

DRYWALL CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION OF NEVADA

DCAN-SW

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Double Up to Eliminate Ceiling Cracks

Most builders have determined to use RC Channel, or at minimum Perimeter Relief Clips in large spanning ceiling areas. Both of these options have had a decent record of success, however in some cases the problems persist despite the use of RC or Clips, or homes without RC end up cracking and then need to be repaired multiple times. In cases such as this, we have another solid option which is a **Double Layer** ceiling. It is roughly 35% more cost to do this in production verse installing RC, however it is highly effective and rarely, if ever, fails.

Following is the recommended installation procedure for a Double Layer Ceiling application: *Lamminate (adhesively glue) and screw a new second layer of 1/2" ceiling board in the opposite direction of the original drywall. The new drywall should be laminated with Westpac Blue Dot taping mud (or equivalent) applied with a notched tile trowel to completely cover the back of the drywall. The board should be secured with laminator screws. An approximate 1/8" gap should be left around the perimeter of the ceiling, which will be caulked. Once the Blue Dot is dry, remove the laminator screws prior to taping and texturing.*

This repair method creates a rigid diaphragm that moves as one giant assembly, which effectively mitigates cracking and ridging issues. It is extremely important to make certain that the second layer being installed is glued to the first layer (or existing drywall in repair application) - you cannot skip this step. Also, an engineer should be consulted to confirm that the additional weight is not an issue for the trusses - it rarely is.

Lastly, I want to make you aware of some language from the **NAHB Residential Construction Performance Guidelines 5th Edition** on this topic. This language is being incorporated into many home builder purchase contracts now. This serves to notify homebuyers ahead of time of this issue and lets them know that some cracks are to be anticipated in wood framed homes.

Here is the language: *“When drywall has been placed on lumber surfaces subject to shrinkage and warpage and which are not perfectly level and plumb, problems may often occur through stress and strain placed on drywall during the stabilization of the lumber, which is inherent in the construction of the house. Due to the initial stabilization problem that exists with the new home, it is impossible to correct each defect as it occurs, and it is essentially useless to do so. The entire home will tend to stabilize itself. Correcting the drywall near the end of the warranty period provides the consumer with the best possible solution.”*

These NABB Performance Guidelines are extremely helpful on a wide range of topics beyond drywall. With respect to drywall, the entire section of this document addresses items such as that drywall should be evaluated from a distance of 6’, that patches may be visible, that repairs will be made once during the warranty period etc. all of which serve to create a realistic homebuyer expectation ahead of time.

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