Joint beading is defined as a fine uniform thin line that forms along the center joint between the gypsum panels. The cause is most commonly but not always related to changes in humidity combined with structural movement and/or green (wet) lumber. During joint treatment application, joint compound is naturally forced between gypsum panels with a knife or blade and tape when applied over the joint area. Successive coats of joint compound are then applied and the final decoration is completed, the surface area is typically deemed smooth and acceptable immediately after completion. If the interior environment is exposed to high humidity, the joint compound can regain a semi-soft state.

It is also possible that if the joint compound never achieved a complete and final set, then moderate humidity can result in beading or ridging. If either of these conditions are accompanied with minor structural movement and/or lumber shrinkage/compression, pressure can be transferred to the gypsum panels and in turn can be exerted on the gypsum panel joints, thus squeezing the joints tighter and forcing the semi-hard joint compound out to form a slight bulge along the joint.

Joint ridging most commonly occurs after a few weeks to a month after joint treatment and/or final decoration is complete. The joint compound then takes a hard final set with the fine deformation line.

Repair is recommended to be done after a full heating season has passed. This allows for the building and all elements to completely stabilize.

Prevention is done by following best practices on environmental conditions during construction and allowing joint compound to fully set or dry before proceeding with successive coats. Interior environmental conditions are critical to prevent joint ridging/bead.

Other tips include:
- Use quality grade lumber
- Stabilize the interior environment (temperature and humidity) prior to taping
- Check lumber for moisture content and do not install gypsum panels until lumber is below 15 percent moisture content
- Building should have 90 percent dead load prior to taping
- Allow joint compound the time to set/dry completely

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