

GA-255-2018 GUIDANCE ON THE USE OF PANEL “RIPS”

“Belly bands” or “drywall rips” are terms commonly used to refer to a strip of gypsum panel inserted in the gap between two (2) horizontally applied panels mounted one against the ceiling and the other just off of the floor. A belly band gets the name from being a narrow band of ripped gypsum panel applied in the middle of the wall—or the “belly.”

Belly bands are most typically used in walls over 8 ft. (2.4 m) in height where there is a gap between the two, 4 ft. (1.2 m) wide panels mounted at the top and bottom of the wall. However, they can occur in any situation where the height of the wall exceeds the sum total of the widths of the panels being used. The width of the gap can vary based on the height of the wall and the width of the panels used.

THE USE OF BELLY BANDS SHOULD BE AVOIDED! The use of rips often results in tapered edge to cut edge joints, which creates challenges in the finishing of these joints. In addition, improperly installed rips are more susceptible to problems such as joint ridging or joint centerline cracking. See GA-221 *Causes, Prevention and Repair of Joint Ridging and Centerline Cracking* for more information and additional possible causes of these phenomena.

The gypsum panel layout should be such that all joints intended to be finished are with a tapered edge against a tapered edge, or a cut edge against a cut edge. For walls exceeding 8 ft. (2.4 m) in height, one should use wider widths of gypsum panels. If using narrow strips of gypsum panels is unavoidable, they should be located at the top or bottom of the wall with the tapered edge of the strip forming a joint against a tapered edge of the adjacent gypsum panel (as shown in the image below).



When their use is unavoidable, band placement at the bottom of the wall is best practice.

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NOTES:

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