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“Oil Canning” or Waviness

Description:

Steel architectural (flat) panels are susceptible to "oil canning" like any light gage metal product. Oil canning is an inherent characteristic, and can be defined as a perceived waviness in flat areas of panels. As the ambient air temperature rises, the panel expands along its length. After the panel has been attached to the framing system, this expansion contributes to the oil canning affect. The longer the panel, the more susceptible the panel is to the oil canning affect. Additional contributing factors could be: panel type, non-planar installation surface, panel color/texture, and the installation technique. Steps can be taken to minimize each of these causes. Oil canning is considered an aesthetic problem, and not a reason to reject the panels.

Installation Techniques:

Proper handling, especially when storing or loading the panels is important. Avoid twisting and "bowing" the panels over their length. Over driving of the attachment fasteners creates excessive stresses in the panel, and provides a "reading line" along the fastener alignment; especially in panels that "clip" on one side and are attached with screws on the other. An oversize hole or a slotted one could allow the panel to expand along its length, reducing the oil canning affect.

Possible Solutions:

If you suspect your installation area may be subject to radical temperature swings, tall screen wall heights, or an uneven attachment surface, you may consider panel options to reduce the oil canning affect.

- Investigate a laminated or foam core panel
- Choose a textured surface or ribbed panel
- Select a "matte" color for the finish
- Pre drill or slot the panels at the attachment points



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