously potential for a product available in the future at the campus bookstore."

numerous bricks to choose from and that way ... you don't have a house side by side the same."

Also in Knoxville, a short video was used to show how thin bricks transformed a nearly 50-year-old building to blend in with newer brick buildings on the University of Tennessee campus. Structural considerations prohibited the use of full-faced brick on the building, which was previously stucco, but the architect spoke about the perfect solution he found with General Shale's Thin Brick product.

And in Salt Lake City, a master mason talks about how he's able to create intricate designs on custom homes thanks to General Shale bricks' durability and size.

Derek Larkin of Larkin Masonry and Construction says, "I like the fact that they're extremely consistent in size and shape, easy to lay and they cut very well."

To see these videos and more, visit General Shale's website at [www.generalshale.com](http://www.generalshale.com). And if you have a customer who you think would be great on video, please contact Dawn Henning at the corporate office.

## A GREAT IDEA COMES TO FRUITION FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS ARRISRAFT

A Success Profile suggestion that was submitted at the Arriscraft Cambridge plant is helping the company continue with its green initiatives.

You may remember Arriscraft received the "Excellence in Energy Conservation" Award this past spring from the Cambridge (Ontario) Chamber of Commerce at its annual Business Excellence Awards.

The award recognizes a business that embraces sustainable best practices and outstanding programs to maintain, protect and promote a healthy environment.

Along those lines, a valuable suggestion from employees George Lehman and Dave Newman has recently been implemented.

Their suggestion was to discontinue use of Styrofoam on the bottom of the product skids when possible.

Plant manager Andy Hall says after researching the suggestion it's been decided that Arriscraft will no longer use Styrofoam with the following products: QN 10", QN 12", QN74A, RS190 Smooth, RS290 Smooth, RS 7-5/8 Smooth and RS 11-5/8 Smooth.

Hall says, "I am glad to announce this is a direct result of a suggestion from the Success Profile program. These are the kinds of suggestions that will continue to make Arriscraft successful."

Arriscraft has a goal of implementing 100% recyclable packaging for its products.





# ACTIVE MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY FIND SUPPORT FROM EMPLOYER GENERAL SHALE

In its 85 years of existence, General Shale has seen a world war and several military conflicts that have affected its employees and their families. It's a company that knows the importance of service to country and does what it can to support its veterans.

Most companies would like to be able to say the same, but statistics show that most can't. A study from the Society of Human Resource Management and from Workforce Management indicates that more than 65% of companies in the U.S. will not hire an active member of the National Guard or Reserves as a new employee. In fact, unemployment rates among many deployed brigades range from 30% to 68%.

Not the case with General Shale. We'd like to introduce you to two employees of General Shale who found support and a job that was waiting on them when they returned from deployment: Rex Hipp and Matthew Berry.

Rex is a sales rep in the Charlotte, North Carolina, office and has been with General Shale for three and a half years. That's just a short stint compared to his 21 years spent in the North Carolina Army National Guard. His current position is a Battalion Chaplain (Captain) for the 505th Engineering Battalion.

"I actually knew my boss prior to coming to work for General Shale. And I was pleased to find out how supportive the company is of those serving the country," Rex says.

In fact, Rex just returned in July from his second deployment. Prior to leaving, Rex worked with his boss, Scott Clark, to prepare for his time away.

"Basically, as soon as I get an order or I'm put on alert that we might be mobilized, I let Scott know right away so he can prepare," says Rex. "This last time it was about three months ahead of time, so he was able to hire a fill-in person for me, and I got him trained before I left."



During his deployment, Rex said he and Scott were able to stay in touch thanks to email. And as the end of the deployment drew near, Rex was up to speed on what had been happening at General Shale so the transition back to work was easier.

But talk wasn't always business. Rex says he really appreciates his fellow employees at General Shale asking if there was anything his family back home needed, from mowing the grass to just checking in on his wife and kids.

"Glad to do it," says Clark. "General Shale honors Rex's commitment to serve his country and community, protecting our freedom to conduct our normal activities. It was a privilege to protect his position within the company, giving him the peace of mind that upon his return, all would be just as he left it."

Another veteran hired by General Shale is Matthew Berry, the plant manager at the Rome, Georgia, facility.

Although he is no longer in the Army National Guard, he served from 1998 to 2005 and was on reserve status when hired by General Shale in 2001. He was deployed to Iraq for a year in 2004.

"General Shale was really good to me when I was deployed," says Berry. "While I was in Iraq my supervisors emailed me to check in, and I appreciated that. And it was nice to know I had a job waiting on me. Not only a job, but also the same exact position. I was a supervisor when I left and I was a supervisor when I came back."

That feeling of support from the company is shown not only at the plants, but at the corporate office as well.

"Being a veteran myself, I know how important it is to have the support of your employer and family back home while deployed," says Charles Smith, President & COO of General Shale. "General Shale is proud to offer that support, and we are appreciative of all our veterans and their sacrifices."

General Shale supports not only its own veterans, but those in the community. In honor of Veterans Day this year, General Shale offered a 15% discount for any retired or active military person on any General Shale product offered at any of its showrooms.

"It's just something we want to do to show our appreciation for all that veterans have done," says Dick Green, CEO. "It's just a small gesture compared to what veterans have given, and we're happy to do it."

# FIREPLACE WINNER

"Everyone that comes in my home sees the drastic change that the rock made in the look of our den..."

Wally Crawford's old fireplace was nice ... a gas insert surrounded by marble and a wood mantel. But when the 29-year employee heard General Shale was offering to make over one lucky employee's fireplace with new thin rock, he jumped at the chance to enter ... and couldn't believe it when he heard he'd won!

The Network Administrative Manager was familiar with how thin brick or thin rock can change the look of a room, after recently applying General Shale thin brick to his kitchen. So he was very excited to see the transformation that would happen in his den.

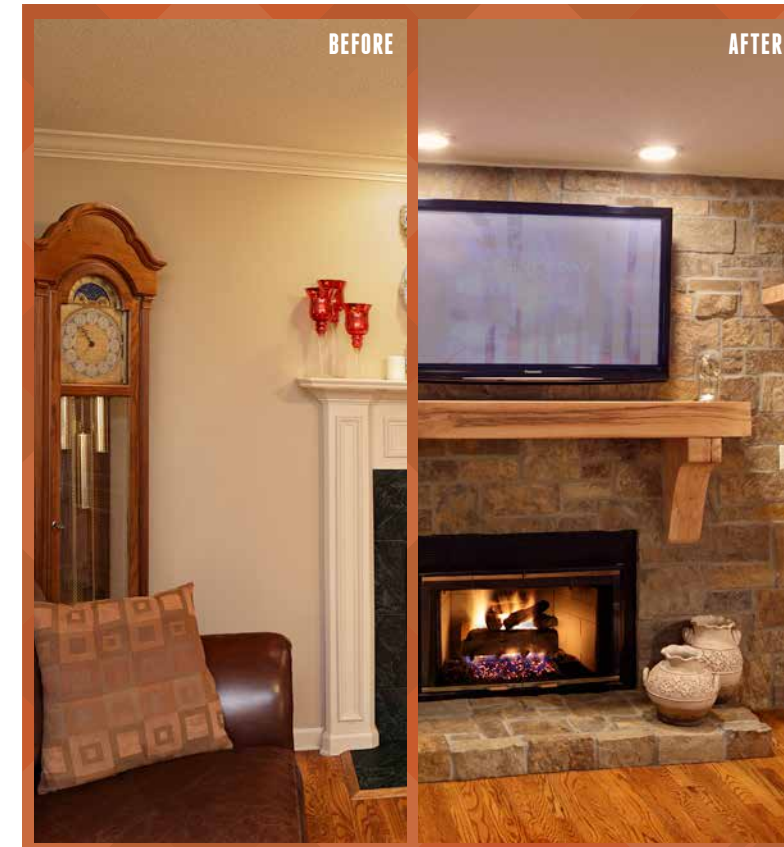
"They told us they'd design it the way we wanted, and we wanted to go away from the contemporary look our fireplace currently had. We started looking at different pictures and decided we wanted more of a rustic look with a log mantel, a small hearth and an earth-tone rock," says Crawford. "It was General Shale's idea to go ahead and do the whole wall. It turned out fantastic and is now a focal point of our den."

Crawford chose Kiamachi Thin Rock, made at General Shale's Denver, Colorado, plant. From demolition to completion, the project took less than a week with the skilled masons from General Shale. But while watching the installation, Crawford feels applying thin rock is something the average homeowner could do.

"They had some techniques as far as only do so much at one time with the weight, the thin rock is a bit heavier than thin brick. But I do feel it's a project most homeowners could tackle, and they'll be so impressed with the difference it makes in the room," Crawford says.

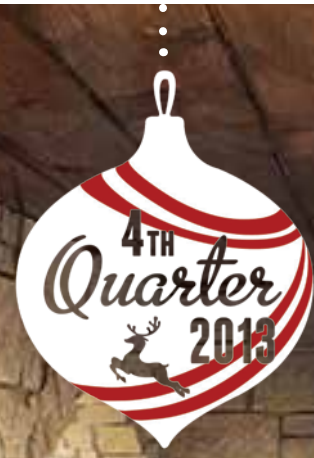
Crawford adds that he's appreciative to General Shale for the opportunity and says the project has become a selling tool for the company.

"Everyone that comes in my home sees the drastic change that the rock made in the look of our den and everyone wants to know how they can get the same look," says Crawford. "I just point them to General Shale."





# New Products



Several new and exciting products have been introduced recently that add to the tremendous selection from General Shale and Arriscraft Stone.

## BUILDING PRODUCTS

### PRESENTING

#### MALLORY CREEK, MOUNTAIN CREEK & STONE CANYON TUDOR BRICK PRODUCTS

In the category of new brick product releases, 2013 has been a productive year! While several more are currently slated to arrive later this year, we are proud to present three new additions to the vast selection of our brick products, all of which are unique to three locations. They are "Mallory Creek," "Mountain Creek" and "Stone Canyon Tudor."

Mallory Creek is manufactured in Moncure, North Carolina, and features elegant, earth-tone colors unlike anything the competition offers. The release has already seen immediate success in the Raleigh and Charlotte markets, with positive buzz in Kernersville as well! Sizes available for Mallory Creek are Lightweight Queen, Lightweight Engineered Modular and Lightweight Modular.

Mountain Creek is manufactured in Rome, Georgia, and is produced as a "Millstone" brick with added textures reminiscent of a rock face texture. With its rich color and textures, Mountain Creek is sure to be a desirable product in all markets. It is currently available in Lightweight King, Lightweight Queen and Lightweight Modular sizes.

Stone Canyon Tudor is manufactured in Marion, Virginia, and is similar to the clay paver released in June of the same name. Resembling the widely popular "Phoenix" brick, its through-the-body coloring allows a product offering that will hold true to its original color in the strongest of outdoor elements. Stone Canyon is available in the following sizes: Lightweight Queen, Lightweight Engineered Modular and Lightweight Modular.



MALLORY CREEK



MOUNTAIN CREEK



STONE CANYON

#### ARRISCRAFT OLD COUNTRY ADDS ARIZONA RED

Old Country Building Stone offers a striking and versatile stone with a rugged texture and earthy color palette. Arizona Red is a perfect blend of deep westerly reds and the familiar texture of Old Country.



ARIZONA RED

#### ASHLAR PARK SERIES

We are proud and excited to present a new and unique product to our company and the building industry. Ashlar Park Series is available in both brick and paver options. Ashlar Park consists of three individual

sizes combined to create unique patterns that bring a never-before-seen character and style in brick and paver applications. Ashlar Park brick adds an extra dimension to our well-known textured brick products.



ASHBROOK PARK



EASTOVER PARK

The most compelling characteristic is the unique look created by the bundling of three individual sizes within each product. Additionally, Ashlar Park provides customers with the option of laying brick in a flush pattern or choosing to have the brick reveal out (or extend beyond) from the wall for a truly unique look to their new home or building. The Ashlar Park Series is available in five colors: Ashbrook Park, Eastover Park, Essex Park, Rockbridge Park and Woodrose Park.



ESSEX PARK



ROCKBRIDGE PARK



WOODROSE PARK

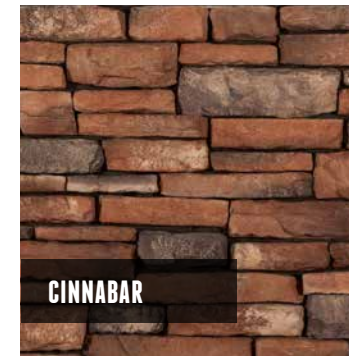
#### SAND MOUNTAIN STONE – NEW AND IMPROVED!

Last spring we introduced a new product called "Sand Mountain Stone" that contained two series of product styles. At the time, each series contained four colors. After a short phase of market testing, we have completely reengineered the styles and colors. The LedgeStone™ Series and Pennsylvania Stone™ Series are manufactured in our Piney Flats, Tennessee, facility. Sand Mountain Stone is designed to provide

a lightweight stone option for primarily new construction and is also suitable for renovation projects. The LedgeStone Series is characterized by its elongated strips that are very narrow, while the Pennsylvania Stone Series is recognizable by its hex pattern and familiar block style. Each series will be available in four colors: Canyon Sun, Cinnabar, Palisades Grey and Twilight Grey.



CANYON SUN



CINNABAR

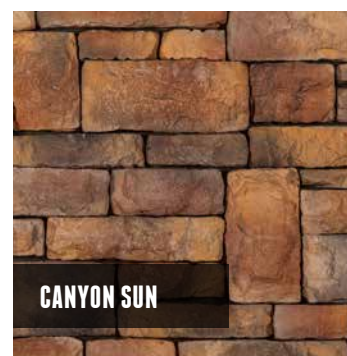


PALISADES GREY

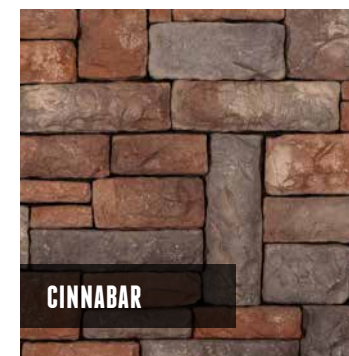


TWILIGHT GREY

#### LEDGESTONE SERIES



CANYON SUN



CINNABAR



PALISADES GREY



TWILIGHT GREY

#### PENNSYLVANIA STONE SERIES



# PRESENTING

## ECLIPSE, SILVERADO & SOLSTICE BUILDING STONE PRODUCTS

There are many features, for which the Arriscraft brand is popular, but the core element of success has always been the versatility and affordability of its Building Stone products. The natural process production maintains the subtle quality and textures our customers have grown to expect, and with every new addition we continue to meet and exceed that expectation. With that, we are thrilled to be presenting three new colors to Fresco

Building Stone, which was originally introduced last year. The new colors are Eclipse, Silverado and Solstice. They accompany Twilight to make a four-color offering of our Fresco Building Stone. Fresco was engineered to display a perfect blend of old-world dimension in a fresh presentation. Look for more colors to become available as product awareness continues to grow.



ECLIPSE



SILVERADO



SOLSTICE

### EXPRESS BRICK

First manufactured in 2010, but never officially announced as a new product, Express Brick is primarily positioned as a building solution for light commercial construction. Express Brick is positioned as a “half-high” architectural masonry unit. The sizes in which it is manufactured are comparable to block products commonly used in commercial projects. Express Brick provides a way for only one wall to be

constructed rather than two, which can significantly reduce construction costs. What’s more, it performs as a load-bearing unit to carry the weight of a structure while also providing a traditional, genuine masonry exterior. Express Brick is available in: Cranberry, Dunes Gray, Forrestal Red, Piney Creek, South Ridge Brown and Regency.



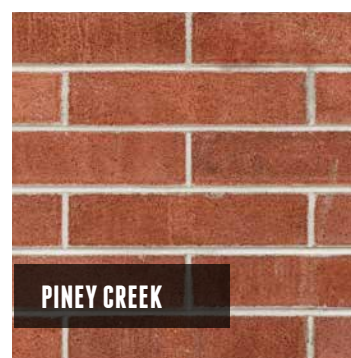
CRANBERRY



DUNES GRAY



FORRESTAL RED



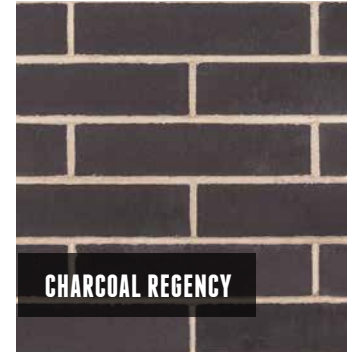
PINEY CREEK



SOUTH RIDGE BROWN

### EXPRESS BRICK

### EXPRESS BRICK REGENCY COLLECTION



CHARCOAL REGENCY



GRAYMIST REGENCY



MANILLA REGENCY



PARCHMENT REGENCY



RAWHIDE REGENCY



SANDCASTLE REGENCY



SEQUOIA REGENCY



TUNDRA WHITE REGENCY

### SCOTTISH MANOR TUDOR

The General Shale family of brick products continues to grow by way of its newest addition, “Scottish Manor Tudor.” Purposefully resembling the popular brick “Charlestown Landing,” Scottish Manor is manufactured in our Mooreseville, Indiana, plant and is positioned to be more affordable and bring the visual appeal of Charlestown Landing to the Northern Markets.



SCOTTISH MANOR TUDOR

### ANOTHER ADDITION TO EDGE ROCK™ BUILDING STONE

Last year we announced Edge Rock™ Building Stone, an Arriscraft product characterized by its dynamic profile, and one that creates an overall unique and rugged appearance in a home design. Joining colors “Delta” and “Glacier” is “Oakwood,” the newest color in the line.



OAKWOOD



# RENOVATION PRODUCTS



## INTRODUCING 4 NEW ARRIS.STACK™ COLORS

Arriscraft continues to offer the most comprehensive line of thin-clad materials on the market today. Products such as ARRIS.stack are versatile and easy to install, and are an affordable option for both residential and commercial applications. Arriscraft's Natural Process production method continues to ensure remarkably natural and unique color ranges

and striations unmatched by other manufactured stone products. That very method was used to produce four new colors to add to the ARRIS.stack palette. "Ice," "Matrix," "Storm" and "Tabasco" will enhance the depth and range of the existing colors released last year, which include "Ash," "Beach," "Cappuccino" and "Desert Sand."

# OUTDOOR LIVING PRODUCTS

## DO-IT-YOURSELF KITS

One of our best-selling new products is the Gathering Grill. It plays off the popularity of the Gathering Square Fire Pit with the addition of a metal grill insert for cooking. Additionally, the kit includes an insert under the grill for catching cooking grease and ash for easy maintenance and cleaning. The Gathering Grill is available in four colors: Buff, Chestnut-Buff Blend, Normandy and Sequoia.



GATHERING GRILL

The Serenity 150 Fireplace is a combination of the 100 and 200 fireplaces with an appropriate midline price. This fireplace offers the quality and style of the Serenity 100, but includes a hearth and added height for those looking to have more at an affordable price. The fireplace is pre-packaged with a firebox lintel and offers the option of a thin brick upgrade. As with the Serenity 200, customers can purchase "stacker" wood boxes to add to each side of the 150 as a bundled upgrade.



SERENITY 150 FIREPLACE

The next Outdoor Living product is an addition to the existing bar kit. Now called the Cantina Bar, it includes a concrete countertop to provide ample space for entertaining.

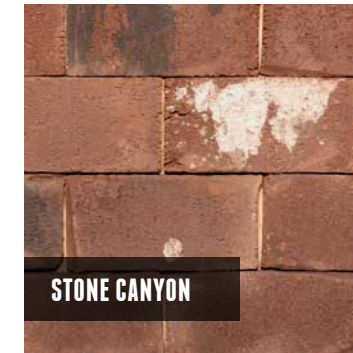


CANTINA BAR

## PAVERS



AUTUMN RIDGE



STONE CANYON

Although introduced to the Outdoor Living products line last fall, General Shale's very first beveled edge concrete paver is now officially available in "Autumn Ridge." The company's strategy in producing a beveled edge paver is to introduce a competitive price-point product for distributor markets. Autumn Ridge is the only color option, but more colors will be produced as customer demand dictates. If a customer requests a specific color, contact Bryan Hoilman, Plant Manager, Tri-Cities Block Plant.

Another great paver product is now available, and it carries a familiar look. Stone Canyon clay pavers provide our customers with a brown version of the ever-popular Phoenix paver. Its through-the-body coloring allows a product offering that will withstand the rigors of time and the outdoor elements by holding true to its original color.

# SALES ON THE UPSWING IN 2013



As most news outlets have reported, the economy is improving. And with increasing consumer confidence comes a boost to the building industry.

"General Shale had a good year in 2013," says John Hammett, Vice President of Sales. "Actually, October was the strongest month of the year for us, and although November and December are traditionally slow, as the weather holds out, we'll be just fine."

Interest rates are still relatively low, but Hammett says it's the previous investments in downturns that are helping the construction industry the most.

"The majority of the building is from the large-tract builders who acquired a lot of the land for a good price when the economy was worse. And now, they really want to finish what they've started, which is great for us."

Hammett says that although in years past General Shale has had to idle some plants down, that wasn't the case this year. In fact, some plants even had to speed up brick production due to demand.

Hammett is even more optimistic for the future, as the company was just awarded the construction bid for the new Texas A&M stadium, which is an imbedded precast product.

"I suspect next year will be better than this year ... As long as we do what we do best, which is to provide the best products and quality service, we'll stay strong in our largest segment, which is of course brick."

And, he adds, now that General Shale is offering the complete package with retaining walls, pavers, outdoor living and thin veneers for exterior and interior spaces, as well as Arriscraft products, the company has solidified its position as a complete solution to any builder's needs.

"Things we can do even better is to continue to emphasize square-foot pricing," Hammett says. "We've been a leader in this, and it's helped people to see the value in brick, not just in price, but in quality and added benefits. I'm happy to say that others in the industry are catching on."

Hammett says if General Shale continues to work as a team in all the departments, and to keep the customer as the focus, things can only go up from here.



# STAYING GS STRONG WELLNESS UPDATE



Our General Shale Wellness Initiative, GS Strong—Building a Better You, is off to a great start. Initiatives include participation in many area running events like the recent Color Me Rad 5K in Johnson City, Tennessee, and a postcard campaign that highlights various wellness topics. One of the more popular wellness initiatives General Shale is offering is the chance to join Weight Watchers at some of its locations.

If you're wondering whether or not you can be successful with Weight Watchers, just read this success story from General Shale Customer Service Manager Karen Corbett in Evansville, Indiana. Karen has lost a total of 118 pounds since joining!

After going through a divorce in 2010, Karen says she gained a lot of weight and was having to take blood pressure medication. Her declining health worried her, so Karen joined Weight Watchers in January 2012 as part of her New Year's resolution to lose weight and be healthier.

For Karen, the hardest part of her weight-loss journey was actually walking through the doors at Weight Watchers. But once there, she met friends and supporters, and saw immediate results.

"Seeing my weight loss weekly was great motivation to keep going. My brother Bob joined in April, and he is very close to his goal with a weight loss of about 115 pounds. Having the support of our family has been incredibly helpful," Karen says.

Weight Watchers is based on a points program, and each day participants are supposed to stay within their given point range. Sticking to her diet, as well as adding exercise to her routine, has helped Karen succeed. She is dedicated and usually walks

in the mornings before work with one friend, and then after work with another friend whom she met at WW. But it's not all hard work; some exercise has been fun ... and rewarding.

"I am now attending singles dances. I never knew I liked to dance before, and it is really good exercise," Karen says. "And I have met a gentleman that I have been dating from the singles dances as well!!"

Seeing continued progress, fitting into smaller sizes of clothes, and getting lots of compliments has helped Karen stay motivated. She has changed her appearance so much that some customers don't even recognize her.

"A couple weeks ago, a contractor asked me, 'So what is Karen doing now?' I told him it is me, and he just couldn't believe it!"

And best of all, Karen's health has improved. With the weight loss, Karen no longer needs blood pressure medication.

Congratulations, Karen, from all of your friends at General Shale!!

Contact your General Shale supervisors to see if Weight Watchers is offered at your General Shale facility.

As part of GS Strong—Building a Better You, General Shale has created a Facebook page for their employees and their families to keep them informed of events, promote health tips, and offer reduced calorie recipes and other topics related to a healthier lifestyle.

Feel free to send us content, pictures, success stories, recipes and anything that has helped you or someone you know maintain a healthier lifestyle.

<https://www.facebook.com/gstrongprogram>



# DON'T LET THE FLU CATCH YOU

NOBODY WANTS TO GET THE FLU. THE GOOD NEWS IS YOU CAN TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT IT. HERE ARE A FEW THINGS YOU CAN DO.

## ARM YOURSELF WITH THE FLU SHOT - <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>

The flu vaccine—also called the flu shot—is a safe, simple way to protect yourself from the flu. You can get the flu shot at a lot of places, like your doctor's office or local pharmacy. The flu shot is especially important for people who are high risk. This includes anyone under age two, over age 65, pregnant or suffering from a medical condition like asthma or heart disease. Once you get the flu shot, it takes about two weeks to take effect.

## OTHER THINGS YOU CAN DO - <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/habits.htm>

- Use a tissue when you sneeze.
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and warm water.
- Keep your hands off of your face.
- Don't go near anyone who is sick or has the flu.

*If you do end up catching the flu, make sure you follow your doctor's orders. For more information on ways to get healthy and stay healthy, visit [myCigna.com](http://myCigna.com).*

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# PREVENTION, SYMPTOMS AND TREATMENT INFORMATION

FROM THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

## INFLUENZA (FLU)

The flu is a serious contagious disease that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes death.

### How does flu spread?

Most experts think that flu viruses are spread mainly by droplets made when people with the flu cough, sneeze or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. A person might

also get the flu by touching a surface or object that has a flu virus on it and then touching his or her own eyes, mouth or nose.

### How long can a sick person spread flu to others?

People infected with the flu shed virus and may be able to infect others from 1 day before getting sick to about 5–7 days after getting sick. This period can be longer for some people,



especially children and people with weakened immune systems. This means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick as well as while you are sick.

**How severe is illness associated with flu?**

Each flu season, different flu viruses spread and affect people differently based on their body's ability to fight infection. Even healthy children and adults can get very sick from the flu and spread it to friends, co-workers and family. In the United States, thousands of healthy adults and children have to visit the doctor or are hospitalized from flu complications each year. While the

flu can make anyone sick, certain people are at greater risk for severe illness resulting in hospitalization or death. They include older adults; young children; people with certain long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes and heart disease; and women who are pregnant. (See "What should I do if I get sick?" on the following page for the full list of high-risk persons.)

**What can I do to protect myself from getting sick from the flu?**

The CDC recommends a three-step approach to fighting the flu: vaccination, everyday preventive actions and the correct use of antiviral drugs if your doctor recommends them.

**PREVENTION**

**#1**

**A flu vaccine is the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses.**

While there are many different flu viruses, the flu vaccine protects against the viruses that research indicates will be most common.

Flu vaccines protect against three or four viruses; an H1N1, an H3N2, and one or two influenza B viruses, depending on the vaccine.

Everyone 6 months of age and older should get vaccinated against the flu each year.

Vaccination of high-risk persons is especially important to decrease their risk of severe flu illness. Vaccination also is important for health care workers and those who live with or care for high-risk people, to keep from spreading the flu to high-risk people.

Children younger than 6 months are at high risk of serious flu illness, but are too young to be vaccinated. People who care for or live with them should be vaccinated to protect these babies.

**#2**

**Take everyday actions to help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses.**

Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

If you are sick with flu-like illness, the CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.

While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.

Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.

Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.

Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like the flu.

**#3**

**Take flu antiviral drugs if your doctor prescribes them.**

If you get the flu, antiviral drugs can treat your illness. These drugs can make illness milder and shorten the time you are sick.

Antiviral drugs work best when started in the first 2 days of symptoms to treat people who are very sick (such as those who are hospitalized) or people who are sick with flu symptoms and who are at increased risk of severe flu illness.



**IF YOU GET SICK ...**

**What should I do if I get sick?**

If you become ill with influenza symptoms you should stay home and avoid contact with other people except to seek medical care. Most people are able to recover at home from the flu without medical care. However, some people are at greater risk of serious flu-related complications. They are:

- Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old
- People 65 and older
- Pregnant women
- People who have:
  - Asthma
  - Neurological and neurodevelopmental conditions [including disorders of the brain, spinal cord, peripheral nerve and muscle such as cerebral palsy, epilepsy (seizure disorders), stroke, intellectual disability (mental retardation), moderate to severe developmental delay, muscular dystrophy and spinal cord injury
  - Chronic lung disease (such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease [COPD] and cystic fibrosis)

- Heart disease (such as congenital heart disease, congestive heart failure and coronary artery disease)
  - Blood disorders (such as sickle cell disease)
  - Endocrine disorders (such as diabetes mellitus)
  - Kidney disorders
  - Liver disorders
  - Metabolic disorders (such as inherited metabolic disorders and mitochondrial disorders)
  - Weakened immune system due to disease or medication (such as people with HIV or AIDS, or cancer, or those on chronic steroids)
  - People younger than 19 years of age who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy
  - People who are morbidly obese (Body Mass Index, or BMI, of 40 or greater)
- If you (or your child) are in one of the groups above and develop flu-like symptoms, consult a health care provider to get advice about seeking medical care. Also, it's possible for otherwise healthy people to develop severe illness, so everyone concerned about their

illness should consult their doctor. There are "emergency warning signs" that should signal anyone to seek medical care immediately.

**Are there medicines to treat infection with flu?**

Yes. Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines (pills, liquid or an inhaled powder) that fight against the flu in your body. While a flu vaccine is the first and most important step in preventing flu, antiviral drugs are a second line of defense to treat the flu if you get sick. Antiviral drugs are not sold over the counter; you must have a prescription to get them. Antiviral drugs are not substitutes for vaccination.

**How long should I stay home if I'm sick?**

The CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine). Stay away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick. Continue to cover coughs and sneezes and wash hands even after you return to work. It is important to know that even if you don't have a fever, you may have the flu and may be contagious if you get flu symptoms.

**EMERGENCY WARNING SIGNS AND FLU SYMPTOMS**

**EMERGENCY WARNING SIGNS IN CHILDREN:**

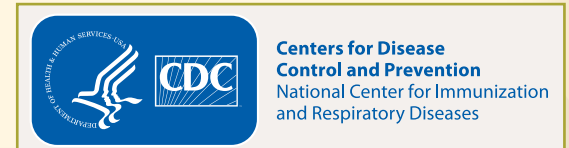
- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

**IN ADULTS:**

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
  - Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
  - Sudden dizziness
  - Confusion
  - Severe or persistent vomiting
- FLU SYMPTOMS CAN INCLUDE:**
- Fever \*
  - Cough
  - Sore throat
  - Runny or stuffy nose

- Body aches
- Headache
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Sometimes diarrhea and vomiting

\*It's important to note that not everyone with the flu will have a fever.



For more information, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/flu> or call 800-CDC-INFO.