

# BUILDER'S MATE

ISSUE 25 | OCTOBER 2007



## Breaking the mould

**Finding mould during building repairs or renovations isn't unusual. Most of it is harmless, but some is a potential health hazard, and you need to know how to handle it.**

Every week builders around the country uncover one of the nastier forms of mould: the greenish-black stachybotrys. This can lead to illnesses with symptoms similar to the flu, general tiredness, headaches and skin irritation.

Like other moulds, it needs moisture and food to grow – leaky roofs or walls and plumbing leaks are typical sources. It grows on a cellulose-based surface such as wood, fibreboard, or paper-covered gypsum plasterboard. It may not cause any health problems until it's been uncovered.

At that point, you need to take precautions to make sure that neither workers nor building occupants are exposed. If you're working where a leak is suspected, proceed slowly. Remove just a small portion of the lining to see if mould is present within the wall cavity. Do not rip into the demolition with a crowbar: all this does is spread the mould spores.

The most commonly found black mould is relatively harmless, but the testing lab Biodet says that every week it finds stachybotrys in samples sent for checking. >

## INDUSTRY NEWS

### All shook up

An unreinforced masonry building is about to meet a machine called a shaker. It is part of a project by Auckland engineering student Aaron Wilson to work out how well Auckland's early brick buildings would cope in an earthquake. Wilson plans to use a mobile field laboratory to simulate an earthquake on an actual building.

Older clay brick buildings are common in the commercial centres of Ponsonby, Grey Lynn, Newmarket and Parnell. However, little field research has been done world-wide to work out how well they would perform in an earthquake.

### Extra edition of *Builder's Mate* for November

Big changes are underway in the energy efficiency and insulation field – most notably, changes to the Building Code requirements. To keep you up with the play, we are putting together a special issue of *Builder's Mate* in November – watch out for it.



**Win!**

**A BOSCH Rotary Hammer  
worth \$399**





Removing stachybotrys

➤ Continued from previous page

If you think stachybotrys is a possibility, take a sample with care:

1. Put on a mask or breathing filter and disposable gloves, and ensure bare skin is covered.
2. Get a strip of adhesive tape about 100 mm long.
3. Place the tape over the mould and press firmly.
4. Lift the tape off and place it in a plastic bag.
5. Seal the bag with tape.
6. Send the sample to a testing laboratory such as Biodet ([www.biodet.co.nz](http://www.biodet.co.nz)).

7. If the test is positive for stachybotrys, it is important to use a respirator with at least a P1 filter when working with the mouldy materials. Wear protective clothing which is disposable or easily washable.

On job sites, dealing carefully with stachybotrys isn't just a good idea – it's the law. The Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 says that all practicable steps must be taken to manage workplace hazards.

## PRODUCT INFORMATION



The Flashman Flashing System is New Zealand designed, manufactured and factory fabricated, then fitted on site by Approved Installers. This complete low maintenance flashing system expels moisture from the head and sides of windows via the extruded aluminium sill. The sill supports the bottom of the window or door and double glazing. The aluminium sill is 1.8 mm thick and powder coated. The system allows cladding to be fitted with or without facings. For more information see [www.flashman.co.nz](http://www.flashman.co.nz).

## Dribblings from the Old Geezer



Over the years I've heard the phrase "bloody greenies" many times. Sometimes it has been during election night viewing with friends; other times it was as a result of being not permitted to do something that impacted on the environment.

There have been times when I've almost agreed with the sentiment, but something always stopped me. Deep down there was usually the nagging thought that they're right even when it seemed silly.

I've been involved in building little ramps for fish to swim and wriggle up to by-pass a small dam that we've constructed. I remember musing that it achieved little because wouldn't it be easy for fishermen to come back at the right time and just wait at the top of the ramp. But that's not the point of the story.

Sadly, we need extremists with drive and energy to try and save the world because most of us just can't be bothered. And when I see friends proudly showing me their newly constructed house with no solar panels for water heating, no rainwater collection, with only the Building Code minimums for insulation, and no thought for sustainability – just the wallet – I wish the greenies had won just a bit more.

Des Molloy

**BRANZ**

## ADVISORY HELPLINES

For the building and construction industry

➤➤ **0800 80 80 85**

For the home owner and public enquiries

➤➤ **0900 5 90 90**

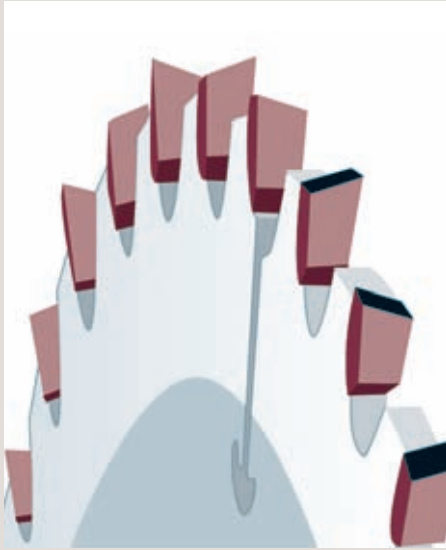
Calls cost \$1.99 per minute plus GST

**[www.branz.co.nz](http://www.branz.co.nz)**

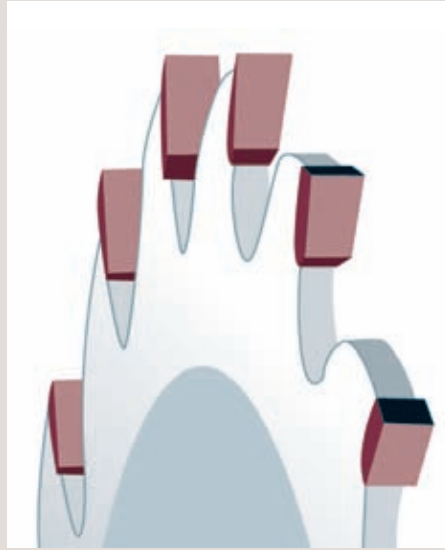
# At a glance

## Checking out your saw teeth

**When you buy replacement tungsten carbide-tipped blades for your circular saw, you have a big choice of types. This is partly to do with tooth configuration – different angles and shapes suit different purposes.**



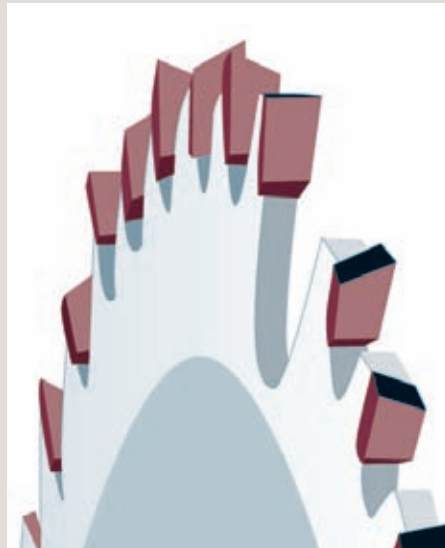
**Alternate top bevel (sometimes given as ATB on the blade packaging):** has every tooth ground at an angle in alternate directions. The teeth cut the grain rather than tearing it, making it a good choice for cross-cutting.



**Flat-top grind (FTB):** has straight chisel teeth for ripping i.e. cutting parallel to the wood fibres. It cuts a kerf with a smooth square bottom, but will splinter the grain if used to cross-cut.



**Triple-chip grind (TCG):** has teeth which are alternately flat tops and ones chamfered on each edge. The chamfered tooth cuts out the middle of the kerf, then the flat-top follows and cleans out the corners. A good design for particleboard, laminates and hardwoods.



**Alternate top bevel with raker (ABT & R):** has a chisel-shaped raker tooth after every two pairs of alternating top-bevel ground teeth to clean up the kerf. A good all-rounder when you want one blade to rip and cross-cut.

## MS (MODIFIED SILICONE) POLYMERS

Recently, BRANZ published an article titled 'Sealing it up' which provided information about the correct choice and application of sealants. The article emphasised the importance of carefully following all manufacturers' recommendations.

We have had feedback from that article pointing to potential confusion about the use of the term 'MS (modified silicone) polymers'. BRANZ would like to take this opportunity to clarify some of the terms used in that article.

Chemically it's correct to say that MS polymers are not silicone sealants or even 'modified' silicone sealants. Some suppliers describe these products as 'silane modified polyurethane'. The amount of silicon in their structure is very small.

Use of the 'modified silicone' term has been driven by the perceived advantages that might arise as a result of association with the high perceived performance of silicone. It suits some companies to use the term 'modified silicone' because they have used it for many years in a descriptive and marketing capacity. It has become established in the industry and trusted like any other trade name.

BRANZ agrees that the use of the term 'modified silicone polymers' can be confusing and they should be referred to as 'MS polymers'. It was not our intention to confuse this situation with the references made in the original article.

## SEMINARS FOR BUILDERS

BRANZ is to host a seminar series called **Shortening the Odds – Reducing your Building Risk** at 22 centres around the country. Specifically for builders, the seminar will focus on practical building techniques for achieving weathertight construction. Solutions for a number of high risk areas will be covered including decks, parapets and balustrades, windows, penetrations, drained cavities and cladding types. See [www.BRANZ.co.nz](http://www.BRANZ.co.nz) for further details and to register.



# COMPETITION Win!



## A BOSCH Rotary Hammer Worth \$399!

This versatile tool can be used for drilling masonry, wood or metal, or for screwdriving. Built for heavy duty use, it offers a 620W motor, equal power in forward and reverse rotation, and a softgrip for fatigue-free use. The BOSCH Rotary Hammer is powerful enough for all applications and reliable in all trade environments.

The prize is provided courtesy of The Tool Shed.

All you need to win is tell us the name of the mystery tool and what it's used for.

Send us your answer plus your name, address and telephone number on the back of an envelope. Post it (you don't need a stamp) to: Builder's Mate 25, Mystery Tool Competition, FREEPOST BRANZ, Private Bag 50 908, Porirua City 5240. One entry per entrant please.

Don't forget to tell us where you picked up your copy of *Builder's Mate*! The winner will be the first correct entry drawn at 9 am on Wednesday 31 October 2007. Details will be posted on the BRANZ Ltd website ([www.branz.co.nz](http://www.branz.co.nz)) and in the next edition of *Builder's Mate*, due out on 1 November 2007.

### Terms and conditions:

Entry is open to all New Zealand residents except employees and immediate families of BRANZ Ltd, BRANZ Inc, BRANZ Pty and The Tool Shed shops. The competition will close on Wednesday 31 October 2007. The prize is not transferable for cash. The judge's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into.



What is the name of this pictured tool and what is it used for?



## BUILDER'S MATE WINNERS

The winner of the BM 24 competition was Rod Cassidy of Stratford. The mystery tool was a hand router, sometimes called a "granny's tooth", used for making and smoothing grooves and rebates. Rod wins a Morgan Flip Over mitre/bench.

*Builder's Mate* 23 winner David Willis of Ashburton receives his prize of an Arges 1100 W planer from Karen Reynolds at The Toolshed, Christchurch.



# BLOKES on the job

## JUSTIN WATSON

Working on new townhouses at Papanui.



### Favourite tool

Radio.

### Favourite tip

Measure twice, cut once.

## PAUL DEROO

Repairing a sawhorse in Christchurch.



### Favourite tool

Sabre saw.

### Favourite tip

Good documents lead to a quicker consent.

## BRIAN TENNANT

Building in Christchurch.



### Favourite tool

His just-purchased nail gun.

### Favourite tip

Be honest.

# A seminar just for BUILDERS!

- Do you worry about your liability if a building you worked on is later found to leak?
- Do you ever have questions about designers' details or building officials' requests?

Visiting a centre near you over the coming months...

## Shortening the Odds – reducing your building risk

This seminar will focus on weathertightness design principles and construction solutions for the riskiest areas of a building.

A must for builders, apprentices and building materials suppliers, visit [www.branz.co.nz](http://www.branz.co.nz) or call 04 237 1170 for more details and to book your place.