VyRal

A LeakReceipts Field Guide

LeakReceipts for Flooring, Drywall & Tile

The Field Guide: where the money leaks, how to prove it, and how to close it

For: Flooring, Drywall and Tile — Substrate and Change Work

by VyRal Dynasty

LeakReceipts for Flooring, Drywall & Tile The Field Guide: where the money leaks, how to prove it, and how to close it

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How every number in this book is labeled.

- **VERIFIED** means the figure comes from a named, dated source, and the source is printed next to it.
- **CALCULATED** means it is arithmetic on verified numbers or on your own numbers, and the math is shown.
- **ESTIMATE** means a reasoned range, and it is always called one.
- **STRUCTURAL** marks a standing rule of the trade (a law, a contract term, how the paperwork works), not a market figure.
- **STILL BEING MEASURED** means VyRal has not verified a figure yet, so no number is printed.

If a number is not labeled, it is a blank for you to fill from your own paper.

What this book is not. This is education, not legal, tax, accounting or financial advice. Where a fix says a professional decides, a professional decides. Nothing here says that any company, customer or person did anything wrong. The fixes show you how to check your own paper and ask in writing.

About how this book was made. This book was assembled with AI from VyRal's sourced research on this trade and checked against those sources. AI can make mistakes. Before you act on a figure, check it against the source printed beside it. Rules and rates change, and every figure carries its date for that reason.

Before you share any document with anyone, Vera included, black out account numbers, Social Security numbers and anything else you would not hand a stranger.

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The short answer for your trade

The bid assumed a sound floor or wall underneath. The field found a wet slab, an out-of-flat subfloor, cracked drywall, or a substrate that needed leveling before anything could go down — and the crew fixed it right then to keep the job moving. Nobody wrote it down. That's the leak: the fix happened before anyone priced it, and the evidence got buried under the very repair that solved it.

Your leak map

Every leak this book covers, biggest first. The size grade is VyRal's research grade for how much money a leak tends to move in this trade. It is a grade, not a dollar figure. Your own paper sets the dollars.

#	Leak	Size grade	Evidence	Fixes
1	Drywall Finish Levels 0-5 — Level 5 Routinely Bid as Level 4	Significant	VERIFIED	1
2	Moisture Test Method Exists, Pass/Fail Limit Is Manufacturer-Set	Major	STRUCTURAL	1
3	Pride Economy — Tools and Equipment	Not graded	STRUCTURAL	1
4	Self-Employment Tax Boundary	Not graded	STRUCTURAL	1
5	Concealed-Condition Notice & Change Order Right	Major	STILL BEING MEASURED	1
6	Warranty May Void When You Install Over an Out-of-Spec Substrate	Major	STILL BEING MEASURED	1
7	Substrate Flatness Standard Exists, Tolerance Is Trade/Manufacturer-Set	Significant	STILL BEING MEASURED	1
8	Waste Allowance Is Standard Practice, No Universal Percentage	Moderate	STILL BEING MEASURED	1

Then there are 4 more leaks to check, each with its own fixes, in the chapter called More leaks to check.

What people in your trade say hurts

Before we built a single fix, we went and read what people in this trade say out loud: forums, trade press, regulators' complaint files and court records. These are the pains that kept coming up, the ones with the most sources first. If one of them is yours, you're not imagining it.

The bid covered the floor I saw; the humps, dips and old tile underneath came out of my pocket

I quote per square foot before anyone checks how flat the slab or subfloor really is. When it is out of flat I have to grind or pour leveler, and leveler covers half as much floor when it has to go twice as thick. Small prep is expected inside my price, so the space between small and major prep is where I lose money.

Found in 3 public sources; newest dated 2026-06-04. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

The plank failed, not my install, but I'm the one tearing it out for free

When cheap plank or other product fails, the customer comes after whoever gave the warranty, and that is me. Unless my terms leave out labor for product defects, the redo is unpaid. Some installers say the goal is just to get past the one-year warranty.

Found in 3 public sources; newest dated 2025-10-01. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

I pay for a lead that three other pros also got, and half never answer

Lead apps charge me per lead whether I win the job or not, and send the same lead to several pros. Getting a refund on a junk lead is hard. Regulators already fined one big lead site for misleading pros about lead quality.

Found in 2 public sources; newest dated 2026-09-16. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

The super said yes to the extra work, the PM said no to the money

Extra rooms, extra prep and moving furniture get okayed by voice in the field. When the bill comes, the person with money authority refuses it or caps the

markup. If I wait to bill extras at the end, I collect a fraction of what I did.

Found in 2 public sources; newest dated 2025-07-01. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Get your paper together

Every fix in this book starts with paper, not memory. Memory rounds in the other side's favor. Paper doesn't.

Pull the last 90 days. Put it all in one folder, paper or phone, and label each piece with its date. Black out account numbers and Social Security numbers before you share anything with anyone.

The paper that proves each leak:

- Your contracts, invoices, statements, pay records and the messages around them.

My folder checklist

Last 90 days of statements or pay records _____

Every contract or agreement I work under _____

Every invoice, ticket or settlement for the same 90 days _____

The messages that changed a price, a scope or a date _____

Leak 1: Drywall Finish Levels 0-5 — Level 5 Routinely Bid as Level 4

Size grade: Significant · Evidence: VERIFIED

What it is. The Gypsum Association's GA-214 standard defines six drywall finish levels. Level 4 (tool-mark-free, standard for flat or light-texture paint) and Level 5 (a full skim coat over the entire surface, required for gloss/enamel sheens, dark colors, or critical raking light) are distinct, differently-priced scopes of work.

Why it leaks. A wall that actually needs Level 5 gets bid and finished at Level 4; joints telegraph under raking or gloss light months later, and the callback gets blamed on 'bad drywall work' instead of the finish level that was never specified or charged for.

The number to hold it against. Drywall finish runs from Level 0 to Level 5; Level 5 is recommended for sheen or gloss paints, dark or deep-tone paints, or critical lighting. Source: Gypsum Association, GA-214-2022, Recommended Levels of Finish for Gypsum Panel Products (2022).

VERIFIED · Near-primary — research body

> **Ask yourself:** Did the paint sheen or lighting on this job call for a Level 5 skim coat, and if so, was it priced as its own line item?

1. Level 5 drywall finish needed but bid and done as Level 4

Fix approved · leak evidence: Verified

Fix 1 — Do it yourself (free).

1. At the bid, ask: what paint sheen and color are going on, and is there strong side light (big windows, wall-wash or raking lights)?
2. The Gypsum Association's finish-level guide (GA-214) points to Level 5 - a thin skim coat over the whole surface - where smooth walls get non-flat (glossy) paint, dark or deep-tone paint, or critical lighting. If that is the job, explain it to the customer.
3. Write the finish level on the bid for each area.
4. Price Level 5 as its own line.
5. If the customer picks Level 4 anyway, write that choice on the signed bid.
6. If the job was already bid at Level 4 and the conditions change (sheen or lighting), send a change order before you finish.

Fix 2 — The words to send, under your own name. Fill in the brackets, keep a copy, and send it from your own email or by mail. Nobody sends it for you.

> Bid clarification: 'Finish level: [AREA] - Level [4/5]. Level 5 includes a skim coat over the entire surface and is recommended where [non-flat or glossy paint / dark or deep-tone paint / strong side lighting] is planned. Level 5 for [AREA]: [PRICE]. [ ] I choose Level 5. [ ] I choose Level 4 and understand joints may be visible under strong side light or glossy paint. Customer: _____ Date: ____.' Change notice: 'Hi [NAME], the plan for [AREA] is now [NEW SHEEN / LIGHTING]. Our bid was Level 4. To get a finish that holds up under that, Level 5 adds [PRICE]. Reply YES to approve.'

Fix 3 — Done for you. **LeakReceipts · Billing Capture**

WE DO: add a finish-level line to your bid template and flag any job where the sheen or lighting noted calls for a Level 5 conversation; draft the change notice if things change. YOU DO: have the conversation, price it, and get the signature.

Keep it closed. Ask about paint sheen and lighting at every bid and write the finish level for each area on the bid.

What this fix can't decide for you. We cite the Gypsum Association guide only for when Level 5 is typically specified; the finish level on any job is the customer's and contractor's choice.

My receipt for this leak			
Owed by my paper	Paid or billed	Gap (CALCULATED: owed − paid)	Fix 2 sent · answer

FREE FIRST CHAPTER

That's Leak 1 of 8.

The full Field Guide for Flooring, Drywall & Tile walks through every leak on the map you just read: why it happens, the paper that proves it, and three fixes for each one — one you do yourself for free, the words to send under your own name, and what LeakReceipts can do for you while the decision stays yours.

Get the full guide:
leakreceipts.com/ebooks/flooring-drywall-and-tile

Run it on your own numbers:
leakreceipts.com

WE WALK BY FAITH NOT BY SIGHT — 2 Corinthians 5:7