



**An elevated lift.** The Panel Lift 439's chain drive, larger wheels, and heavy-duty construction make it more mobile and able to lift heavier stuff higher.

## Lift for the long haul

I bought my first drywall panel lift way back at the beginning of my career as a drywall contractor. I'm guessing that I would have had at least one shoulder surgery by now if I hadn't. Over the years, I've pretty much stuck with the Panel Lift brand for my crews. The only "money-saving" off-brand I ever bought ended up in the trash after a month. The cheapest of the cheap lifts can cost less than \$100, but to anyone in the industry who hangs drywall more than a few times a year, the lift I would recommend is the Panel Lift 439, and here's why: The 439 has large, 6-in. caster wheels, which are easier to roll over extension cords and scraps of drywall. Also, this model is chain-driven, which bumps its lifting capacity to 200 lb. The overall construction is heavy-duty, and the lift remains stable even when hoisting 4x16 5/8-in. sheets 14 ft. 5 in. (the max height) off the ground. There is an 18-in. extension available (sold separately) that brings the max lift to 15 ft. 11 in. The lift breaks down into five narrow pieces, so when your friend inevitably wants to borrow it, it will fit in the back of a minivan. If using a lift isn't easy enough for you, then you can purchase the "Drill Drive" attachment that raises and lowers the lift with a simple squeeze of the trigger on your cordless drill. The Panel Lift 493 is made in the United States and can be purchased at industrial tool suppliers for about \$1300.

*Elfego Gomez, a drywall contractor in Burnsville Minn.*

## Set windows solo, from the inside

According to Pella, their new Steady Set window installation system makes the installation process safer and more efficient. Three innovative features enable Steady Set window shimming and fastening to be done by one installer entirely from the inside rather than the exterior like traditional flanged windows. First, flexible flashing fins are folded down and toward the exterior with protective covers so they can be folded open after the window is slid through the rough opening from the inside of the house. Second, "L"-shaped mounting brackets restrain the window from falling outwards and provide a positive depth stop so

that the flashing fin/flange stays in plane with the exterior. The brackets are shipped with the fastening legs facing in toward the window; before placing the window into the opening, the installer slides the brackets out of the jamb-mounted receivers, flips them 180°, and reinserts the fastening leg back into the jamb-mounted receivers until they lock securely in place. After centering the window and adjusting for plumb, level, and square, the installer drives screws through the brackets into the stud faces to secure the window in place. The third innovation is a window head stabilizer with four metal inward-facing fingers that act like barbs to temporarily restrain



**Stay inside.** Pella's Steady Set windows install from inside the structure, using metal clips that fasten to the framed opening. A fold-out flange allows conventional flashing techniques.

the window from tipping inward, while still allowing the window to be shifted around for leveling and shimming. Steady Set will be available in Pella Reserve and

Lifestyle Series windows in the summer of 2024. Visit [pella.com](http://pella.com) for more information, and look for my in-depth review of the installation in a coming issue.

M.G.