

>> PRO DEALER ANALYSIS

In recovery

Do's and don'ts for the unsecured creditor

BY BRAE CANLEN

A succession of builder bankruptcies in California, Arizona, Wisconsin, Utah and other parts of the country have sent a chill through the LBM distribution channel. Suppliers wonder if they'll soon find themselves standing in a group of unsecured creditors — and if they should even bother getting in line. Commercial bankruptcy attorneys say it all depends — they're lawyers, after all — but suggest a few simple things that pro dealers can do to minimize their losses.

Home Channel News reached out to legal experts as well as building product distributors on the front lines of the issue to compile the following how-to advice for the LBM industry.

File a "proof of claim" as soon as possible. This is a simple form, available from the Web site of any federal bankruptcy court, that explains what a debtor owes you, and why. "Don't wait to figure out what the deadline is," advised Annie Catmull, a bankruptcy attorney with Walker Wilcox Matousek in Houston. Vendors of a "recently supplied product" — delivered in the 20 days preceding the bankruptcy — may be eligible for full payment under an "administrative priority claim." "It is much better than a general claim, but the [parameters] are very specific," said Catmull, who advises legal help for this route.

(See *Bankruptcy*, page 30)



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ProDealer Industry Summit Issue

sum•mit *Noun.* The topmost level attainable. Also, conference of top executives. Both of those definitions apply to the Home Channel News ProDealer Industry Summit Issue, which includes profiles of our Pro Dealers of the Year: Curtis Lumber and Keim Lumber. Also, our editors track some of the hot button issues that will frame conversations at the Oct. 1 to 3 event in Chantilly, Va.



Special
industry report
begins on page 15.

Panning pesticides

RONA makes over lawn and garden in the green model

BY LISA GIRARD

When RONA, Canada's largest hardware and gardening retailer, with \$6.3 billion in annual sales, announced Sept. 10 that it will stop selling synthetic pesticides for cosmetic use in all its stores across Canada beginning July 1, 2009, it was another major step toward chemical-free gardening north of the border.

This statement from Boucherville, Quebec-based RONA came on top of Home Depot's announcement in the spring that it will voluntarily (See *RONA*, page 38)

MAKING MOVES

Menards adjusts its empire

BY KATE FAZZINI

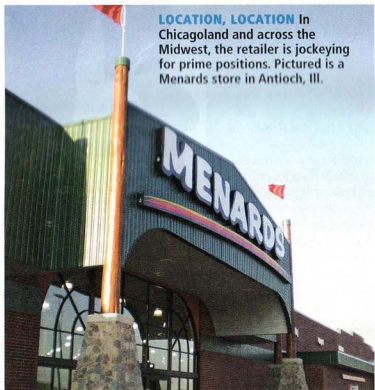
As Menards continues to expand its borders, including into two new states in the United States, the retailer is also fine-tuning its locations within its already established Midwestern market.

Consider the Menards store in Hoffman Estates, Ill., which serves as an anchor tenant in a strip mall in that village. The retailer announced it would pull out of the location in November of this year, moving business just a mile outside the village's limits, to Hanover Park, Ill., according to Hoffman Estates' village manager Jim Norris.

The chess move came as a surprise to Hoffman Estates village officials, who were, in fact, in the market for a second home improvement

(See *Menards*, page 37)

LOCATION, LOCATION In Chicagoland and across the Midwest, the retailer is jockeying for prime positions. Pictured is a Menards store in Antioch, Ill.



INDEPENDENTS Expansion mode

The Hacketts chain has just opened its seventh store, with three more planned. **PAGE 8**



LBM & DURABLES Countertop trends

HCH looks at the debate surrounding the use of granite. **PAGE 33**