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## **Unique characteristics of gypsum levelers are flexibility, workability and finish**

March 18, 2009 - Connecticut

A great deal of ink has been spent extolling newer generations of "gray" cement-based self levelers, including low prep products. Often, because of some interior and inexpensive gypsum materials over the years that were mostly sand and over-watered, gypsum self levelers have been criticized as weak in strength and dusty. There has also been a lot of misinformation that they "promote" the growth of mold and mildew. Nothing in gypsum "promotes" mold or mildew growth, though gypsum products are not highly alkaline like most cement-based products, so are less resistive to growth of bacteria in the presence of significant moisture unless protected.

Our gypsum products contain mildewcides and other protective ingredients to provide high mold resistance that pass all accepted tests and standards. They are not as porous as many gypsum underlayments and do not require sealing to receive adhesives or install a floor over them.

Superior flexibility. The two most unique characteristics of gypsum levelers are their flexibility and extraordinarily easy working characteristics and finish. Especially wherever self levels must be placed over a suspended floor, whether concrete pan, concrete plank, wood substrate or corrugated steel deck, our gypsum based levelers offer the highest flexibility to move with the subfloor without cracking or separating, unlike cement-based levelers which tend to be more brittle. Time and again, we have provided new underlayment for large floor areas where cement-based levelers couldn't hold up to the movement.

Easy placement superior finish. The workability, placement and finish of our other gypsum levelers is also a bit unique. Floor installation crews find it the easiest of self levelers to place, the most forgiving in working and heal, and very reliable in set time, hardness and superior finish. The finished product is not only very hard, but does not dust, and is highly abrasion resistant compared to the gypsum products most have been familiar with. While not recommended as a finish wear surface, it will easily hold up to construction traffic until covered. Another unique characteristic is that these products gain full strength as soon as they are dry, and can be force dried by heat and/or dehumidification, which cannot safely be done with cement-based products that require many weeks to properly hydrate to full strength.

Superior compatibility. Because cement-based and particularly modern calcium aluminate cement materials are highly chemically reactive to many different materials, including metals, grinding residues and gypsum materials among others, many contractors have experienced dramatic reactions, debonding, curling and other problems with placement in some environments, requiring

far more subfloor preparation and removal time. Gypsum-based materials tend to be very chemically unreactive, and in the process of setting and hardening only lose excess water content through drying. These features make our products much more tolerant of the wide variety of substrate conditions that may be presented on jobsites, leading to far fewer repairs and failures.

High strength. Some leveling products may have compressive strengths as low as 1200 psi and tend to crack and break apart easily. We install material with psi strengths from 2500 to 8000. These have proven over the years to hold up very well and all have very high compressive strengths, usually equaling and exceeding the strength of poured concrete.

In extreme heat or fire, gypsum off-gasses water, so it is also considered a higher fire rated material in many applications. In many applications, gypsum-based products provide the fastest, easiest, longer lasting and most economical floor leveling option.

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