

Environmental Statement



Visit the USG Sustainable Ceilings Resource Center at sustainableceilings.com

Integrity, dependability and innovation are the standards by which USG operates. We believe that health, safety and environmental well-being are compatible with economic health. We have a longstanding commitment to our employees, our customers and our communities to:

- Provide product and manufacturing solutions that reduce environmental impact
- Eliminate manufacturing waste at our plants
- Use recycled materials in product formulation and development

Reducing Environmental Impact

As a manufacturer, we are dedicated to safeguarding the environment. USG has a solid history of environmental responsibility and is constantly seeking environmentally sound products and manufacturing solutions.

Environmentally friendly alternatives

United States Gypsum Company's FIBEROCK® brand AQUA-TOUGH™ floor underlayment not only incorporates a patented technology that delivers outstanding performance benefits, but also offers an environmentally friendly alternative to conventional wood-based underlayments. Produced on a new manufacturing line at our Gypsum, Ohio plant, FIBEROCK underlayment is made from 100 percent recycled gypsum and 100 percent recycled cellulose fibers, recycled from scraps of cardboard box manufacturing. This plant also produces FIBEROCK® brand AQUA-TOUGH™ interior panel, tile backerboard and sheathing using the same technology.

In recognition of these achievements, United States Gypsum Company has earned independent certification from Scientific Certification Systems (SCS).

Using recaptured gypsum

Recaptured gypsum, also called synthetic gypsum, is a byproduct of several processes including flue gas desulfurization (FGD), which reduces acid rain by removing sulfur dioxide from the emissions of fossil-fuel-burning power plants. Our use of recaptured gypsum reduces the amount of this material that gets disposed in landfills. Wallboard made from recaptured gypsum offers the same properties and benefits as wallboard made from mined gypsum rock.

United States Gypsum Company has used recaptured gypsum to manufacture wallboard since 1974. Currently, we produce 24 percent (2.3 million tons per year) of our total production with recaptured gypsum cores. Nearly 50 percent of our wallboard plants use recaptured gypsum to some degree.

Eliminating Manufacturing Waste

United States Gypsum Company and USG Interiors, Inc. have used environmental control equipment since before the Clean Air Act was passed in 1969. Our plants consume clean fuels, such as low-sulfur oil and natural gas, wherever possible. Water treatment equipment installed at our paper mills and ceiling panel plants recycles water and reduces effluent discharges into municipal treatment systems.

Recycling heat

USG plants also conserve energy by recycling heat. Heat-exchange processes are used throughout our manufacturing operations to conserve energy and maximize efficiency. For example, we use heat from thermal process discharges to warm other parts of the plants.

Reusing waste

Our gypsum plants recycle plant waste back into the manufacturing process. U.S. Gypsum wallboard plants have a 95 percent recovery rate, and part of the remaining 5 percent is repurposed as protective material to support stacks of gypsum panels. Ceiling panels that are chipped or broken during manufacturing are also recycled and then returned to the process.

Using Recycled Materials

The foundation of United States Gypsum Company is built on gypsum rock, which we complement with alternative resources, such as recycled industrial material, post-consumer waste and renewable agricultural sources. Incorporating these alternatives helps to preserve natural resources, support clean air and ease disposal problems for public utilities and other companies.

Reusing byproducts

- United States Gypsum Company has used recaptured gypsum to manufacture wallboard for more than 25 years. (See recaptured gypsum section for more information.)
- United States Gypsum Company uses fly ash, a byproduct of coal-fired utility plants, in the core of its cement board products. Lignin sulfonate, a byproduct from the paper industry, is also part of the formulation for gypsum wallboard.
- USG Interiors, Inc. uses slag, a byproduct of steel manufacturing, in manufacturing mineral wool for acoustical ceiling panels.
- USG Interiors, Inc. and U.S. Gypsum use post-industrial wastepaper for its acoustical ceiling panels and wallboard products.

Reusing discarded material

- Since the 1960s, United States Gypsum Company has made its own wallboard paper from 100 percent recycled paper including newspapers, phone books, corrugated cartons and cardboard cuttings.
- USG Interiors, Inc. grid can be recycled completely by remelting and salvaging the metal. Twenty-five percent of the material used in our steel fabrication plants is recycled. We also use waste newspaper to manufacture acoustical ceiling panels.

Reusing renewable agricultural sources

- Our plants use corn and wheat starches as binders in the manufacture of drywall and ceiling products.
- These agricultural sources can be harvested and replanted in a continuous cycle of renewal.

Leadership

USG supports environmental initiatives and is involved with a variety of environmental organizations.

U.S. Green Building Council

In 1993, USG helped establish the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), a diverse coalition of principal groups involved in the building industry. The council's mission is to promote buildings that are environmentally responsible, profitable and healthy places to live and work.

LEED Program

Developed by the USGBC, the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program created a building rating system to evaluate environmental performance from a "whole building" perspective, providing a standard for "green building." Credits are earned for satisfying specific building criteria. USG endorses this program by contributing environmentally sound products that help a builder earn credits toward a green building.

National Association of Home Builders

USG is involved in construction recycling demonstration projects with the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).

