Is a G235 16 gauge metal stud available? Can a G235 coated 16-gauge sheet be cold rolled to a C-section without the zinc coating chipping or cracking? Is it possible to hot dip a G60 or G90 16-gauge stud after it is rolled? —L.H.

According to Barry Mau of Knorr Steel Framing Systems’ technical services department, a G235 coating is theoretically feasible, but the “real world” limit is G115—and even that has its problems. Essentially, coatings over G90 tend to crack where the sheet metal is bent into shapes, leaving avenues for rust to form at the corners. According to Mau, the coating is actually spray-applied to the metal substrate as it is rolled off a coil. The coating’s thickness is regulated by the speed that the metal sheet is moving through the coating, while the coating is applied at a constant rate. The shapes are formed from that sheet. For thicker galvanizing, the simplest approach is to apply a zinc-rich or zinc-dust coating to the framing once it is in place. Since material this thick will require welding, there will already be the need to coat the welds with that very same material.

I need to have metal lath attached to a concrete masonry unit surface so the surface can be stucco finished. My contractor says he can use cut nails to do this, but the building official needs to see a standard showing the proper spacing, depth, etc., for attaching the lath to the block. What do you recommend?

The standard for attaching metal lath to CMU is buried in ASTM C1063. I must admit that I skimmed right over it in the standard, so I called Gary Maylon at Alabama Metal Industries, the chairman of the ASTM task group on C1063.

Maylon pointed out that the language appears in section 7.10.5 (he also admits that the title in the previous paragraph, “Attachments for Metal Plaster Bases to Concrete Joists,” can misguide all but the most diligent readers). ASTM C1063, 7.10.5 states: “Metal plaster bases shall be attached to masonry or concrete with power or powder actuated fasteners or a combination of power or powder actuated fasteners and hardened concrete stub nails. One power or powder actuated fastener shall be located at each corner and one at the mid-point of the long dimension adjacent to the edge of the metal plaster base sheet. The balance of the sheet shall be fastened with power or powder actuated fasteners or hardened concrete stub nails. The fasteners shall be installed in rows not more than 16 inches long with heads not less than the 3/8 inches wide.”

Is it okay to apply a skim coat of drywall joint compound over a semi-gloss painted wall without doing any prep work?

Drywall compounds are designed/formulated to be applied over either bare drywall or a previous coat of drywall compound. Spackling compound is generally better suited for application over existing paint. Even marginally cured semi-gloss paint should be sanded before anything, including another coat of the same paint, is applied over it (usually, it may be re-coated with itself without sanding within a few days of the first coat). When re-coating a semi-gloss finish with paint, I recommend 150 to 220 grit; when patching over semi-gloss paint, I recommend 80 grit. Make sure to remove all dust created by the sanding prior to applying anything to the surface, otherwise the adhesion of the top layer may suffer. I don’t recommend using a primer over the semi-gloss in lieu of sanding.

About the Author
Lee G. Jones is AWCI’s director of technical services. Send your questions to him at jones@awci.org.