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WALL AND CEILING BUREAU

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TECHNICAL BULLETIN

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Cracks in Gypsum Panel Products on Wood Framing

The installation of gypsum wallboard (drywall) to wood framed walls and ceilings is often used to serve a variety of functions, including finishing and substrate sheathing, shear, sound and/or fire resistance. When applying gypsum wallboard to wood framing members, satisfactory results can be assured with either single-ply or multiple assemblies by requiring the following items:

Framing Details – All lumber should be straight, correctly spaced, properly installed and cured. All wallboard must have wood backing, secured to receive it.

Job Conditions – Controlled temperature with adequate ventilation throughout application.

Onsite lumber storage - Lumber must be kept dry during storage and installation, moisture content of lumber should not exceed 15% at the time of gypsum board application.

Joint Treatment - Where materials are being mixed or used for joint treatment the room temperature shall be maintained at no less than 50 degrees for a period, beginning not less than 48 hours, before mixing or application and continuing until applied materials are thoroughly dry

Summary - Adhering to the above conditions should limit cracking, however, it is typical, that as the wood framing dries, cracks can be expected to appear in the drywall. Common places for cracks to appear are at the heads of windows where walls intersect at the corner beads and where wall and ceiling planes intersect. **Cracks less than 3/32 inch in drywall are building maintenance items.**

Contractors Responsibility: The contractor should make necessary repairs if the above guidelines were followed. If wood framing or foundation movement is causing the cracking, this condition must first be remedied before attempting drywall repairs.