

NEW PRODUCT PROFILE:

GatorBar Debuts in Hawaii

New rebar looks to take a bite of local market

BY BRANDON BOSWORTH

Hawaii recently became the second state in the U.S. to stock GatorBar, an alternative to steel rebar constructed from basalt fiber reinforced polymer developed by Neuvokas Corp. Honolulu Wood Treating is the exclusive stocking distributor in the Islands.

“As a wholesale distributor Honolulu Wood Treating will provide stocking service to the entire state at all levels in the distribution chain,” says Erik Kiilunen, Neuvokas chief executive officer.



Erik Kiilunen

“With their truckload commitment, Honolulu Wood Treating will make GatorBar available to everyone in Hawaii. With

the corrosion and transportation challenges Hawaii faces, we are confident they will be successful.”

Four hundred and fifty thousand feet



Paul Kane

of GatorBar arrived on the islands in mid-January. Paul Kane, Aloha Marketing and the manufacturer's local representative, says he is “very excited for what we can do with GatorBar in 2017. My hope is the freight, labor and handling savings will win over Honolulu Wood Treating dealers and Hawaiian contractors alike.”

Neuvokas makes GatorBar by a process that involves wetting basalt fibers with epoxy resin and then shaping them into bars. The resulting product is seven times lighter than steel rebar and has higher tensile strength but costs approximately the same, according to the company. It is both corrosion resistant and rust-free. GatorBar is thermally and electrically non-conductive.

Kane says GatorBar is a perfect fit

for the Hawaii market. “Using GatorBar can save 50 percent on shipping and labor costs,” he says. “Plus, there's nothing to corrode.”



GatorBar is seven times lighter than steel, according to Neuvokas Corp.

He adds that GatorBar is made from basalt, a volcanic rock formed from rapidly cooling basaltic lava similar to the lava that flows from Kilauea. “We're taking something like Pele's hair and making it into rebar,” Kane says.

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the same things I learned in the Army helped in roofing: accuracy, patience, do the job right the first time.”

the online Encyclopedia of Surfing, one dramatic tumble during ABC's coverage of the 1968 Duke was later

particular—one working barefoot on a slippery roof on Molokai in his younger days—and surviving without a broken bone.

“The good thing with those big wooden boards is that you developed really good shoulder muscles carrying it to the beach. The bad thing was if your board hit you, it could kill you.”

“I've heard stories of some bad falls,” he says. “There are war stories in roofing as in any other dangerous job, so after 40 years I've been lucky. But I've also stayed focused on safety.”

There are other similarities with surfing: “In both, you usually have a pretty good view, you're out in the fresh air and sunshine and you have to be careful about sun exposure.”

And then there are the falls. Or wipe-outs, whatever you want to call them.

Jock knows falls—according to

used in the "Wide World of Sports" opening credits to illustrate “the agony of defeat.”

“That's why you have to focus and be prepared, have a plan,” says Jock. “Even a four-foot (roofing) fall can kill you.”

He recalls two roof falls in

He's still nimble and wiry, still roofing (reach him at 221-4952), and is so in demand he's running a couple of jobs behind.

“No surfing today,” he says, checking a client's text message on his phone. “Maybe tomorrow.”

Just as well. Waves are forecast to be bigger then. 🏠

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Have a good story about a good person in the Hawaii construction industry? Please email me at dchapmanwrite@hawaii.rr.com.