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## Bench Test: Keep it on Track

by John R. Godsell

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I recently began using a product called Trakloc. The system consists of an adjustable metal stud that locks into a matching track. A large portion of our work is within New York City and the freight cars are very tight with regards to delivery space. We were introduced to this product by Kevin W. Engemann, product manager of Kamco Supply, (who have offices in Brooklyn, Manhattan, Syosset and Hicksville, N.Y.), and our company has not been disappointed with the product. He has been on all of our jobs before, during and after installations to ensure proper installation; always keeping in mind the desired maximum efficiency the product offers to the contractor.

The interior drywall framing studs available in 6, 35/8 and 2 1/2 inch, in 20, 23 and 25 gauge, can be loaded into tight spaces. For one job, we were able to collapse a 14-foot, 5-inch stud length down to less than 10 feet to fit in an elevator; on other jobs 12- and 13-foot studs were collapsed down to 8 feet. This feature saves man-hours and as a result allows higher profits and/or enables us to meet budgets and deadlines. We like that custom sizes are available in the three sizes of studs with minimum wait times outside the standard 1-foot size increments in stock.

I also want to mention we have successfully used the product on large partition walls with an average-sized man in a standing position on the floor hitting, twisting and turning studs into 11- and 12-foot deck heights. Some of our job site floors are very uneven and deviate as much as 2 to 4 inches or more. We can use this product without cutting or measuring each stud. The jobs where the product is used are much cleaner and safer, too. The excess stud waste remains in the walls vs. in our in trash dumpsters. Repetitive framing on multiple floor levels is surely a “no-



brainer” with this product. We like the fact the company has started printing the size of the stud on the outside of the flange vs. the inside of the web for easier product identification on job sites, particularly when we have multiple size studs on the jobs. On a recent city job, we were even able to use the stud up to a 32-degree angle deck/wall holding within the track without using fasteners.

A typical job starts off with my foreman measuring the slab for minimum and maximum heights and then an order is placed through Kamco Supply. When the material gets to the job site, it starts out as a typical framing job with the top and bottom tracks being installed. Manpower starts to install the studs from the extension end at the top and pulling the base of studs downward to the track. This saves us time on having to measure and cut every stud. The studs are fastened (toe-nailed) only at the door/window headers and track ends into a recessed track, which eliminates the infamous drywall “bump outs” at the door/window headers and also at the base. The field portion of the stud to track assembly does not require fasteners; studs lock firmly into the base track.

My men build “knee walls” and soffits on the ground and lift them into place without measuring every stud, due to the telescoping studs. Not measuring and cutting every stud also means less time on the scaffolds and chop saws for greater efficiency and safety concerns. They use a laser as a guide and shoot their required points of wall/floor/ceiling heights for the knee walls. Where required, they use braces in the knee walls and then secure the web with a screw, as well as the typical end details.

My men expressed initial concern of the studs slipping when the other trades pull their wires through the service holes. Trakloc—with its oversized round service holes—permits easy installation of wires and its “knurled” track holds the studs firmly in place. Recently, the product has been improved with additional service holes in the extensions, as well.

We are eager to use the product in new construction where typically we order precuts to minimize installation time. The jobs move significantly faster as a result of using the product.

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