

LETTERS



OSHA Turns up the Heat

To the Editor:

Concerning the temporary safety railings shown in Figure 1 of the article "Fall Protection: Complying With OSHA's New Rules" (1/96), my experience is that you are going to run into problems with second-story wall platers with this setup. Second-story platers are concerned with getting the walls at their proper widths for trusses, despite the measurements that the first floor ends up at. Even if the first floor is perfect, joist hangers are going to really piss off a second-story plater. I have been on projects with inspectors roaming round the clock and seen second-story platers kick the railing right off the building because they were not allowed enough room to plate (even without the hangers), then let someone else catch the heat from the inspectors!

Mark Currie
Santa Fe, N.M.

Michael Davis responds:

The temporary railing system in Figure 1 is intended for use at exterior balconies or open landings. By using duplex nails to attach the joist hangers to the floor deck, sections of the railing can easily be moved and repositioned. This system is a low-cost alternative to prefabricated post-base systems.

Twenty years ago when I was a piece-work framer, we all shared the "kick the rails off" mentality that Mr. Currie refers to. Over time, as my business and the visibility of my jobs has grown, my attitude towards safety issues has matured. The twin clubs of insurance premiums and

OSHA fines have "beat a little common sense into my thick skull."

As I sit here today I have contracts on my desk for enough work to keep my people busy for the next eight months. I also have a letter from OSHA telling me that framing, as I know it, is now illegal in my state. I'm sorry, but "pissing off the second-story platers" is the least of my worries these days.

Michael Davis is president of Framing Square Construction in Albuquerque, N.M.

CAD Overkill

To the Editor:

As a building code official, I wanted to comment on "Cad for Hire" (Eight-Penny News, 12/95). We plan reviewers cringe when homeowners come in with CAD drawings for decks to get building permits. Instead of the typical two pages of construction drawings, we are now looking at 10- to 15-page submittals that show too many beams, posts, and other extraneous information, but contain no pier information, no connection details, and no railing specifications.

What we really need is a pier plan with the framing above shown, two or three elevation views, and a cross-section through the beam and ledger board areas. We issue more than 30,000 permits a year, but we still pride ourselves on being able to handle smaller projects on a walk-in basis. However, we have had to reject the CAD deck drawings due to the extra time involved.

Meg Grimaud
Glen Carbon, Ill.

Cathedral Clarification

To the Editor:

I have long sought a method to build an R-38 cathedral ceiling. The "no-fault" cathedral ceiling (Focus on Energy, 2/96) needs clarification for me. I am concerned that moisture might condense on the underside of the foil-faced polyisocyanurate. I am also curious why the author used 1x4 furring strips, since a dead air space is created without them.

Dan Ederer
Debco Builders
Saginaw, Mich.

Richard Harrington responds:

It is unlikely that moisture will condense on the underside of the foil-faced polyisocyanurate because the surface is within the thermal envelope. Conditions within that space are similar to the indoor climate: The foil surface is almost as warm as the surface of the drywall below.

The 1x4 furring strips were used because of the 24-inch on-center spacing of the wooden I-joists. It's recommended that 1/2-inch drywall not span more than 16 inches on a ceiling. My options were to use the furring strips 16 inches on-center or switch to 5/8-inch drywall. Since I prefer not to lift 5/8-inch drywall 15 feet into the air, the decision was easy. The furring had no effect on the dead air space.

Richard Harrington is an exbuilder and professor of building technologies at State University of New York in Delhi.

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