

Green option for drywall winning converts

A new fire-and-water-resistant wallboard that is cleaner and tougher than common drywall, more durable and much more environmentally friendly is winning converts in B.C.'s construction industry.

But proponent and supplier of Magnum Board sheathing, Peter Francis, believes wide acceptance is slower than it should be for a "generally superior product."

Sized like drywall sheets, Magnum Board is smooth on one face and textured on the other, which provides a superior surface for attaching tiles. Magnum Board comes in various thicknesses from 1/8-inch (3 mm) to 3/4-inch (19 mm), and the thinner sheets are flexible.

"Magnum Board is not affected by water. It is so strong, similar to OSB (oriented strand board), it can provide structural strength to a wall, it will not burn and it will not support mold or mildew. It is also impervious to ants and termites," Francis explained. And Magnum Board, which is made from magnesium oxide, magnesium chloride, perlite and fibre, can be safely disposed of since it contains no toxic materials. As a comparison, common gypsum drywall has to be separately recycled through landfills, at a charge of \$150 per tonne at the Vancouver landfill, as an example.

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It is the inherent strength and ease of installation of Magnum Board that may win more converts. "In one test, 250 pounds was hung from one screw in the wall," Francis said. Calgary home builder Cam Kraychy tested Magnum Board in a classically Canadian fashion: he fired pucks at it. "We were amazed. I took a few slapshots at it with a real puck and it barely dented," said the president of Rocky Point Custom Homes as he placed an order for Magnum Board.

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Installers prefer Magnum Board because it doesn't require tape or mud or corner beads, meaning you can board and paint the same day, and does not generate the dust associated with common drywall. The boards can be mounted using a nail gun and common carpentry tools, or scored and snapped. Boards don't have to join on a stud, meaning fewer cuts and less waste. Faster installations mean the installed costs are similar to gypsum.

Francis, president of Vancouver-based Canadian Building Technologies, notes that Magnum Board can also be used as exterior siding and cladding. This year Magnum will introduce a full line of lap and panel siding, soffits and trim. "There is also an integral rain-screen cladding system in the works to fill the hole left by Ceraclad leaving the market," Francis added.



As an experienced home builder himself, Francis knows it takes time for even a great product to win over an industry. "It is just a matter of time," he said, before Magnum Board becomes as common in homes as other once-novel products such as double-pane windows and stone countertops.



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HOME of MAGNUM BOARD

"The New Generation of Building Material"

- Fire resistant, non combustible (suitable for fire separation)
- Impervious to water, wet or dry use
- Mold & mildew proof, termite and ant proof
- Structural, similar to OSB in strength
- Easy to work with, standard carpentry tools
- Sustainable, negative CO₂, recyclable
- Non toxic, no VOC outgassing, no carcinogens
- Durable, impact resistant
- Low cost

WHAT'S ON YOUR WALL?

Material Comparison

Material	Magnum Board®	Cement Board	Gypsum Board
Flame Resistance	Excellent	Good	Good
Water Resistance	Very Good	Very Good	Poor
Mold Resistance	Excellent	Good	Poor
Insect Resistance	Excellent	Good	Good
Fastener Strength	Very Good	Poor	Poor

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