



BARNDOMINIUM CLIENT GUIDE

INTERIOR WALL FINISH GUIDE

Drywall | Paint | Accent Walls | Utility | Wet Areas

DENZEL CONSTRUCTION LLC

531-352-1780 | www.denzelconstruction.llc

START WITH THE CLIENT - NOT THE MATERIAL

Select wall finishes by room use, maintenance, lighting, durability, and style.

1

HOW THE ROOM IS USED

Living, sleeping, cooking, bathing, working, storage, pets, children, or garage activity.

2

WHAT THE WALL MUST DO

Stay smooth, wash easily, resist impact or moisture, absorb sound, or support mounted items.

3

HOW IT SHOULD FEEL

Modern, farmhouse, rustic, industrial, warm, minimal, or a coordinated mix.

CLIENT QUESTIONS

Do you prefer smooth or textured walls? How often will the wall be cleaned? Are there pets or children? Will the room have strong side lighting? Do you want wood warmth, a metal look, or a simple painted base?

PROJECT QUESTIONS

Which walls need cabinets, TVs, mirrors, grab bars, shelves, handrails, or heavy decor? Which areas are wet, high-impact, tall, vaulted, or hard to access? Where will materials transition at corners, doors, windows, and ceilings?

EASY MAINTENANCE

Use washable paint or approved panels in halls, kitchens, mudrooms, laundry, pet zones, and other high-contact areas.

WARM + RESIDENTIAL

Use drywall as the consistent base, then add one or two wood, shiplap, stone, or panel focal walls.

DURABLE + PRACTICAL

Use plywood, metal, FRP, or another approved impact- and cleaning-focused finish in shop and utility areas.

A STRONG BARNDOMINIUM APPROACH

Keep most walls simple and consistent. Add special materials only where they improve function, acoustics, durability, or the focal-point design.

APPROVE EARLY

Wall finish thickness affects backing, outlets, trim, door and window returns, cabinets, baseboards, and the construction sequence.



WALL FINISH OPTIONS AT A GLANCE

Compare the main client benefit first; cost is shown later as a secondary reference.

MATERIAL	MAIN BENEFIT	BEST CLIENT / ROOM
Level 4 drywall	Versatile painted base for most residential rooms.	Bedrooms, halls, closets, secondary rooms.
Level 5 smooth drywall	Most uniform smooth appearance under critical lighting.	Open great rooms, tall walls, modern interiors.
Textured drywall	Adds visual texture and helps soften minor surface variation.	Clients who prefer texture or easier visual blending.
Shiplap / board-and-batten	Painted architectural detail with farmhouse character.	Entries, dining, bedroom, fireplace-adjacent feature walls.
Tongue-and-groove wood	Authentic warmth, grain, and premium natural material.	Vaulted rooms, beams, great-room focal walls.
Acoustic / decorative panels	Texture, depth, and possible sound absorption.	Media rooms, offices, tall open areas.
Plywood / interior metal	Impact resistance and functional shop appearance.	Garage, workshop, mechanical, storage.
FRP / washable panels	Easy cleaning and moisture-resistant surface.	Laundry, pet wash, utility, service areas.
Tile / shower wall system	Wet-area performance with many design options.	Showers, tubs, backsplashes, wet walls.

THE FINISH NAME IS NOT ENOUGH

Specify the complete system: substrate, finish level or texture, primer, paint sheen, panel thickness, orientation, trim, fasteners or adhesive, joints, waterproofing, and approved samples.

REFERENCE IMAGES

Images show design direction only. Final color, pattern, texture, joint layout, lighting, and material samples must be approved.

DRYWALL FINISH LEVELS + EXPECTATIONS

Drywall level describes preparation; lighting, paint, texture, and workmanship affect the final appearance.

LEVEL 3

Typically used where a medium or heavy texture will cover the surface. It is not intended as the common smooth painted residential finish. Confirm the texture system and final expectation in writing.

LEVEL 4

A common painted-wall level for many residential rooms. Final appearance depends on surface preparation, primer, paint sheen, color, lighting, and viewing conditions. Flat or lower-sheen coatings are generally more forgiving.

LEVEL 5

Adds a thin skim coat across the entire surface to improve uniformity. Often selected for smooth modern walls, tall open spaces, dark or glossy finishes, and areas with strong side lighting.

WHAT LEVEL 5 DOES

It improves surface uniformity and reduces visible differences between gypsum face paper and finished joints. It does not guarantee a flawless wall under every light angle, color, gloss, or close inspection.

CRITICAL LIGHTING

Large windows, clerestories, wall-wash fixtures, vaulted spaces, and long uninterrupted walls can reveal waves, joints, fasteners, and texture differences. Review lighting before selecting the finish level.

PRIMER + PAINT

Use the specified primer and compatible finish coats. Dark colors and higher sheen reveal more surface variation. The paint system should match washability, touch-up expectations, and room exposure.

DEFINE THE ACCEPTANCE SAMPLE

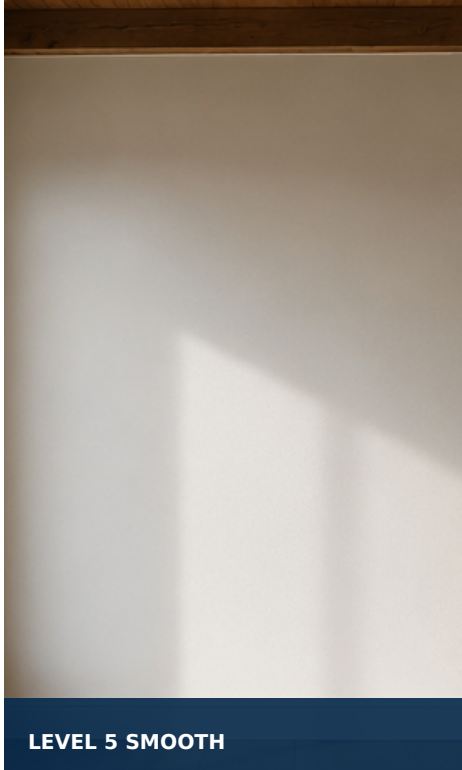
Approve a representative wall area with the planned texture, primer, color, sheen, lighting, and viewing distance. A small hand sample cannot show long-wall lighting effects.

RECOMMENDED CONVERSATION

Consider Level 5 in the tall open great room or other critical-light areas, and Level 4 in many bedrooms and secondary rooms, unless the design calls for texture or another finish.

VISUAL DRYWALL TEXTURE COMPARISON

Side lighting makes smooth, orange-peel, and knockdown surfaces easier to compare.



CLIENT EXPERIENCE

Modern and clean; requires careful surface preparation and consistent lighting review.

CLIENT EXPERIENCE

Subtle sprayed texture that softens minor visual variation while remaining residential.

CLIENT EXPERIENCE

More visible hand-textured depth; repair matching and consistency should be discussed.

WHAT THE CLIENT SHOULD COMPARE

Look from several angles in daylight and artificial light. Compare texture depth, shadowing, cleaning, repair matching, paint sheen, and whether the finish supports the desired modern or traditional style.

REFERENCE IMAGES

Concept images exaggerate texture slightly so differences are visible. Approve an actual on-site sample before completing the project.

DIRECT COMPARISON: LEVEL 4 VS LEVEL 5

The better choice depends on the room, light, paint, viewing conditions, and expectation.



LEVEL 4 - COMMON RESIDENTIAL BASE



LEVEL 5 - HIGHER SURFACE UNIFORMITY

CLIENT PRIORITY	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
APPEARANCE	Good standard painted surface when matched with suitable paint and lighting.	Smoother, more uniform surface for demanding visual conditions.
BEST LIGHT	Typical room lighting without strong grazing light.	Tall walls, large windows, wall washing, or strong side lighting.
PAINT	More forgiving with flat, matte, or lower-sheen finishes.	Helpful with dark colors or higher sheen, but a sample is still essential.
REPAIR	Common repair methods; matching paint and texture still matters.	Repairs may require broader skim and repainting to preserve uniformity.
BEST CLIENT	Values practical, consistent residential walls in normal rooms.	Prioritizes a smooth modern look in main open areas.
DECISION	Use where finish expectations and lighting are moderate.	Upgrade only where the room and design benefit from the added preparation.

CLIENT TIP

Do not label every wall Level 5 automatically. Place the upgrade where large surfaces, side light, paint color, and design expectations make the difference visible.

WRITE IT DOWN

The drawings or selection schedule should identify the drywall level, texture, primer, paint system, and rooms included.



PAINT SHEEN COMPARISON

Sheen changes washability, reflection, touch-up visibility, and how much wall variation can be seen.

SHEEN	MAIN BENEFIT	COMMON CLIENT FIT
Flat	Lowest reflection and strongest ability to visually soften wall variation.	Ceilings and low-contact adult areas when the coating is suitable.
Matte	Soft modern appearance with modest washability in quality product lines.	Great rooms, bedrooms, offices, and clients wanting low reflection.
Eggshell	Balanced appearance and cleanability with mild sheen.	Living rooms, bedrooms, and general residential areas.
Satin	More washable and moisture tolerant; shows more surface variation.	Kitchens, baths, laundry, mudroom, halls, and active households.
Semi-gloss	High washability and strong reflection.	Trim, doors, cabinets, and selected high-contact or specialty areas.

DARK COLORS

Dark navy, charcoal, black, and saturated colors can reveal waves, joints, patches, roller marks, and touch-ups. Prepare a larger sample under the final lighting before approval.

TOUCH-UP EXPECTATIONS

Higher sheen and certain colors can flash when touched up. Save labeled paint, record the product and batch information, and understand when an entire wall may need repainting.

CLEANING

Match the coating to fingerprints, grease, steam, splashes, pets, and cleaning frequency. Use manufacturer-approved cleaners and avoid aggressive scrubbing until the coating is cured.

SAMPLE THE COMPLETE SYSTEM

Approve primer, color, sheen, texture, roller or spray appearance, trim color, and lighting together. The same color can look different on smooth and textured walls.

CLIENT TIP

Choose sheen by room function and surface condition, not by a universal rule.

ACCENT WALL STYLE GALLERY

Use one or two focal materials to add character without making the interior visually busy.



PAINTED SHIPLAP



TONGUE-AND-GROOVE WOOD



BOARD-AND-BATTEN



WOOD FEATURE WALL



WARM NATURAL GRAIN



PAINTED ARCHITECTURAL DETAIL

REFERENCE IMAGES

Final board width, orientation, profile, spacing, joint layout, color, stain, sheen, trim, outlets, and transitions must be approved from actual product samples.

DIRECT COMPARISON: POPULAR ACCENT WALLS

Compare style, movement, cleaning, trim, and the amount of visual texture.

CLIENT PRIORITY	PAINTED SHIPLAP	NATURAL TONGUE-AND-GROOVE
STYLE	Farmhouse, coastal, or clean architectural lines.	Warm, rustic, premium, or contemporary natural look.
COLOR	Paint can coordinate with drywall and trim.	Wood species, grade, stain, clear coat, and natural variation control the look.
MOVEMENT	Joints and seasonal changes can remain visible beneath paint.	Acclimation, expansion, humidity, and fastening are critical.
CLEANING	Painted grooves collect some dust; washable coating helps.	Profile and finish affect dusting and cleaning; water exposure should be controlled.
DETAILS	Plan reveals, outside corners, base, casing, outlets, and board termination.	Plan board direction, lengths, end matching, trim, grain blend, and lighting.
BEST CLIENT	Wants painted character and defined lines without natural wood color.	Wants authentic warmth and accepts natural variation and movement.

BOARD-AND-BATTEN

Provides vertical rhythm and can be full height or wainscot height. Plan batten spacing around corners, windows, doors, outlets, and wall-mounted items.

WAINSCOTING

Protects and dresses the lower wall. Coordinate top cap, baseboard, casing, wall thickness, chair height, paint sheen, and transitions.

MIXED MATERIALS

Combining wood, painted trim, stone, drywall, and metal can work well when the thickness and transition details are drawn first.

CLIENT TIP

A single well-planned accent wall usually creates more impact than repeating several unrelated materials throughout the home.

BEFORE ORDERING

Approve a full-width sample or mockup that shows boards, joints, trim, color, sheen, and an outlet or corner condition.

DECORATIVE PANELS, ACOUSTIC SLATS + STONE



WOOD-SLAT / ACOUSTIC FEATURE



THIN STONE FEATURE WALL

WOOD-SLAT + FELT PANELS

Adds vertical texture and may improve sound absorption depending on the tested product and assembly. Plan panel width, slat spacing, felt color, seams, corners, outlets, fire performance, and access.

STONE / THIN BRICK

Creates a durable focal point with natural texture. Confirm substrate, weight, attachment, corners, mortar, ledges, top termination, firebox requirements, and how the finish meets flooring and trim.

3D / FLUTED PANELS

Available in wood composite, gypsum, PVC, felt, and other materials. Compare impact resistance, moisture limits, cleaning, fire and smoke performance, joint visibility, trim, and repairability.

ACOUSTIC EXPECTATION

Decorative slats alone do not guarantee room acoustics. Ceiling height, floor finish, windows, furniture, rugs, doors, and the tested absorption of the complete wall system all matter.

CLIENT TIP

Use acoustic treatment where echo affects conversation, television, music, office calls, or bedroom privacy - not only because the panel looks attractive.

GARAGE + UTILITY WALL GALLERY

Durable finishes should match impact, cleaning, moisture, sound, fire requirements, and future changes.



CLIENT EXPERIENCE

Easy attachment and warm workshop appearance; joints and fasteners remain visible.

CLIENT EXPERIENCE

Classic barndominium look with durable surface and increased sound reflection.

CLIENT EXPERIENCE

Bright, washable surface for laundry, pet wash, and utility applications.

CHECK THE COMPLETE ASSEMBLY

Confirm required fire-resistance, substrate, panel thickness, fasteners or adhesive, framing spacing, trim, penetrations, joints, impact exposure, moisture, and manufacturer-approved room use.

REFERENCE IMAGES

Final panel profile, grain, sheen, fastener pattern, seam layout, trim, color, and cleaning requirements must be approved.



DIRECT COMPARISON: PLYWOOD VS METAL VS FRP

There is no single best utility-wall finish; choose for the work performed in the room.

PRIORITY	PLYWOOD	INTERIOR METAL	FRP / WASHABLE PANEL
MAIN BENEFIT	Impact resistance and convenient attachment.	Durable barndominium appearance and easy wiping.	Washable, bright, moisture-resistant surface.
APPEARANCE	Natural, sealed, stained, or painted; fasteners visible.	Ribbed industrial finish with metal trim.	Functional smooth or lightly textured panel.
SHELVES + TOOLS	Easy to fasten light items when the assembly permits; heavy loads still need framing support.	Backing or framing is needed behind the panel.	Backing is required; do not rely on the thin panel.
MOISTURE	Edges and finish need protection; not a wet-area waterproof system.	Corrosion environment, condensation, and cut edges must be considered.	Surface is moisture resistant; seams, adhesive, and substrate still matter.
SOUND	Moderate hard-surface reflection.	Usually the most reflective option.	Hard washable surface can also reflect sound.
BEST CLIENT	Workshop client changing shelves and equipment over time.	Wants a clean industrial barndominium shop look.	Prioritizes frequent washing in utility or pet areas.

FIRE + CODE COORDINATION

Do not cover required fire-resistance assemblies or expose combustible finishes without confirming the approved wall design and local requirements. Penetrations and joints may need specific treatment.

FUTURE FLEXIBILITY

Photograph framing and utilities. Add backing for cabinets, hose reels, TVs, charging equipment, shelves, and tools before the finish is installed.

CLIENT TIP

The wall behind a workbench, sink, pet wash, mechanical equipment, or vehicle may need a different finish from the rest of the garage.

LIGHTING + CLEANING

Glossy white panels brighten a room but show dirt and reflections. Wood and metal create a different maintenance and sound experience.

BATHROOM + WET-AREA WALL SYSTEMS

The visible finish is only one part of a complete water-management system.



LARGE-FORMAT PORCELAIN SHOWER



WASHABLE UTILITY / PET AREA

TILE + PORCELAIN

Durable and customizable. Plan waterproofing, backer, movement joints, grout or seams, niches, valves, edge trim, glass, and cleaning.

PANEL SYSTEMS

Acrylic, fiberglass, PVC, solid-surface, or large panel systems can reduce joints. Follow the complete listed installation and trim details.

PAINTED BATH WALLS

Use bathroom-appropriate board and coating outside direct wet zones. Ventilation, condensation, splash exposure, and cleaning affect performance.

WATER-DURABLE IS NOT WATERPROOF

Cement backer board can be water-durable, but the wet-area assembly may still require an approved waterproofing membrane, sealed penetrations, drain connection, and compatible components.

DO NOT ASSUME

Regular painted drywall is not a shower wall system. Tile alone is not waterproofing. A visible panel does not replace the required substrate, membrane, seams, or flashing details.

CLIENT TIP

Select the shower or tub system before framing so niches, benches, valves, blocking, glass, wall thickness, and finish transitions can be coordinated.

BACKING, OUTLETS, TRIM + TRANSITIONS

The wall finish looks better when everything behind and beside it is planned first.

1

BACKING

Cabinets, TVs, mirrors, grab bars, handrails, shelves, heavy decor, acoustic panels, and future accessories.

2

PENETRATIONS

Outlets, switches, lights, plumbing, speakers, thermostats, vents, hose bibs, and service panels.

3

FINISH THICKNESS

Drywall, board, panel, furring, adhesive, stone, tile, trim, and air or movement space.

DOORS + WINDOWS

Coordinate jamb extensions, casing, sills, returns, reveals, shade pockets, curtain hardware, and how thick wall finishes stop at openings. Draw outside corners and transitions before ordering.

BASEBOARD + FLOOR

Plan base thickness, shoe molding, floor expansion gaps, panel termination, wainscot cap, metal base, wet-area sealant, shop floor coating, and how different room finishes meet at doors.

CABINETS + BUILT-INS

Confirm finished wall thickness and flatness before cabinet layout. Decide whether panels continue behind cabinets, stop at cabinets, or return into niches. Locate backing and utility rough-ins.

CEILING + BEAM TRANSITIONS

Vaulted ceilings and post-frame beams create visible termination lines. Plan scribes, trim, shadow gaps, movement joints, stain or paint transitions, and access for future maintenance.

BEFORE CLOSING THE WALL

Photograph framing, backing, utilities, blocking, penetrations, and measurements. Save the photos with the approved drawings and product information.

CLIENT TIP

Mounting needs should be discussed before drywall and panels, even when the client has not selected the final TV, mirror, or shelf.



ROOM-BY-ROOM RECOMMENDATIONS

Use this as a starting package; client priorities and exact products control the final choice.

ROOM	STRONG STARTING FINISH	WHY / CLIENT BENEFIT
Great room	Level 5 in critical-light areas; selective wood, slat, stone, or shiplap accent.	Smooth main surfaces with one intentional focal point.
Bedrooms	Level 4 drywall with matte or eggshell paint; optional board-and-batten or headboard wall.	Comfortable, repairable, and easy to personalize.
Kitchen + pantry	Washable painted drywall; tile or approved backsplash at work zones.	Cleanability around cooking, seating, and storage.
Bathrooms	Washable painted walls outside wet zones; complete approved shower or tub wall system.	Moisture and cleaning matched to exposure.
Mudroom + laundry	Satin painted drywall, wainscot, FRP, or washable panels in splash zones.	Handles boots, pets, water, and frequent cleaning.
Office + media	Painted drywall with optional tested acoustic slat or felt feature wall.	Balances professional appearance and sound control.
Garage + shop	Approved plywood, interior metal, FRP, or durable painted assembly by zone.	Impact, attachment, cleaning, and equipment use.
Mechanical + utility	Durable, accessible, light-colored washable finish with labeled service access.	Inspection, leaks, maintenance, and visibility.

RECOMMENDED PACKAGE

Use a consistent painted drywall base, Level 5 only where lighting and design benefit, one or two coordinated accent materials, washable finishes in active areas, and utility-specific finishes in the shop.

WHY THIS WORKS

The client receives a calm interior, practical maintenance, clear upgrades, better coordination, and special materials placed where they create the most visible or functional value.

CLIENT TIP

A room can use more than one finish when the transition is intentional and each material has a clear purpose.

MAINTENANCE, REPAIRS + ACOUSTIC COMFORT

The best wall finish should still work for the client years after move-in.

PAINTED DRYWALL

Easy to repaint and widely repairable, but patches can flash under side light or higher sheen. Save labeled primer and paint. Record color, sheen, product line, and application method.

WOOD + PAINTED BOARDS

Wood can move with humidity. Painted joints may show. Cleaning and refinishing depend on the coating. Save extra boards and stain or paint; record species, profile, grade, color, and finish.

PANELS + METAL + FRP

Dents, scratches, seams, trim, fasteners, and adhesive repairs can remain visible. Save spare panels and matching trim. Protect product labels and installation instructions for future replacement.

STONE + TILE

Keep extra tile or stone from the same lot or blend. Save grout, mortar, sealant, trim, and care information. Replacement can require removing adjacent pieces or accessories.

ACOUSTIC COMFORT

Tall metal buildings can create echo. Coordinate wall absorption with rugs, curtains, upholstery, ceiling treatment, doors, and room layout. Use tested acoustic products where sound performance matters.

CLEANING PLAN

Define approved cleaners, tools, stain response, moisture limits, touch-up method, and how often the client expects to wash the wall. A durable surface can still be damaged by the wrong cleaner.

HANDOFF PACKAGE

Give the client a finish schedule, product information, care instructions, warranty documents, leftover labeled materials, colors, lots, and photographs of backing and utilities.



RELATIVE COST - SECONDARY REFERENCE

Select the finish by client benefit first; dollar signs compare general complexity only.

WALL FINISH	RELATIVE LEVEL	WHAT CHANGES THE LEVEL
Level 4 drywall + standard paint	\$	Wall height, access, corners, color, primer, repairs, and lighting expectation.
Level 5 smooth drywall	\$\$	Skim coat, sanding, tall walls, critical lighting, dark color, and sheen.
Textured drywall	\$-\$	Texture type, masking, sample approval, repairs, and paint system.
Painted plywood / basic panel	\$-\$	Panel grade, joints, fasteners, backing, trim, paint, or clear finish.
Interior metal / FRP	\$\$	Profile, trim, substrate, adhesive, penetrations, corners, and room conditions.
Shiplap / board-and-batten	\$\$-\$\$\$	Board profile, spacing, backing, trim, paint, corners, and outlets.
Tongue-and-groove wood	\$\$\$	Species, grade, lengths, acclimation, waste, stain, clear coat, and detailing.
Acoustic / decorative panels	\$\$-\$\$\$\$	Tested performance, material, layout, seams, backing, trim, and access.
Stone / premium shower panels	\$\$\$-\$\$\$\$	Substrate, waterproofing, weight, layout, cuts, edges, niches, and labor.
COST LEGEND		COMPARE THE COMPLETE SCOPE
\$ = budget-friendly, \$\$ = moderate, \$\$\$ = premium, and \$\$\$\$ = luxury or specialty. These symbols are comparisons only, not a project quotation.		Include backing, substrate, trim, outlets, corners, wall height, access, primer, paint or stain, samples, protection, cleanup, spare material, and future repair needs.

CLIENT TIP

Spend on the walls the client sees, touches, cleans, or depends on most. Keep secondary walls simple and coordinated.



FINAL CLIENT-SELECTION CHECKLIST

Approve wall systems, samples, locations, details, and responsibilities before ordering.

DRYWALL + PAINT

- ☐ Drywall level by room and wall
- ☐ Smooth, orange-peel, knockdown, or other approved texture
- ☐ Primer, paint product, color, and sheen
- ☐ Critical-light walls and acceptance sample
- ☐ Moisture-resistant locations and wet-area exclusions

ACCENT WALLS

- ☐ Exact locations, dimensions, and orientation
- ☐ Shiplap, wood species, profile, panel, stone, or brick selection
- ☐ Color, stain, clear coat, sheen, and variation approval
- ☐ Seams, joints, corners, edges, trim, and transitions
- ☐ Outlets, switches, lights, TV, shelves, and access panels

UTILITY + WET AREAS

- ☐ Garage, workshop, laundry, utility, and pet-zone finish
- ☐ Plywood, metal, FRP, washable panel, or painted assembly
- ☐ Shower or tub wall system and waterproofing
- ☐ Fire, moisture, impact, cleaning, and service requirements
- ☐ Spare materials and maintenance instructions

PROJECT APPROVAL

- ☐ Backing, blocking, and rough-in locations
- ☐ Door, window, base, ceiling, beam, and floor coordination
- ☐ Physical samples and on-site mockups
- ☐ Purchasing responsibility, allowances, and change orders
- ☐ Signed finish schedule, warranty, care, and handoff package

READY TO SELECT YOUR WALL FINISHES?

Bring inspiration photos, room priorities, paint preferences, accent-wall ideas, and cleaning expectations. We will coordinate the complete wall system before installation.

531-352-1780 | denzelconstructionllc@gmail.com | www.denzelconstruction.llc