

Safe and sound

With growing scarcity of land and increasing preference for tall buildings, Indian construction industry is rapidly adopting dry walls

By Bhaswati Das

India is no way lagging behind in adopting energy saving technologies. Numerous innovations are taking place in the field of construction technologies and our country is quite open to accepting such changes," said V Subramanian, Managing Director, Saint-Gobain Gyproc India Ltd in conversation with *Property World*.

The Mumbai-based Saint-Gobain Gyproc is a leading market player in the construction space. The company is known for the introduction of the light weight interior construction spaces in the Indian Construction spaces. "Construction in India is moving towards international standards. We believe our light weight drywall and ceiling solutions will help architects and developers provide energy efficient buildings. Dry walls provide advantage over conventional brick, block and wood as they are lightweight, faster to install and completely green. Studies indicate that there is a marked increase in productivity with acoustically designed spaces."

Dry wall, as the name suggests, is a dry construction technique to build walls. A dry wall consists of an ultra steel frame work (studs, floor and channel ceilings) fixed on gypsum plaster boards on both the sides. The same is then finished using a joining compound and paper tapes for a monolithic finish. Between the metal stud portions is an air gap which can be filled with glass insulation to get higher fire and acoustic ratings.

Spelling out the advantages of the drywall, Subramanian said, "A dry wall would be 8-10 times lighter than an equivalent brick wall, 3-5 times faster to construct, offer better aesthetics as it is smoother and crack-free as the boards are machine made and can be tailored to specific needs to offer better insulation, moisture protection, fire-safety within one hour to four hour rating, better insulation and acoustics."

With growing scarcity of land and increasing preference for tall buildings, the buildings of the future will have more stringent safety requirements and need more acoustic comfort. "Over 80 per cent of all interior construction in the developed markets across all applications is with dry walls. We see great potential for Indian markets too."



V Subramanian

Managing Director, Saint-Gobain Gyproc India Ltd

Developers in Bangalore and Chennai were early adopters of the technology. "Many IT companies which are based in these cities have had exposure to this technology abroad. Hence they want to adopt it here too. Mumbai is following suit. A number of office space developers are using dry walls as they are easier and faster to install. Time is money and the same can have a huge impact on the project lifestyle cost."

The entire gypsum plaster board, ceiling tiles and gypsum range of products is approved by CII-Godrej GBC for consideration towards Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design points and can reduce the carbon footprint in any building.

The company has four manufacturing plants located in Jind (near Delhi), Wada (near Mumbai), Bangalore and Chennai, which are backed by sales and distribution set up across the country.

The company has robust expansion plans for the future. Subramanian said, "We are keen to increase our market in the drywall category across segments like hotels, offices, retail, industrial and residential sector among others. We would also like to popularise our products in the smaller cities." Saint-Gobain has also invested substantially in creation of capacities. "There will be a major overhaul of our sales and marketing strategy in the near future," added Subramanian.