

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

A Quick Fix For Walls Can Save Time And Money

(NAPSA)—Making your home presentable for company may be easier than you think—even if it involves fixing problem walls.

Often, small cracks and holes in plaster and wallboard can be repaired in a few hours using inexpensive materials. Here are a few helpful hints:

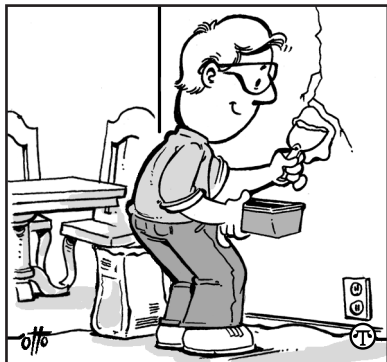
- Prep the area. Push against the crack to determine the softness of the area. Remove any loose material with a screwdriver, then clean the area with a slightly dampened paintbrush or sponge.

- Gather materials. You'll need a utility knife; a 4- to 6-inch-wide drywall knife; an 8- to 10-inch-wide drywall knife; joint tape for wider cracks; a ready-mixed or powdered joint compound product, such as SHEETROCK® Brand Lightweight Setting-Type Joint Compound (EASY SAND™); safety goggles, a dust mask and fine sandpaper or a sponge.

- Fill with a first coat. Small drywall and plaster cracks require one application of joint compound. Deeper cracks need two or more coats. Using a 4- to 6-inch-wide drywall knife, apply compound over the crack. Force it into the crack, then smooth it out. Allow it to dry completely.

- Reinforce larger cracks with joint tape. Apply a thin coat of compound over the crack. Then insert a strip of joint tape to bridge the crack. Draw a knife over the crack to embed the tape. Let the coat dry completely.

- Apply joint compound over the tape to level the repair. Add



Setting-type joint compounds can make fast work of wall cracks and produce top-quality results.

compound with a drywall knife, then smooth and feather the compound out along the edges. Let it harden and add another coat, if necessary.

- Smooth the surface once the wall is dry. Then lightly sand the edges of the repaired area with fine sandpaper or a damp sponge.

- Prime and paint. To ensure a uniform finished surface, prime the patched area. Wait until it dries completely before applying a new coat of paint.

These tips come from United States Gypsum Company, a leading manufacturer of gypsum board and plaster products. A free step-by-step guide detailing how to install and repair drywall is available by writing to United States Gypsum Company, 125 S. Franklin St., Chicago, IL 60606-4678; calling 1-800-USG-4YOU; or visiting the company's Web site at www.usg.com.