



GIB

Onsite tips for minimising plasterboard construction waste

The New Zealand building industry is becoming increasingly aware of the financial and environmental gains possible through minimising construction material waste especially as landfill disposal costs continue to increase year on year.

But what practical steps can be taken onsite to start minimising plasterboard construction waste?

01. Waste Ownership and Accountability

Clear ownership and accountability for waste minimisation both during design and construction is essential.

If minimising waste is a priority it's worth clearly defining on a project:

- Who is specifically responsible for monitoring and implementing waste minimisation initiatives during both the design and construction phases.
- Do clear waste minimisation targets exist for the project.
- Are waste streams being regularly reported on using data from the waste collection service provider.
- Are waste minimisation targets included in the project contracts and subcontractor agreements to help ensure they remain a priority on the project.

02. Room Take-off and Ordering Processes

It makes logical sense that the person responsible for installing the plasterboard should also be the one paid to do the site measure and specify the plasterboard sheet lengths and volumes required.

An experienced installer can help ensure the most efficient sheet sizes for the project are used to reduce offcut waste, while also providing guidance around potential installation issues such as the most efficient delivery method to use so a smooth and efficient plasterboard installation can occur.

If there is a preference on site to use a single sheet length throughout the entire project then some installers have found the use of 3600mm sheets provides a high degree of versatility for use on walls.

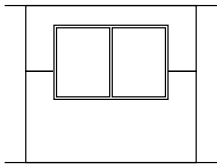
03. Horizontal Plasterboard Installation

Specify on design plans that the plasterboard to be installed horizontally on walls where possible. This provides greater opportunity for sheet lengths to be ordered which work in more closely with the total room length and reduce the overall amount of plasterboard waste generated than if the plasterboard was installed vertically.

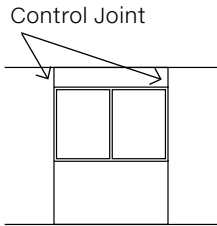
Horizontal fixing can also reduce the number of sheet joints in a room reducing the amount of stopping required.



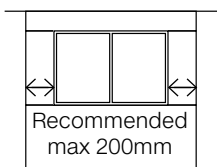
04. Window and Door Openings



Another potential source of plasterboard waste is where plasterboard full sheets are used around door and window openings to reduce the risk of cracking in the corners.



One option worth considering to reduce offcut waste is to move the sheet joint away from corner openings and use a floating joint such as shown here.



Alternatively for applications prone to high degrees of movement, such as transport homes consider including a control joint at the edge of the opening.

05. Plasterboard Delivery Timing.

For compact sites it may be worthwhile considering an early delivery of the plasterboard into areas where it may be difficult to access once the building is closed in.

For some projects it may be worthwhile utilising a Hiab lift delivery prior to installation of a window to reach those hard to get to places and reducing the need later on to maneuver long sheet lengths in tight spaces.

06. Managing Waste Streams on Site

Engage with the main contractor on site to understand their approach to managing waste streams.

One option may be to consider separating the main construction waste streams into common groups such as plasterboard, treated and untreated timber to allow it to be more easily collected by waste providers and recycle it.

07. Plasterboard Wastage Rates

It's also worthwhile considering the plasterboard wastage rate factored into the overall project cost. A fairly typically plasterboard wastage rate used is around 10%, however live site trials indicate this figure could be closer to 15% meaning additional unaccounted for margin being lost for the installer¹.

¹ Based on results of actual waste monitoring of Skip the Skips Project Site in Auckland conducted mid 2021

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