

WELLNESS UPDATE

General Shale is committed to offering employees a healthy work environment—one where employees feel valued for their contributions and are encouraged to live healthier and happier lives by making better lifestyle choices. For this reason, we are pleased to announce our new wellness program: **“GS STRONG; building a better YOU!”** The program is available to help you and your family meet your health and wellness goals.

One event recently held in the Tri-Cities region was the Color Me Rad race/walk. Color Me Rad is a fun 5k run/walk where participants get doused with nontoxic, colored powder. “We are currently working with Color Me Rad to sponsor races in other cities where General Shale has facilities and operations,” adds Campbell.

Other Wellness initiatives include a postcard campaign that will begin soon. Employees will receive postcards that highlight various wellness topics including preventive care, cancer screenings, low back pain, asthma, healthy eating, etc. The first campaign will focus on preventive care and cancer screenings.

“We want employees to understand that an annual doctor’s visit and many preventive screenings such as mammograms, PSA tests and colonoscopies are free under our group health insurance,” explains Campbell. “Many of these tests can identify a potential problem early enough for the outcome to be improved. Early detection is the key.”

Campbell asks for wellness success stories to be submitted. “Have you lost weight? Have you reduced your cholesterol? Have you increased your strength? Or has an annual physical helped you detect something early that made a difference in diagnosis? How do you and your family incorporate wellness into your daily routine? We’d love to be able to tell your story,” she says.

Campbell can be contacted at AngieCampbell@generals hale.com.



We have introduced a new Wellness logo to help you easily identify wellness-related topics, activities, etc. Anytime you see this logo, it should be a symbol of General Shale’s focus on having a healthy and safe environment for our employees, as well as to encourage healthy lifestyles.

The logo will be used in our Wellness marketing efforts including a new Facebook page, says Angie Campbell, General Shale benefits manager. “We’ll post upcoming Wellness events throughout our locations, health tips and articles that focus on overall health and well-being.”


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MESSAGE

FROM MR. GREEN

I’ve logged some miles and worn out some shoe leather in the past few months. I have been on the road visiting many of General Shale’s most important customers and potential new customers to accelerate our company’s growth.

I am happy to report that these customers have been impressed with our new products and our strategy to better serve both the residential and commercial markets with all their masonry needs. All whom I have visited are focused on significant new construction projects that can have a positive impact on our sales.

The work that all of us have contributed to the expansion of our product portfolio over the past few years is beginning to pay off in our company’s investment in product development, and the development of our people. Likewise, our shared investment in the seven elements of our Success Profile has resonated very well with our customers.

Our products and technologies prove that we are a modern and future-oriented company. Our expertise in building materials and our superb customer support truly give us an edge that differentiates General Shale from its competition.

Every time I step into a meeting with a current or potential new customer, I have the confidence of knowing that each one of you stands behind our mission to be North America’s preferred source for masonry materials, and I want to thank you for your support and your trust.

My many visits this summer have convinced me that the North American construction business is in the midst of a slow, but steady, rebound from several years of decline or stagnation. I know that our products, our people and our commitment to our customers have made our efforts to accelerate sales growth a much easier task. I am happy to report that we are poised for continued growth as the North American economy continues to expand.

To all of you ... thanks for making this year one that is centered on long-term growth for us all.



Sincerely,
Richard “Dick” Green
CEO – North America
General Shale

85
YEARS
OF SUCCESS
1928-2013

Impressions

THE GENERAL SHALE EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

autumn 2013

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD CUSTOMER SERVICE

Adapted from
Keys to Operating a Successful Business
at www.hdkeys.com



**“THE CUSTOMER IS ALWAYS RIGHT”
IS A FAMOUS SAYING IN BUSINESS.**

The underlying truth behind this statement is recognizing that customers are the lifeblood of any business.

Understanding the importance of good customer service is essential for a healthy business in creating new customers, keeping loyal customers and developing referrals for future customers.

Excellent customer service begins at the initial greeting, whether that’s in person, on the phone or via email. In all these situations, using good people skills will increase the chances for a positive first impression. For example, saying hello with a smile to a customer who just walked in the door will invite that person in and make him or her feel welcome. On the other hand, when an employee doesn’t acknowledge the client, or makes the client feel like an inconvenience, that customer immediately feels slighted.

That negative feeling doesn’t get the customer in a buying mood, and it will most likely turn the customer away from ever coming back to that particular store.

If the employee is utilizing good customer service on the phone, the initial greeting will be courteous. Again, this makes the client feel comfortable. In turn, the customer will appreciate the pleasant greeting and will usually be more agreeable on the other end of the phone. This is a much better situation for the client, instead of leaving messages on answering machines, never getting any returned phone calls or trying to extract some product information from an uncaring employee.

Of course, good customer service goes beyond the initial contact. When helping customers choose the right product or service or answering their questions, assisting

them with their needs is a great example of going the extra mile. This kind of service establishes goodwill, and it'll eventually lead to loyal customers. Even if they don't purchase anything at that time, the good shopping experience will bring the customers back again.

Think about how you've been treated whenever you're the customer. If you've ever had a bad experience with a company, you know that it's not easy to forget the encounter. Oftentimes the managers or the owners of

the store usually aren't notified of the poor customer service. Instead, the people that do hear about the negative experience are the customer's family and friends. Especially with social networking, word travels very fast when it comes to communicating negative experiences to the world.

Good customer service leads to many benefits. Not only will you gain trust with your current clients, they'll also become a wonderful referral system as they spread the word about your

business to other prospects. Especially with any Internet business transactions, product reviews are quite common. Whether it's positive or negative feedback about a product or service, people are writing freely about their shopping experiences. In the long run, treating people fairly and with respect will bring business to your company today and in the future.

GENERAL SHALE PURCHASES JOHNSON CITY'S BOLTON BLOCK COMPANY

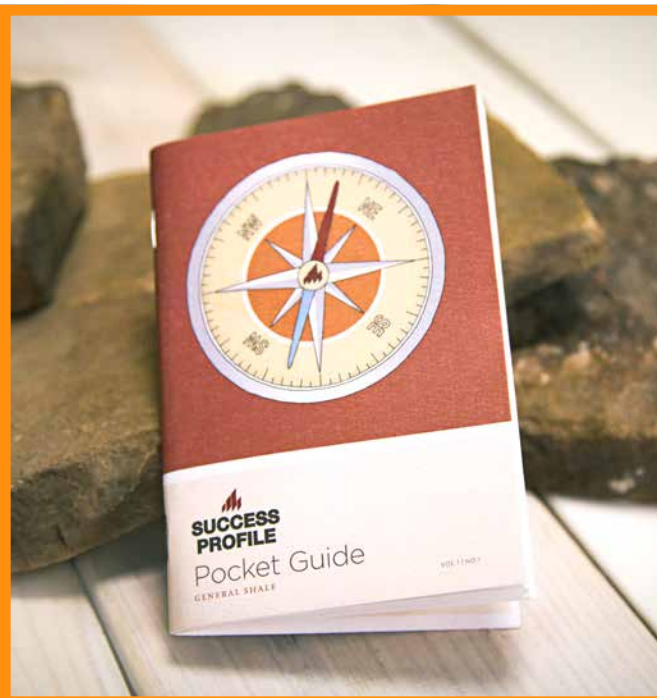
General Shale has purchased the assets of a 60-year-old Johnson City company, Bolton Block, and will now handle all of Bolton's incoming orders for concrete and masonry products going forward.

Bolton Block Company has served both residential and commercial building markets in the region since 1951, manufacturing concrete block in Johnson City and later adding sand and mortar, as well as brick distribution, to its line of products.

"With this acquisition, we have gained some new customers that we are very proud to have on board and look forward to serving," says Dick Green, CEO of General Shale. "We're also pleased to announce that we've hired a new sales representative, Chip Bolton, who will continue to call on his loyal customers, and Scotty Maupin, who will be a supervisor at our block plant in Piney Flats, Tenn.

We feel confident that the customers who have used Bolton's products will enjoy the multiple products from General Shale's broad product line.

"We look forward to providing the same high-quality product offerings and services to which Bolton customers are accustomed, and we will do everything we can to ensure a smooth changeover," he adds. "Our professional staff will be glad to process orders, answer questions and help in any way they can."



SUCCESS PROFILE POCKET GUIDE

You were recently given a General Shale Success Profile Pocket Guide that we hope you will use as a valuable tool to help our Success Profile initiative prosper.

The guide is an easy way for employees to reference Success Profile initiatives and progress. Previous ideas that have been submitted along with the actions taken by General Shale are highlighted under each of the sections of the seven Success Profile initiatives: Value Pricing, Expert for Building Professionals, Technological Leader, Modern and Future-Oriented, Building with a Clear Conscience, Leading Position in Energy-Efficient Construction and being a High Touch Company.

Each section also contains "Questions to Consider." These are some thought-provoking questions that hopefully will spur some thought and further suggestions.

The book contains several perforated idea pages so that you can jot down fresh ideas on how General Shale can improve our process, products and service to customers in each of the seven success profile areas, and you can turn them in to any of the Success Profile suggestion boxes at your General Shale location.

If you have not received yours yet, please ask your area supervisor for one or how to request one.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY WITH GREEN GUARD



Despite the Farmer's Almanac's prediction that Tennessee should brace for a colder-than-average winter, one homeowner in Johnson City is confident his heating bill will be much lower than any of his neighbors'.

That's because his new home meets the 2012 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) that requires R20 for wall insulation, up from R13 previously.

"It's a significant change for much of the country, including Tennessee, that requires that a builder meet the new IECC codes," says General Shale Engineering Services Manager Jim Bryja. "A builder would not be able to do it with a 2x4 wall using traditional sheathing, which has been the mainstay for years. The builder has to go to a 2x6, which is added cost as well as lost space. The alternative is still using 2x4s but using better insulation such as Green Guard®."

Green Guard foam insulation gives continuous rigid insulation and when used with masonry has a higher R-value than does traditional OSB board. "R" means resistance to heat flow. The higher the

R-value, the greater the insulating power. So that means the homeowner's house will be cool in the summer and warm in the winter. The home is one of the first in the area to meet the new insulation code.

"Because the insulation is placed on the outside of the framing, it's continuous and minimizes thermal bridging - that's places where heat can travel through and escape, making it less efficient," explains Bryja. "When used with the brick, this homeowner is getting excellent insulation and weather resistance."

Green Guard is also an excellent moisture shield and prevents the accumulation of water within the wall assembly by providing a water-resistant barrier behind the exterior veneer.

The homeowner is curious to see what his heating bill will be this winter. "I'm hoping that with the Green Guard insulation in combination with the brick I'll have the best and most efficient energy consumption possible ... providing we remember to turn off the lights when we leave," he says.

ARRISCRAFT MEETS SAFETY MILESTONE

Arriscraft's Cambridge, Ontario, plant is celebrating more than a year of no lost time accidents. The milestone was reached on August 17. That adds up to nearly 300,000 hours of no lost time accidents, an incredible achievement for a plant that often requires very labor-intensive duties.

Safety Manager Nelson Camara says, "I want to congratulate everyone on this accomplishment. Arriscraft has always had a commitment to safety, and we've launched several safety initiatives that are paying off."

Camara explains having no lost time means not only reducing workplace injuries and mishaps, but also encouraging workers to return to work under modified conditions.

"It's a win-win for everyone," he explains. "While we have reduced injuries by 85%, we've also implemented a campaign to help medical professionals understand that our facility offers modified duties. We've also done a good job of explaining to employees that coming back to work and having modified or lighter duties helps them maintain 100% pay and keeps the operations running smoothly."

Camara points out that statistics have shown that the longer one is off work, the harder it is to get back into a routine and return to work. So if

possible, coming back sooner rather than later from an injury is beneficial in the long run.

The plant has also started rotating workers more often through various jobs and on multiple machines. This helps employees stay sharp and avoid mistakes that can come from monotonous, repetitive duties.

"We encourage everyone to be as safe as possible," Camara says. "Safety is not a one-man show. It takes a lot of team effort; it takes management's commitment and the workers' commitment to follow the direction and make the effort to stay safe."

Camara encourages communication. The Success Profile suggestion process is a great way to bring up any safety concerns or suggestions.

"I'm very proud of everyone's efforts," Andy Hall, plant manager, concludes. "If we went back and thought about it, this milestone may not have been thought possible just a few years ago. Everyone's cooperation and willingness to work safe has played a part, and I look forward to a million no lost time hours!"

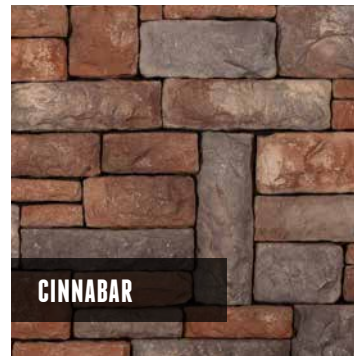


Several new and exciting products have been introduced this quarter that add to the tremendous selection that General Shale and Arriscraft Stone provides. We would love to share them with you.

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, Tenn., facility. Sand Mountain Stone is designed to provide a lightweight

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

REINTRODUCING SAND MOUNTAIN STONE



PENNSYLVANIA STONE SERIES

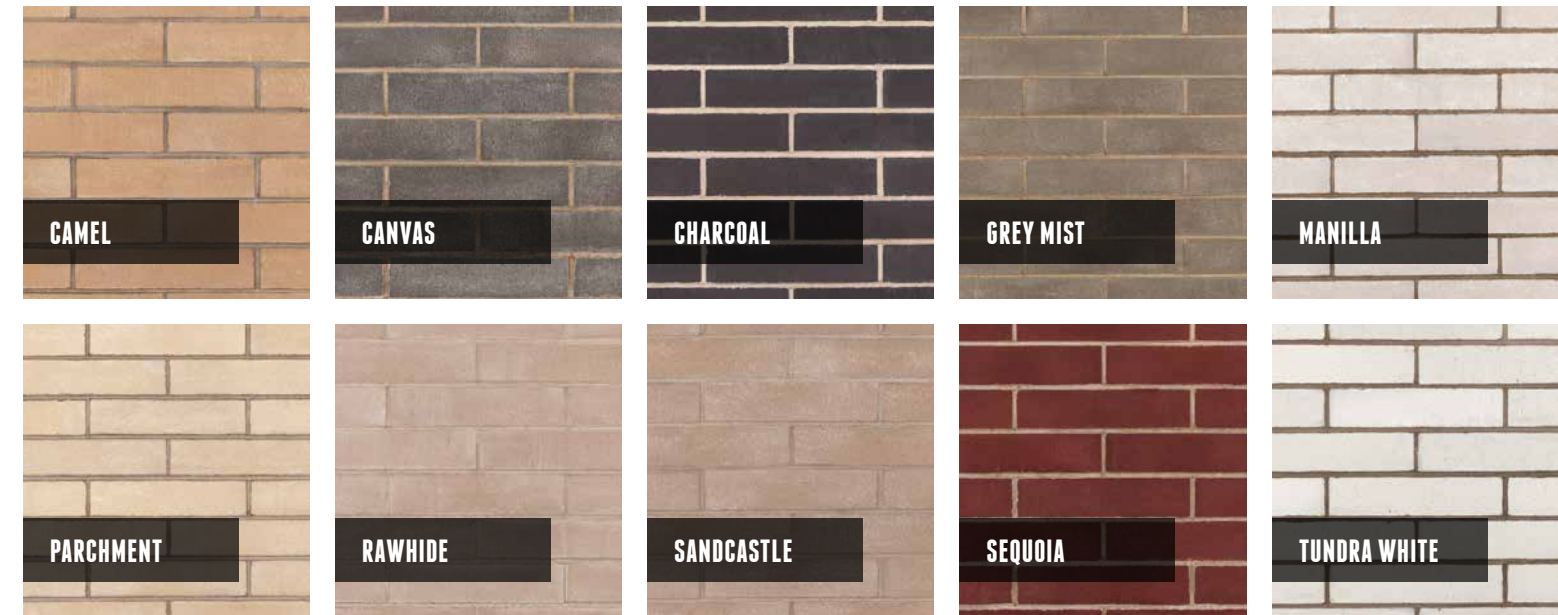


LEDGESTONE SERIES

PRESENTING EXPRESS BRICK REGENCY

In October 2012 we introduced you to “Regency Stone,” a price-point product manufactured at our Piney Flats location comparable to a select line of Arriscraft Building Stone. Likewise, in April of this year, we officially announced “Express Brick,” a product primarily targeted for application in light commercial construction. Today we would like to present “Express Brick Regency,” a product crafted through the combination of Express but offered in Regency Stone colors. Since product specifications and functionality remain unchanged from the original product offering,

Express Brick Regency remains 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 Regency 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.



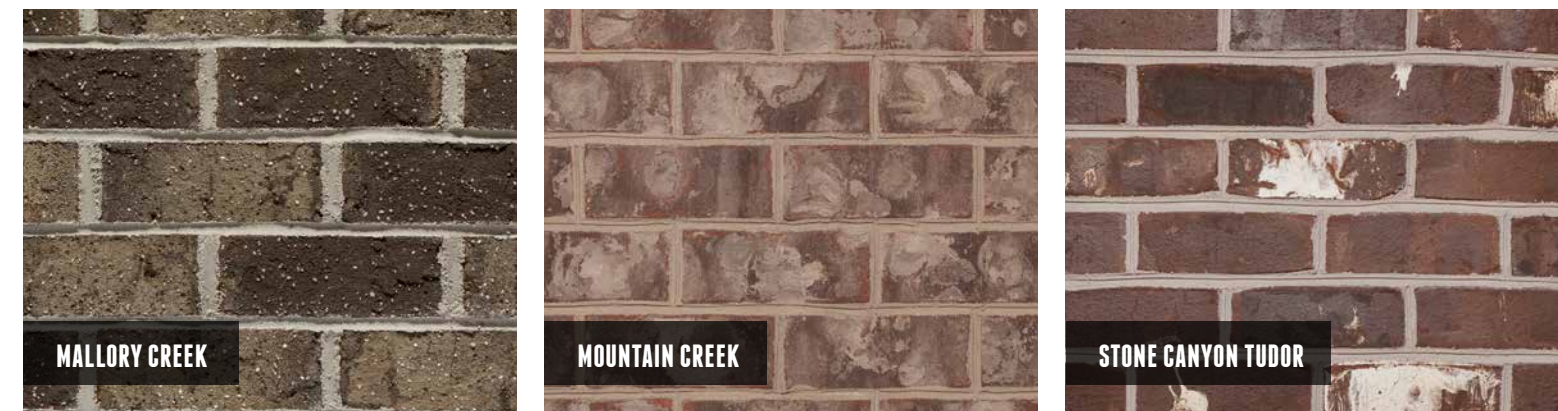
PRESENTING MALLORY CREEK, MOUNTAIN CREEK AND STONE CANYON TUDOR BRICK

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 called “Mallory Creek,” “Mountain Creek” and “Stone Canyon Tudor” brick.

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

Mountain Creek is manufactured in Rome, Ga., and is produced on a “Millstone” brick with added textures reminiscent of a rock face. 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 brick is manufactured in Marion, Va., and is very similar to the clay paver of the same name released in June. 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. Sizes in which Stone Canyon Tudor is available are Lightweight Queen, Lightweight Engineered Modular and Lightweight Modular.



New Arriscraft Products

INTRODUCING FOUR 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".



ICE



MATRIX



STORM



TABASCO

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 lends an overall unique and rugged appearance to a home design. Joining colors "Delta" and "Glacier" is "Oakwood," the newest color in the line.



OAKWOOD

FRESCO SERIES



ECLIPSE



SILVERADO



SOLSTICE

PRESENTING FRESCO ECLIPSE, SILVERADO AND SOLSTICE

There are many features for which the Arriscraft brand is popular, but the core element of success has always been the versatility and affordability offered in 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 include: "Eclipse", "Silverado" and "Solstice". They accompany Twilight to make a four-color offering of our Fresco Building Stone. Fresco was engineered to create a perfect blend of old-world dimension with a fresh presentation. Look for more colors to become available as product awareness continues to grow.

GREAT NORTH AMERICAN HOMES PUBLICATION NOW AVAILABLE

Be sure to pick up your copy of the annual Great North American Homes Magazine published by General Shale. Full of beautiful photography and the stories behind some of North America's most gorgeous homes, the keepsake magazine is packed full of inspiration, ideas and information on building the American Dream.

This year's effort includes a special 85th anniversary article that traces the storied history of General Shale from its humble beginnings. Another story features a three-generation family working at the Johnson City location. There are fireside recipes to bring more life to your outdoor living area, and you can meet the families behind a variety of custom homes, including our 2013 Home of the Year.

You can request your own copy of the 2013 edition by going online to GeneralShaleRegister.com and entering your information – or download the magazine directly from our website.



MICROSITES AND SHARESITE GET A FACE-LIFT

As part of the Modern and Future Oriented initiative from our Success Profile, General Shale has updated its online GSBSHaresite and revamped individual microsites for the company's retail locations.

The GSBSHaresite is used primarily by the managers and retail showrooms for downloading and viewing General Shale marketing materials easily and securely.

It now has a more user-friendly interface that is more intuitive for uploading and downloading the digital and print assets that can be used company-wide for marketing.

"One of the biggest changes you may see is in the order forms," says Dawn Henning, director of Marketing and Retail Sales. "The order forms received a huge overhaul. Instead of having to download a PDF, fill it out

and send it back in, now everything is web-based and information can be input directly online."

The site is also more robust as far as storage and contains a company-wide calendar of events, which allows managers to promote retail location sales, events and grand openings as well as find out where GS1 and GS2 are currently located or how you can request one of the trucks to come to your location.

The new microsites have also been updated to reflect a more retail-oriented branding for each showroom location. The home page for each retail location microsite can be customized with local photography and copy that will be a draw for contractors and residents in different regions of the country.