

Project Profile



USG SHEETROCK® Brand Paper-Faced Metal Drywall Bead and Trim

Application/Building Type:

Single-Family Construction

Project Location:

Bristol, Indiana

Off-Site Builder:

Pinnacle Building Systems

Featured Product:

SHEETROCK® Brand Paper-Faced Metal Drywall Bead and Trim

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Bringing Site-Built Quality to Off-Site Building

By the year 2010, according to some industry experts, significantly more new residential construction will be factory-built. The steadily increasing use of manufactured, modular and panelized homes means both new challenges and new opportunities for builders. Pinnacle Building Systems of Bristol, Ind., is using quality components and construction to take advantage of the trend toward the off-site building of residential structures.

Chris Graff, president of Pinnacle Building Systems, says that while Pinnacle is officially classified as a modular manufacturer, he prefers the term “off-site” builder. “Quality can be more effectively controlled in a factory than on a jobsite,” he points out, adding, “We’re stick-building a house in the factory. We ask our customers to do an apples-to-apples comparison with site-built homes on specifications, materials and cost.”

Pinnacle Building Systems, marketing to sophisticated buyers, sells its homes through a network of qualified builders. Its retail arm, Pinnacle Homes, performs this function locally. Currently, Pinnacle’s homes are distributed through builders primarily in Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Illinois and Missouri.

In order to produce homes of superior quality, Pinnacle selects its components from the high end of the spectrum, using trusted brand names to ensure that its customers get the best. One of the brand-name products Pinnacle relies on is SHEETROCK® brand paper-faced metal bead and trim from United States Gypsum Company. Pinnacle uses the product on all inside and outside corners, as well as for reveal details in selected areas.

Eric Powers, Pinnacle vice president, notes that installation is easier than with other beads. “The application is more forgiving,” he says; “The product is more user-friendly, and we get better, straighter inside and outside corners.”

Vice President Larry Young adds that “because it’s easier to get a true corner, people can spend more time working on the other details in a home.”

In addition to ease of application, the crack resistance provided by SHEETROCK paper-faced metal bead and trim is vitally important, because off-site-built units are subject to tremendous stresses when being moved to their final destinations. Powers points out that “a house may be moving down the road at 60 miles per hour, traveling into a 20-mile-per-hour wind; people have compared this to going through an earthquake or a hurricane.” Despite this punishment, Pinnacle’s units have had significantly fewer cracking problems since the company began using SHEETROCK paper-faced metal bead and trim. The reduction in cracking saves Pinnacle both time and money. Products from USG, says Powers, “put more beef into our homes.”

Young adds that SHEETROCK paper-faced metal bead and trim, along with the other quality components used by Pinnacle, is a selling point with retail customers. The company uses plant tours to help sell potential buyers, showing them the high-quality materials used by Pinnacle and explaining their features and benefits. “When we pull out the bead to show them,” says Young, “customers are impressed.”

Vice President of Manufacturing Pat O’Brien is enthusiastic about both the quality of SHEETROCK paper-faced metal bead and trim and the service provided by United States Gypsum Company. “We sent one home all the way to Wyoming,” he notes, “and there was only one crack.” He also says that follow-up and monitoring are as important as the quality of the bead. “USG didn’t just sell us the product and walk away,” says O’Brien. “They’ve been there whenever we’ve needed them.”

While continuing the company’s focus on quality, Graff also plans to move Pinnacle Building Systems into some underdeveloped niche markets, such as handicapped-accessible housing, assisted-living units, town homes and lake cottages. Because some of these projects can be built year-round, they will enable Pinnacle to keep its plant running for 12 months a year without layoffs—which will help Pinnacle to build a loyal workforce. “I want this to be a good place to work,” says Graff, “where employees are treated honestly and fairly. Our focus is on relationships—with fellow employees, with builders, with suppliers. If the relationships are good, profits will follow. We would never want the business to grow at the expense of any of those relationships.”

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