I’m suspending this column’s regular format this month to tell you about a new ceiling system that uses components for an acoustical ceiling and gypsum board. It promises to reduce installation costs by up to 40 percent, compared to the “old” cold formed channel/hat channel system. This newer system uses a heavy-duty galvanized version of the suspension “tee” grid system, familiar to anyone who has installed or observed the installation of a common acoustic suspension ceiling. This new system appears to have many advantages that lend themselves to the cost savings.

For starters, the grid goes up just like that of a typical acoustical suspension ceiling. There are L-shaped pieces that are installed at the desired height around the room’s perimeter (the instructions admonish the installer to check the level as this hardware goes up—probably not a half-bad idea). Then the main “tees” are put into place at the usual 4-foot intervals. Then, hang the main tees from above with 12-gauge wire (providing another opportunity to check for level). Then the main “tees” are put into place at the usual 4-foot intervals. Then, hang the main tees from above with 12-gauge wire (providing another opportunity to check for level). The grid allows the easy use of regular ceiling tile in immediate proximity of the gypsum board ceiling with no change in hardware. Several fixtures commonly used in regular suspended ceiling systems can now be used with the gypsum board system.

Also, the main “tees” can be curved to several radii allowing for curved ceilings, or soffits. The grid allows the easy use of regular ceiling tile in immediate proximity of the gypsum board ceiling with no change in hardware. Several fixtures commonly used in regular suspended ceiling systems can now be used with the gypsum board system.

I recently wrote about painting over stucco. According to Frank Nunes of the Lathing & Plastering Institute of Northern California, the first choice is applying a “fog coat” to a properly prepared existing uncoated stucco surface in otherwise good condition.

A fog coat may be applied using either a brush-applied or a pump-up sprayer. According to a recipe from the Northwest Wall and Ceiling Bureau, a fog coat consists of one part cement, one part lime, oxide pigment colorant and clean water. Mix the ingredients together by adding the water slowly and stirring to form a thick paste. Let the paste stand for 10 minutes. Mix again to get rid of any lumps, and add enough water to achieve the desired viscosity—slightly thicker than milk for brush application and somewhat thinner for sprayer application. It’s very important to keep the final proportions consistent to ensure color uniformity. Strain the mixture through a nylon stocking three times before putting it in the sprayer.

If using a brush apply enough mixture to hide fine cracks and other minor surface irregularities. If spraying, adjust the tip to get a fine spray. Spray in a circular motion. Stir the contents in the sprayer continuously to keep dispersed. Don’t let it run. Another coat may be applied in the same day if needed to get a uniform appearance. The fog coat should cure naturally in cool damp weather; in warmer, drier weather, dampen it lightly the following day or evening. Some chalking may appear until the fog coat has completely cured.

About the Author
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