BIFSA, told us that some students walk as many as 5 miles to the program each morning, while many others are housed in modern, comfortable dormitories operated by BIFSA.

The unfortunate part of the program is that demand for participation exceeds the number of openings for training and literally thousands of men are turned away each year.

**A unique school . . .**

While enrolled in the training program, students receive a mix of both classroom, shop and field training, all under the watchful eye of experienced tradesmen, Instructors are also both black and white. One classroom we visited was basic mathematics with a black instructor teaching elementary construction geometry to a small class of about 8 black students. It was encouraging to watch these men who had little or no earlier training in this field eagerly call out “one hundred eighty!” when asked the number of degrees in a half circle.

Wages for the students are paid entirely by BIFSA from contributions from contractors and owners, similar to a degree-to the manner in which apprentice training is financed in North America. In addition to wages, students are also provided with a nourishing lunch (although many of the men not housed in the dorms take part of their lunches home for their family each day).

During AWCI’s visit last August, in addition to those students at the training college itself, we saw hundreds of apprentices working on a new headquarters building for BIFSA, and dozens more working on several community projects in the Johannesburg area.

Upon graduation, the trainees are placed on construction jobs where — contrary to American media reports—pay is commensurate with skill and is not based on color or race. Many of the graduates go on to start their own construction firms in the townships where they employ additional blacks.

Apprentice training in South Africa is truly an equal partnership in several aspects: Blacks and whites working side by side, and contractors and owners jointly financing the education and instruction of new workers. In South Africa, BIFSA’s unique training program is one of the better examples of change and progress . . . an area not well covered by the media.

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**Minimum Temperatures in the Workplace**

**Your Input is Important on This Reader Survey**

By J.L. Houser
Genstar Gypsum Products Company
Gypsum Association Technical Committee Chairman

In an effort to update and improve industry recommended specifications, the Gypsum Association has undertaken a program to evaluate current requirements governing the minimum ambient temperature necessary when installing (hanging) gypsum board. Both the ASTM Standard Specification for the Application and Finishing of Gypsum Board C-840 and the Gypsum Association GA-216435 covering the same operations, call for minimum temperature when installing gypsum boards of 50°F (10°C).

The issue is extremely important. Production can be affected if the working conditions are not reasonable. The addition of temporary heat on a job can be a costly item and must be included in a bid where it is required either by a standard reference or as a separate item in the specifications.

Gypsum panels have been known to freeze together and face paper damaged when moisture and cold temperatures were found at the job site. Very cold temperatures also affect the workability of the gypsum board and its relationship to the framing. Cold conditions have been known to cause bond failures, nailing and other problems.

AWCI’s contractor membership is being asked to address this topic by answering and submitting the accompanying questionnaire. This gives every contractor member the opportunity to make his voice heard in the preparations of the standards by which he must work. A few minutes of your time is earnestly requested.
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<th>Type of drywall firm:</th>
<th>Regional area of work:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Residential _________</td>
<td>Northeast ____________</td>
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<td>Other (Specify) ______</td>
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**Does your firm normally provide heat for drywall hangers?**
Yes ______ No ______ At what temperature ______________

**How long do you provide heat, when required before starting the hanging operation? (Circle One)**
- 0 hours
- 24 hours
- 48 hours

**Is temporary heat provided continuously (overnight)?**
- Yes ______ No ______ Only during work hours? Yes ______ No ______

**What are the sources for your temporary heat?**
1. ____________________________ 2. ____________________________

**Do your labor contracts specify minimum working temperatures?**
- Yes ______ No ______ What Temperature? ______________

**Do your job contracts require the general contractor to provide for heat at certain temperatures?**
- Yes ______ No ______ If so at what temperature ______________

**At what temperature would you recommend that heat be required?**
- None __________ 32° F __________ 40° F __________
- 45° F __________ 50° F __________ 55° F __________ Other __________

**Comments**
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

**Optional information (not required):**
- Firm Name ____________________________
- Signature ____________________________
- Date ____________________________

**Please respond by January 15, 1987**

*Send completed form to: AWCI/Technical Department*
25 K Street, NE • Suite 300  Washington, DC 20002