

ACCEPTABLE MATERIALS FOR USE ON WALLS AND CEILINGS:

The 2008 FEMA Flood Damage-Resistant Materials Guide Accepts the Use of “Non-Paper-Faced Gypsum Board,” such as DensArmor Plus® Interior Panels and DensShield® Tile Backer.

An August 2008 FEMA Technical Bulletin (Flood Damage-Resistant Materials Requirements for buildings located in special flood hazard areas in accordance with the National Flood Insurance Program) provides guidance under National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) regulation. This guidance indicates that the use of non-paper-faced gypsum board for walls and ceilings is acceptable for certain special flood hazard areas. The use of paper-faced gypsum board is unacceptable for walls and ceilings in these flood hazard areas.

The NFIP regulations for flood damage-resistant materials state that certain flood risk communities in Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) subscribe to the following practice: “... If a proposed building site is in a flood-prone area, all new construction and substantial improvements shall.... (ii) be constructed with materials resistant to flood damage ...” (44 CFR Section 60.3(a)(3)).

SFHAs are determined by FEMA through a map called a FIRM (Flood Insurance Rate Map), which delineates these 100-year flood zones and other risk premium zones applicable to a community; for example, an area below a dam. It is estimated that there are more than 12,000 SFHAs in the United States.

Both DensArmor Plus® Interior Panels and DensShield® Tile Backer are fiberglass-mat gypsum boards that provide increased resistance to moisture as compared to paper-faced gypsum boards and have been designated as acceptable by FEMA for use in areas designated as SFHA.

The Bulletin is available on the FEMA website at <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/risk-management/building-science/national-flood-insurance-technical-bulletins>

On the linked website “Technical Bulletin 2, Flood Damage-Resistant Materials Requirement” Technical Bulletin. Look for the “Paper-Faced Gypsum Board” on page seven and the diagram of the “drainable dryable wall” (as diagramed by Building Science Corporation) listing non-paper-faced drywall on page 16 for flood-resistant wall assemblies outside of Special Flood Hazard Areas.

