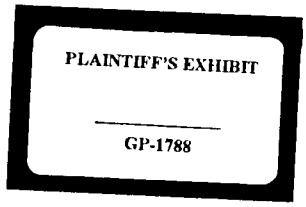
PAOLI, PENNSYLVANIA

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To: All Regional Sales Managers
All Area Sales Managers
All Salesmen

General Sales Bulletin #69-65

Subject: BESTWALL JOINT SYSTEM TAPE

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File - Gypsum Products Manual
Wallboard - End of Section 6A

The 2" paper tape used to reinforce the joint between gypsum wallboard in conjunction with various joint system compounds, is a small segment of a very large sheet generally made on a high speed machine under carefully controlled conditions. However, as a result of the high speed, there are variations from time to time as the paper varies between the limits set by the manufacturer of the paper itself. Jumbo rolls of this paper 36" wide and many thousands of feet long, are shipped by the paper manufacturer to companies who process this tape, including skiving edges, sanding, perforating, cutting, and rewinding in 60', 75', 250', or 500' rolls. These fabricators box it and ship it to their customers who generally are the gypsum manufacturers or the drywall trade.

All of Bestwall's joint system tape is manufactured by one company, the Marco Company of San Rafael, California. This company only fabricates tape for private label sale and does not sell direct to dealers, applicators, hardware stores, etc.

While the United States Gypsum Company makes their own joint system tape, they actually are a fabricator only and buy their jumbo rolls from the same paper manufacturer who supplies Marco. Furthermore, USG fabricates their joint system tape at four points around the Country. Thus the USG tape may have a variation depending on the area of the Country the material comes from. On the other hand, Bestwall's tape from one source is more consistent, the only variations being in those which the paper manufacturer normally encounters and also those which the tape manufacturer will develop.

The National Gypsum Company fabricates a large portion of their tape at one facility and supplement this by buying tape in certain areas of the Country from independent tape manufacturers.

Marco, in making private label tape for several companies including some of the independent joint system manufacturers, fabricates almost as much tape as does the major gypsum manufacturer at their several facilities.

Marco is making a tape which, on the basis of recent comparative tests, is equal in every respect to our competitor's tape, and in many cases, it is better.

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The next time you look at a roll of tape, examine it carefully for several things. First, (holding it to the light) you will notice that Bestwall's tape is rough on both sides as the fibers are raised across the 2" width on both sides indicating both sides of the paper have been roughened. At the same time, notice that the outside of the roll has the two edges skived for 3/8" to 1/2" from the edge to form a taper. This taper is designed to prevent the edge of the tape from curling when applied in the joint, to keep the edges flat, to permit the tape to be concealed more easily and to help prevent edge cracking. The customary way to apply the tape to take advantage of this feature is for the outside of the tape on the roll to be laid against the board in taping the joint. However, some applicators take the tape off the roll such that it lays with the inside against the board. Tape applied through mechanical tools the way the tool manufacturer recommends the roll to be threaded into the machine, results in the tape being laid into the joint in the proper way.

If you'll notice most tape of the major gypsum manufacturers, you will see that it is skived on one side only. Some tape manufacturers do not roughen the entire surface of the back of the paper tape, that is the side on which the edges have not been skived, but only roughen it along the edges. This makes it appear that the tape has been skived on both sides but holding the tape up to the light and comparing it with other tapes, will quickly show that this is not true.

Some of the poor performing tapes, are made of a thicker paper and some instead of having a tapered skived edge, actually have a recessed skived edge; the difference being the same as would be noticed between a recessed edge gypsum wallboard as compared with a tapered edge wallboard. This can quickly be seen again if the tape is held to the light to look through the 2" width.

Another point to notice in looking through the tape in this manner, is the evenness of the perforations. The spark perforations may show as dark spots because the arc producing the spark perforations has burnt the paper. This is no indication as to whether the tape has actually been perforated. Perforations can only be seen by holding the tape up to the light. These perforations are not put in for the purpose of providing any mechanical key but merely to permit air to escape from underneath the tape as it is laid in to the joint and also allow faster drying of the joint system under the tape in the joint.

A good tape has to have good wet strength and furthermore, should have minimum dimensional change when embedded in the joint compound. These characteristics are built into the paper by the manner of manufacture and the ingredients that are included in it.

Bestwall's tape is made in one width only: 2" with a tolerance of plus 0.05".

Bestwall's tape is creased by a rounded edge wheel in the initial processing. As the jumbo roll of paper is slit and immediately before it is wound onto the rolls, the paper is actually folded on itself and then flattened as it goes into the roll. The process is carefully controlled to avoid weakening the fibers by making too sharp a fold since this would induce a very weak point in the tape

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and contribute to its splitting in application or use. If the applicator pulls the tape off of the roll with one hand held close to the roll, cupping the fingers to crease the tape and pulling the paper with the other hand, he can develop a proficiency such that the tape will be creased down the center consistently and rapidly. On the other hand, if the applicator tends to cut off 8' to 10' lengths of the paper and then fold it, it is very difficult to fold consistently at the crease with Bestwall or any tape.

From time to time, there has been reference to USG's tape being softer than Bestwall's tape. However, on continued examination of rolls of tape in different areas, the softness of USG's tape has never been consistent and in many instances, Bestwall's tape is just as soft. One way to check this, is a blindfold test in which a man is given fresh tape from competitive rolls. It is very difficult to tell one from the other of the good grade tapes at this point.

A very Important factor is the bonding of the tape with the joint system material. In a recent series of comparative tests, Bestwall tape adhered well not only to Bestwall joint compound but also to most competitors' compound. On the other hand, one of our major competitors' tape did not bond well either to his joint compound or to ours.

From time to time, you may encounter a complaint that the tape is too wide or too narrow for the mechanical tools. The applicator may complain the tape has a tendency to wander when too narrow whereas in the case where the tape is too wide, it sticks in the tool head. Generally, where there is a complaint that the tape is too wide, a careful inspection of the tools will show that the opening through which the tape leaves the box, has become dirty and if this is cleaned out, the tape will work satisfactorily. In one or two instances where banjo boxes have been made locally by sheet metal shops, the throat is crimped too tightly in the manufacture and again, the use of a putty knife in widening the openings through which the tape leaves the box, will cure the problem. With the tolerances of the Bestwall tape the comment that it is too narrow has not been heard in well over a year now.

An inspection of Marco's facilities by Bestwall representatives in the past few months, indicates these are very clean and the equipment very well maintained. They have a continuous inspection system which quickly picks up and corrects any variation of width, lack of skiving or sanding, lack of perforations or other imperfections.

Bestwall is not in the business to sell joint system tape. However, you should sell all the tape necessary to be used with Bestwall joint system and you should sell all the joint system necessary to finish Bestwall board. While the ratios are much better than they have been in the past years, there still is room to increase the sale of Bestwall joint system and tape to get Bestwall's share of this market. When you consider that such companies as Proko, Synkloid, Reardon and other manufacturers with no gypsum wallboard, are selling large quantities of joint system and tape you can appreciate that there still is a great potential to sell just the material needed to cover all Bestwall board.

We hear many complaints of competitors selling "unit responsibility". Are you selling unit responsibility on Bestwall board sales and getting the joint system to go with that wallboard?