



## Recommended Surface Treatment For Finishing Gypsum Panels to Attain a Level 5 Finish

**1. Scope.** The purpose of this document is to describe guidelines for determining the visual performance expectations that an acceptable surface treatment will impart to achieve a Level 5 finish over a properly prepared Level 4 joint treated gypsum panel surface.

**2. Terminology.** The following definitions are applicable to this document.

**gypsum panel products (n):** The general name for a family of sheet products consisting essentially of gypsum. - **ASTM C11**

**inspection lighting (adj):** Inspection lighting shall be representative of normal lighting conditions in intensity and location.

**normal lighting conditions (adj):** Normal lighting conditions are described as those in place when the project is finished. This includes, but not limited to, design lighting (e.g. wall washers, spots and floods, etc) and natural lighting." - **PDCA**

**normal viewing position (adj):** The normal viewing position shall be at any angle provided it is established at a minimum distance of five feet perpendicular from the surface to be viewed.

**properly painted surface (adj):** One that is uniform in appearance, color and sheen. It is one that is free of foreign material, lumps, skins, runs, sags, holidays, misses, strike-through, or insufficient coverage. It is a surface which is free of drips, splatter, spills, or overspray which were caused by the contractor's workforce. Compliance to meeting the criteria of a "properly painted surface" shall be determined when viewed without magnification at a distance of five feet or more, under normal lighting conditions and from a normal viewing position. - **PDCA**

**skim coat (n):** A type of surface treatment that employs the use of joint compound to minimize surface variations.

**surface treatment (adv):** Any method of treating a gypsum panel substrate to minimize surface variations.

**uniform surface (n):** A gypsum panel substrate that exhibits the same visual appearance properties over the entire surface area when decorated.

**3. Guidelines For Determining An Acceptable Surface Treatment.** The following performance descriptions have been established as a guide.

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### **3.1 Surface Treatment - Conditions for Installation**

3.1.1 Surface treatment shall be installed over a properly prepared gypsum panel substrate. The level of gypsum panel finish should meet the minimum criteria of a Level 4 finish as described in; GA-214 "Recommended Levels of Gypsum Board Finish", NWCB "Recommended Levels For Finishing Of Gypsum Board", and/or equivalent.

3.1.2 Surface treatment will be applied over unpainted properly prepared gypsum panel substrates only.

3.1.3 - Leave sufficient material that minimizes surface variations over joints, fasteners, trims, and gypsum panel surface in accordance to the jobsite standard.

3.1.4 During the construction phase, jobsite conditions should be maintained in accordance with Drywall Finishing Council document titled, "Interior Job Condition Specification For The Application of Drywall Joint Compounds, Drywall Textures, And Paint /Coatings".

3.1.5 A jobsite standard of the finishing system, surface treatment, and decoration of gypsum panel substrate shall be constructed for the purpose of establishing a level of visual appearance deemed acceptable.

3.1.6 The jobsite standard shall be constructed in advance of work.

3.1.7 The constructed jobsite standard shall be representative of the wall and ceiling configuration typically found at the jobsite.

### **3.2 Surface Treatment - Materials**

3.2.1 All surface treatment materials should be compatible with materials in the underlying properly prepared gypsum panel substrate, and provide an acceptable surface to receive decoration.

3.2.2 Any material may be used that meets the visual performance expectations of a surface treatment applied over a properly prepared gypsum panel substrate.

3.2.3 Surface treatment materials may be applied by any method deemed practical and/or recommended by the manufacturer.

### **3.3 Surface Treatment - Visual Performance Expectation**

3.3.1 Provide a finished surface that is suitable for decoration.

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3.3.2 Provide a uniform decorated surface when viewed without magnification under occupancy conditions with normal lighting conditions and from a normal viewing position. Consideration shall be given to window treatment and/or any other decorative finishes that could affect lighting and viewing.

3.3.3 Inspection lighting shall be representative of normal lighting conditions in intensity and location.

3.3.4 Achieves a level of visual appearance as established by the approved jobsite standard.

**4. Comments.** The following definitions are applicable to this document.

**intent** - This performance description is designed to minimize decorating problems that can occur due to surface variations between the gypsum panel surface and areas finished with joint compound.

**surface smoothness** - Because the joints and fasteners must be concealed with fill and finish coats of joint compound, it is impossible to achieve a finished surface that is a flat plane. Instead, the joints and fasteners are finished with graduated arcs designed to prevent recesses or ridges that result in distinct shadows in critical light.

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