

## TOP TIPS

# Choosing Unistrut Products for Demanding Applications and Harsh Environments



# Atkore Defender™

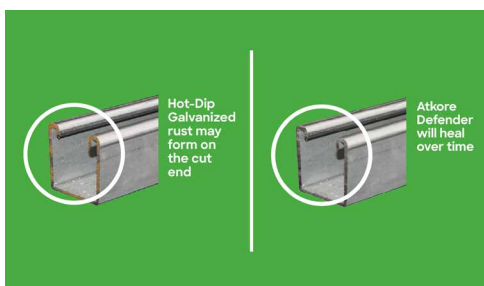
How much more productive could your installers be if they no longer had to touch up the cut end of each strut? How many more projects could your company win with strut channel products that cost up to 40% less than stainless steel alternatives? And what if those products also were durable enough for mission-critical applications such as cell phone towers, solar farms, and electrical substations?

Follow these five tips to determine which types of products meet those key criteria — and more.

# 1

### Consider specially coated hardware.











Think of some installations where replacing struts, fittings, and other equipment is difficult, dangerous, time-consuming, or expensive, such as a remote high-voltage transmission tower. Or think about installations subject to the worst nature has to offer, such as the salt spray that afflicts offshore drilling platforms and seaports.



In independent lab tests using ASTM B117, hot-dip galvanized hardware reached the 5% red rust failure mark after as little as 3,000 hours of continuous salt spray exposure.

An alternative is [coated products](#) designed to withstand at least a decade of salt spray, high humidity, and other environmental extremes. These products should be backed

## PHOTOS FROM ASTM B117 SALT SPRAY TEST

	0 hours	100 hours	1,000 hours	2,000 hours	3,000 hours
<b>Atkore Defender™ (DF)</b>					
<b>Hot-Dip Galvanized (HG) per ASTM A123 and A153</b>					

by real-world installations and rigorous lab tests conducted by independent, accredited organizations using ASTM standards. They should also be backed by [a 10-year limited warranty](#) against rust in excess amounts that would significantly compromise the performance of its steel substrate.

2

### Skip stainless steel.

Compared to hot-dip galvanized products, stainless steel is more durable and more attractive, especially after years out in the elements. The catch is that it's tough to win projects when the bid is bloated by stainless steel's price premium.



Coated strut channel products overcome this challenge by providing a cost-effective alternative to type 304 and 316 stainless steel products, but without any tradeoffs in useful life. In fact, they can save up to 40% on installations by eliminating the need for stainless steel fasteners. That helps win projects with tight budgets and still maintain profit margins.



3

### Focus on labor-saving products.

How much time do your employees spend touching up the cut ends of hot-dip galvanized struts? It's probably more time than you think. Coated products eliminate this step, easily saving on labor costs. Its self-healing properties also mean they don't have to do follow-up inspections checking for any coating inadvertently damaged during installation. Those bottom-line benefits are among the reasons why companies such as Maddox Electric prefer coated strut products.

"The labor cost is better," says [David King, Maddox Electric's vice president of construction](#). "We don't have to go back for punch lists. We don't have to spray paint the ends with cold gal. So there's less labor involved in that. When you cut it, you're done with it. There's nothing else to do."

All those advantages maximize employee productivity — a major competitive advantage with today's chronic shortage of skilled labor. In the process, the use of coated products also helps keep projects on

schedule, which boosts client satisfaction and your brand reputation. Finally, its proven durability eliminates the callbacks, profit-busting repairs, and client ill will that can occur if products fail prematurely.

4

#### **Leverage what your employees already know and use.**

Why do contractors stick with a product when they know it has major drawbacks? Often, it's because they're concerned about the time and expense of getting employees trained on the superior alternative and equipping them with new tools.

That's not the case with coated products because they are specifically designed to be a direct replacement for hot-dip galvanized products. Installation doesn't require specialized training or tools. Employees simply use what they already know and have. They'll also appreciate that coated fasteners are much easier to install than hot-dipped galvanized ones.

5

#### **Go lean with the right product and vendor.**

More products mean more overhead because you need a bigger warehouse to store them and bigger trucks to cart them around. To avoid those profit busters, contractors such as Maddox Electric are focusing solely on coated products.

"We have less product on our trucks," King says. "We don't have to have stainless. We don't have to have galvanized. We don't have to have zinc coated. We can carry one product."



**How to Get Started:** To learn more, download this FAQ, which answers the top questions that project managers, engineers, building owners, contractors, and specifiers typically have about why, how, and where to use coated products. Then visit <https://www.atkore.com/Atkore-Defender> to see the benefits of the Atkore Defender line of coated products and find your Atkore regional sales rep or call (800) 882-5543.