

Futuristic Gypsum

USG'S revolutionary sag-resistant gypsum ceiling panels helped create the Millennium Home – and will ensure that it maintains its stunning appearance for years to come.

When 1998's Custom Builder Show Home was built, the goal was to use advanced technologies to create a home for the new millennium – which means, given today's demographics, a structure that can fulfill the dreams of Baby Boomers while also meeting their changing needs. The Millennium Home, built in the Bishops Gate subdivision of Lincolnshire, Illinois, addresses both requirements. The structure is universally accessible, with an elevator, three-foot-wide doorways, and ramped access to the garage. It also boasts a magnificent library, an exercise room, a media room, and a solarium – not to mention an eight-car garage with cathedral ceiling for the owner's vintage auto collection.



Underlying all this opulence are innovative technologies that increased the efficiency of the building process while contributing to the beauty of the home. One of the featured new products was USG's SHEETROCK Brand Interior Ceiling Panel, Sag Resistant. Manufactured using a patent-pending technology, this $\frac{7}{8}$ -inch gypsum ceiling board combines improved handling characteristics and lighter weight with better sag-resistance than that offered by conventional $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch gypsum panels.



The difference was readily apparent to those working with the drywall – and was especially helpful during the construction of a three-story great room with vaulted ceiling. “My company has been hanging drywall for 12 years, and my crew immediately noticed the difference,” said Jack Szwoob of Brookside Construction, Inc., based in Deerfield, Illinois. While much easier to lift and maneuver, “the board was also very strong and didn't crack or break. At the same



time, it was easy to cut and separate.”

In addition to increasing the efficiency of the building process, USG’s $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch ceiling panel helped ensure the home’s lasting beauty by providing three times the sag resistance offered by conventional $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch gypsum board. “I’m glad to see this product hit the market,” said Dick Sevon, one of the founders of Sevvonco, Inc., the project builder, based in Palatine, Illinois. “In the past, to eliminate sag, primarily where trusses are used with 2-foot centers, we’ve had to create furring strips. The new sag-resistant board helps eliminate costly callbacks to repair sagging ceilings.”

The visual drama designed into the Millennium Home included not only cathedral and vaulted ceilings, but also a large number of curved surfaces. Their construction was made easier by another product from USG, SHEETROCK Brand $\frac{1}{2}$ -Inch Flexible Gypsum Panels. Both drywall contractor and architect were pleased with the results. “I’ve used this product for the past three or four years, and it works wonderfully,” said Szwob. “It’s a pleasure to work with flexible sheets you don’t have to moisten.”

According to project architect Bill Styczynski, of Styczynski Walker & Associates in Willowbrook, Illinois, “We’ve designed a number of projects with radius walls, and I’ve watched contractors ‘score’ drywall to make it bend. I was very curious, then pleased, to see how the $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch flexible board worked in this application. It provided a smooth, seamless surface for some very tough radius walls.”

While most homeowners never think about their drywall unless something goes wrong, the desire of Baby-

Boom buyers for increasingly dramatic spaces makes it imperative to choose the right gypsum panel for the job. According to Styczynski, “Curved walls are a very hot item with our custom clients right now, and I can really appreciate a product that makes these difficult spots look right. We don’t want people to notice a curve because of its imperfections. We want people to notice the smoothness of a curve and how it provides a nice transition between spaces.”

Like everyone involved in the creation of the Millennium Home, USG is looking toward the future. The firm’s continuing research effort in the area of gypsum panels will help meet the changing needs of architects, contractors, and homebuyers as the building industry enters the 21st century.

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