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Drywall Installation Tips

Light Bulb Runner-Up

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Lonnie Cox, CGR, sales manager for Brothers Strong in Houston, used to own his own drywall company and has turned his tricks of the drywall trade into innovative remodeling so-lutions in the field.



Caulking corners helps prevent future paint repairs.

Because drywall is flat and absorbs light, imperfections can be hard to see, but they can become glaringly obvious once the surface is painted. Brothers Strong crews use a halogen light or flashlight when applying mud, sanding and texturing so they can discover knife marks, dips and other flaws before priming. While this can add slightly more time to the job, Cox would rather be proactive than repair the surface after painting.

Using 8- or 10-foot-long, 1-inch-wide corner bead along with paper or fiberglass tape lets crews plaster each side of a corner without dragging a knife through the opposite side. Cox says the rigid metal center makes spreading drywall easier because it catches excess the first time around while creating straighter, well-defined corners. Also, both walls can be floated at once, so more gets done in less time. Cox says the time saved is worth the bead's extra cost.

To counteract cracks once a project is completed, crews run painter's caulk on the inside corners of the drywall before texturizing, priming or painting. Cox says this is "a cheap way to provide extra protection and flexibility in the corners and saves the paint" because even if the drywall cracks, the caulk often prevents the crack from showing through the paint.

Cox remains on the lookout for new solutions. "I sometimes just go to the big-box stores to walk the aisles to expose myself to tools and materials," he says. "I take the time to look at the new stuff. You have to be willing to experiment."

To submit an idea for The Light Bulb, send a description (and photo if possible) to Meghan Haynes at 630/288-8145 (fax) or mmhaynes@reedbusiness.com.



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