These large, rigid sheets are fastened directly to the frame of the building with nails, screws, or adhesives, or are mounted on furring strips of wood nailed over the studs, joists, rafters, or masonry, which allow free circulation of air behind the interior wall. Following are safety guidelines when working with drywall:

- **Clear** your pathway of obstacles before starting.
- **Avoid small injuries** to muscles and joints caused by forceful repeated motions, such as lifting, cutting, tapping, and sanding, all day long.
- **Set up** loads close to waist height. Keep the load as close to the body as possible while lifting, carrying, and putting the load down. Avoid reaching over obstacles. Always make two person lifts the standard procedure.
- **Avoid** heavy lifting while bending that puts intense stress on your back. Spinal discs, nerves, and muscles can be damaged.
- **Avoid** twisting your back while lifting, carrying, and putting the load down. Use your feet to turn your body. Ask for help.
- **Avoid** reaching overhead and holding drywall in place, causing joint, muscles of the neck, shoulder, back, and hand injuries.
- **Minimize** the need for lifting. Have materials delivered as close as possible to where they will be used.
- **Use** drywall carts and lifts that do the lifting, and carrying for you, whenever possible. Maintain all movable parts on the cart.
- **Evenly place** loads on the carts and lifts to avoid tipping. When the load is heavy, have a co-worker help move the load.
- **When a worker** moving material down a ramp does not have a clear view of a lower landing on which workers are employed, a horn, bell or other warning device, which is automatic in operation, must be provided, maintained, and in good working order.
- **Use** special drywall handling tools that make lifting less awkward, and improve your gripping ability.
- **Use** t-jacks and board hanger clamps to help hold the drywall in place for nailing.
- **Avoid** a stressful work environment where you rush, take shortcuts, and overwork yourself.
- **Rest** for 15 seconds many times throughout the day. Short breaks help prevent injury and fatigue.
- **Rotate jobs.** If one part of the job requires a lot of overhead work, switch for a while to an activity in another position that uses different work motions.
- **Talk** with others at work. Do workers have similar injuries or muscle strains? Are some of the causes of injury due to heavy lifting, awkward positions, repetitive motions, or cold? Specifically remedy and address the common areas of injury and muscle strain.
- **Select** tools that are easier on the body. When buying power tools, consider the weight, grip comfort, ease of triggering, vibration, and noise. Four-finger triggers are best for installations.
- **Work** with other subcontractors on the jobsite with safety items such as housekeeping, walkways, and work space.
- **Use** wallboards that are fire-rated from 1 hour to 4 hours according to the time that a fire's progress would be retarded by the wallboard. The framing lumber must have low moisture content to avoid loosening of the drywall nails.
- **Use dust masks or respirators**, safety goggles, gloves and long-sleeved clothing when cutting or sanding asbestos-cement boards that are formed from a mixture of portland cement and asbestos fiber. Organic fibers are added to some asbestos-cement boards and may contain curing agents, water-repellent admixtures, and a variety of other substances that can be harmful to the skin, eyes, and lungs. Be vigilant on remodeling jobs.
- **Review the MSDS** and wear appropriate PPE for all material used on the jobsite, including the drywall.
- **Wear protective footwear** when working in areas where there is a danger of falling, or rolling objects.
- **Dress** warm in cold weather. Keep your hands warm and dry. Wear gloves, and change them if they get wet.

**Conclusion:** Lifting, loading, unloading, and installation work with drywall, can be stressful, harmful to the muscles, and dangerous when cutting, or sanding specific types of boards. Follow these safety guidelines when working with drywall.

**Work Site Review**

Work-Site Hazards and Safety Suggestions: ____________________________
Personnel Safety Violations: ____________________________
Material Safety Data Sheets Reviewed: ____________________________________________ (Name of Chemical)

**Employee Signatures:**

(My signature attests and verifies my understanding of and agreement to comply with, all company safety policies and regulations, and that I have not suffered, experienced, or sustained any recent job-related injury or illness.)

__________________________  ____________________________  ____________________________

__________________________  ____________________________  ____________________________

__________________________  ____________________________  ____________________________

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**Foreman/Supervisor’s Signature:**

These guidelines do not supersede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations. The first aid information provided is intended to be general in nature and is based upon the “best available” guidelines. No results either general or specific are represented or guaranteed.