

Top 10 Checklist: Selecting a Boardwalk Material

- ✓ **Aesthetics:** Find which colors and textures are available to complement the surrounding buildings, hardscape features and natural environment. Will the colors fade; will the texture function as anti-slip?
- ✓ **Visit an Installed Project:** Seeing is believing! Get a true feel by walking, running, or biking on the material – during good and bad weather conditions.
- ✓ **Design Requirements:** Live load requirements may vary: pedestrian, H-5 (10,000 lb.), emergency vehicle, wind, seismic, etc. Product also needs to conform to ADA requirements and local building codes (IBC or UBC for example).
- ✓ **Site Suitability:** No two sites are the same. Materials may perform differently depending on the area: heavy UV exposure, floodplain, prescribed fire zone, moist wetland, residential/commercial, etc.
- ✓ **Expected Design Life:** owners will need to replace the structure eventually. How do the boardwalk materials look on similar projects after 5, 10, 20, 40+ years?
- ✓ **Design Support:** Will the company assist by turning over signed and sealed drawings for your project? If not, allow for a little extra \$\$\$ to hire a boardwalk engineer.
- ✓ **Product Manufacturing Origin:** Is the product from South America or 100 miles down the road? Regional materials are usually beneficial to the overall project.
- ✓ **Case Studies:** Learn from other consultants and owners- leverage the ways they were able to address similar challenges.
- ✓ **Maintenance Costs:** Draft a spreadsheet with estimated yearly maintenance per sf. With dwindling maintenance crews, a product's life cycle maintenance costs can be a driving factor.
- ✓ **Installation:** The manufacturer should provide clearly defined procedures and best practices. Understand what is expected of the contractor, it will help eliminate future headaches! Will the contractor have to pre-drill each hole, install stringers every 16" or create dust while cutting pieces in the field?