



## ICPI - Arizona Chapter

### “TECH TIP”

November 29, 2007

## PAVER CUTTING

There are several different means of cutting concrete and brick pavers. Each has its own advantages and disadvantages.

One of the most common means is the use of a brick/block saw. There are many different manufacturers of this type of saw, and is usually available to use either a 12” or 14” diamond blade. These saws can be set up to cut either wet or dry (*see dust control below*). These saws are available electric powered or gasoline powered. They are also available with different stands, either for standing at the saw or sitting at the saw.



The advantage to this type of saw is very accurate cuts, it is easy to use and it is quite safe when used with the proper safety gear. One of the disadvantages is, unless mounted on a rolling cart, the pavers must be marked, brought to the saw, cut and then returned to their needed location. Another disadvantage is they can be messy. If used wet, it will usually create a muddy hole where it is used. If used dry, it will create a lot of concrete dust.



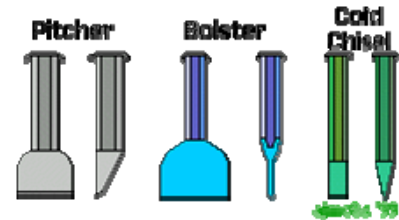
Another very popular type of saw is the concrete cut off saw. Usually available with either a 12” or 14” diamond blade, the cuts with this saw are normally made “in place”. This makes this type of saw very fast. Disadvantages with this saw are; it can be less accurate, it can be dangerous and it is usually used dry and creates a lot of concrete dust.

Attachments are available for this saw to cut with it wet, but that creates its own problem with leaving concrete slurry on the installed pavers. Dust control is available for dry cutting with this saw, as discussed below.

Often not thought of are paver splitters (guillotine). When used properly, splitters can have many advantages. They are relatively inexpensive to purchase and are manually powered. There is almost nothing to break down. The cuts provided with a splitter are not as clean as with a diamond saw, however on tumbled pavers, it makes a very good appearing cut. A splitter can also not be used to make very small cuts, but then, we are not supposed to have very small cuts – are we.



Finally, you save a lot of investment and upkeep and go back to the original means of cutting pavers. The bad part of this means is, it is slow, the cuts are not clean, the cuts are not very accurate – but it's cheap.



## **DUST CONTROL**

It is time that we all began thinking about dust control on our jobs. The Maricopa County Environmental Protection Agency is. There have recently been some changes to the pollution controls laws in the State and the county. Dust control is a big, BIG part of the new regulations. We need to think about all facets of dust control during our installations, but for now, we will discuss dust control while cutting pavers.

As discussed above, a brick/block table saw, operated wet, will create no dust (just mud). Edco is currently making an attachment for its brick/block saws that will capture the majority of the dust. The system incorporates an enclosure for the saw and a high flow/high lift vacuum system. It is not cheap. The list price is over \$5,800.00 for the attachment, not including the saw.

There are also simple attachments for cut-off saws (*as shown below*). The attachment is relatively inexpensive (+/- \$75.00); however you still need to provide a vacuum. Cheap “shop vacs” will work, but they do not have the high volume flow that is required to do the best job.



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As time goes on, and more and more agencies require dust control, costs will surely go down, and options will become more plentiful. In the mean time, be aware that the Maricopa County Environmental Protection Agency will be enforcing the new laws, with very high penalties.