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30

SBCRI: A Whole New Bag of Tricks

by Molly E. Butz & Kirk Grundahl

The vast resources of SBCRI have the ability to give us more answers than ever before about the nature of structural performance.

38

Reduce Risk and Increase Revenue:

Wall Panel Plant Personnel Hiring & Training (Part 3 of 6)

by Jim Boyle

Part 3 in this series discusses best practices to help ensure you are effective throughout the hiring and training process.

44

Truss Plant Tour TTWs: The Power of the Plant Tour Field Trip (Part 2 of 3)

by Emily Patterson

Why plant tours are a great way to get your marketplace excited to learn more about components.



Photo courtesy of Coau Early

48

So You Want Your Lumber Green? (Part 2)

by Sean D. Shields

What CMs supplying commercial and residential jobs need to know before going green.

54

11 Questions with Jim James

by Libby Maurer

Get to know the new leader of ITW Building Components Group.

56

2008 WTCA Membership Directory

Columns

Editor's Message • SBCRI: The Possibilities Are Limitless	7
Publisher's Message • On the Right Side of Change	10
Technical Q&A • Installation of Insulation in Wood & Steel Truss Fire Endurance Assemblies	12
Safety Scene • Handle with Care: HazCom & Material Safety Data Sheets	14
BCMC & Your Business Plan • The Industry's Launch Pad for New Products	18
WTCA Update • Benefit from Questioning the Value of Your Association	20
The Big Picture • SBCRI Steering Committee Priorities: Going with the Flow of Loads	26

Departments

Calendar of Events	72
Chapter Corner	74
Industry News & Data	76
Classified Ads	78
Advertiser Index	80
Parting Shots	82

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Editor's Message

SBCRI: The Possibilities Are Limitless

by Bob Becht

SBCRI breathes new life into the industry.

When I entered this industry many years ago, I never imagined that we would be faced with such a revolutionary opportunity. Of course, I'm speaking of the Structural Building Components Research Institute (SBCRI), built in Madison, WI. Though it is not even one year old, the unique capabilities our industry now has because it exists are boundless. It is no doubt a tough time for many component manufacturers (my company included!), but it's also an exciting time for the industry because we're standing on the cusp of learning some critical information about the products we supply every day. I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all SBCRI donors who have helped take SBCRI from concept to creation in the last few years.



The unique capabilities our industry now has because SBCRI exists are boundless.

Selfishly, I have some things I hope are tested in SBCRI. This facility exists to benefit the industry, and I encourage all of you to think of the things in your own businesses that would be helpful to have more test data and analysis on. The only limits on the possibilities of SBCRI are our own imaginations.

The industry testing done at SBCRI will be shared with the memberships of WTCA and TPI. The funding of this testing will be jointly provided by these organizations per the Joint Testing Venture Agreement finalized just a few months ago. Over the course of the next several years, TPI and WTCA will invest almost \$2 million in targeted industry testing projects that will benefit our businesses and our products. The financial commitments made by these organizations to SBCRI will provide the industry with the unique opportunity to learn a tremendous amount about building components that has not been an option in the products' sixty years of existence.

If you haven't already, check out more about the facility at www.sbcinfo.info, and keep checking **SBC** for continual updates about the testing happening at SBCRI.

On a different topic, our industry has been challenged with record-low housing starts for many months now. As we head into the building season, I hope you find that there is some recovery happening in your market. If this is the case, remember that WTCA is your #1 resource for educational training tools and technical resources. The article on page 20 provides an example of just how many options are avail-

Continued on page 8

at a glance

- ❑ SBCRI is a one of a kind world-class testing lab located in Madison, WI dedicated to testing building components.
- ❑ TPI and WTCA have committed to investing almost \$2 million in the next several years for industry testing projects.
- ❑ Take advantage of your WTCA membership by using the products and services developed for component manufacturers.



The industry celebrated the completion of SBCRI in late June of last year with a ribbon-cutting and open house in Madison, WI. Since that time, a number of tests have been completed as staff continues to hone testing and reporting processes. In February, the SBCRI Steering Committee set priorities for future tests. The article on page 26 outlines these projects. The article on page 30 explores a specific testing project that serves as a great example of what is possible through testing. If you are interested in touring the facility, contact Megan at mdahl@qualltim.com.

Editor's Message

Continued from page 7

able to you...all just a phone call away. Each one of these products and services developed by WTCA were created to serve members' needs, and many of them can be customized or used in ways that best suit your business needs. You don't have to reinvent the wheel; call WTCA first! **SBC**

SBC Magazine encourages the participation of its readers in developing content for future issues. Do you have an article idea for a future issue or a topic that you would like to see covered? Email your thoughts and ideas to editor@sbcmag.info or call 608/310-6706.

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The mission of *Structural Building Components Magazine (SBC)* is to increase the knowledge of and to promote the common interests of those engaged in manufacturing and distributing structural building components. Further, *SBC* strives to ensure growth, continuity and increased professionalism in our industry, and to be the information conduit by staying abreast of leading-edge issues. *SBC's* editorial focus is geared toward the entire structural building component industry, which includes the membership of WTCA – Representing the Structural Building Components Industry. The opinions expressed in *SBC* are those of the authors and those quoted, and are not necessarily the opinions of Truss Publications or WTCA.

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Publisher's Message

On the Right Side of Change

Enjoy a new editorial focus for this issue!

by Libby Maurer

Back in May 2007 when the *SBC* team set our 2008 editorial calendar (and simultaneously groaned about how early things have to be planned at a publication), slating this issue as our very first edition focused on Research & Testing seemed ambitious. At the time, the world class component testing lab known as the SBC Research Institute (SBCRI) was just beginning to take shape, and the construction of the facility was, well, getting tiresome. It was nearly impossible to predict what would happen between then and now.

On page 26, read what is in the works for SBCRI testing in the near future in **The Big Picture**. Kirk Grundahl reports that the SBCRI Steering Committee has outlined a series of testing projects with the goal of discovering how loads flow through the elements of a structure. In addition to this industry testing, the SBCRI facility is available for companies with a need for proprietary testing projects. Grundahl explains how the management company, Qualtim, Inc., will ensure that the results of these tests remain confidential. Whether for proprietary or industry testing, it's certain that SBCRI will house many interesting tests that will tell us a lot about our products.

Long about December, this issue's cover story fell from the sky (as did the trusses that supported a rather large commercial building). The article "SBCRI: A Whole New Bags of Tricks" on page 30 couldn't be a more appropriate example of why SBCRI is essential to our industry's advancement in residential and commercial building construction marketplaces. The story involves buckled long-span trusses, a commercial building with doors wide open to the public, and a building owner not willing to close it. The question to ask while you're reading is what would have been done before SBCRI existed.

For every member who is sick of this green building buzz, there are two wondering what they have to do to be deemed "green" in their customers' eyes. If you've found yourself wondering lately, check out Sean Shields' "So You Want Your Lumber Green?" on page 48—the second article in a series about component manufacturers supplying jobs shooting for one green building certification or another. Bottom line: it should be simple, but it's not. There should be a straightforward protocol to follow, but there's not. We hope this article will help you determine understand what is required of you to meet the standards set forth in your specs!

When consolidation happens as aggressively as it has in our industry lately, it's difficult to keep tabs on the changes. Of course, one of the biggest changes on the supply side occurred in 2006 when Truswal Systems Corporation and Alpine Engineered Products, Inc. were acquired by ITW. While both companies have maintained separate identities, software and customer bases, they now share the parent company known as ITW Building Components Group, with group president Jim James at the helm. We caught up with James to talk about what has changed as a result of these acquisitions, what remains the same, and why the industry is positioned to alter the face of building construction.

Change really is all around us. Will we allow it to energize and motivate us, or will we watch as it leaves us in the dust? Let's plan for the former. With tools like SBCRI on our side, there's no reason our industry can't be on the right side of change for building construction. Enjoy the issue! **SBC**

at a glance

- The stories on pages 26 and 30 illustrate why SBCRI is vital to the advancement of the industry.
- Decide whether you should go green with the article on page 48.
- Turn to page 54 to get the inside scoop on ITW's acquisitions and the new president of its Building Components Group.

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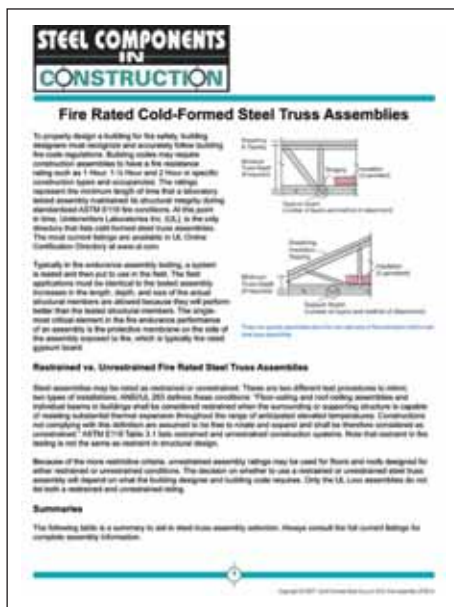
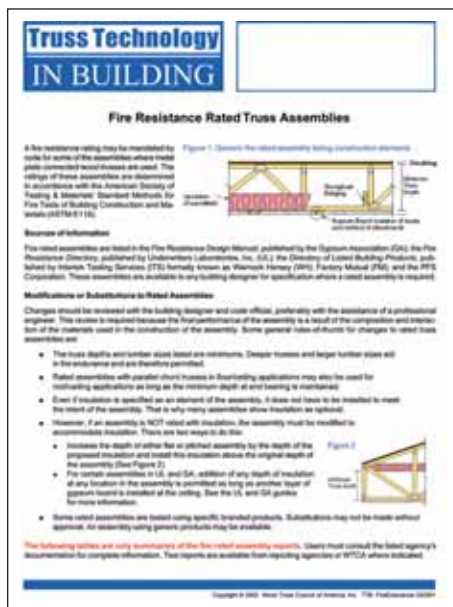
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by WTCA Technical Staff

Fire endurance is a hot topic, especially when it comes to insulation.

At least once a week, WTCA receives a question about trusses and fire endurance assemblies. One of our goals is to provide the construction industry and fire service with accurate information regarding the fire performance of metal plate connected wood trusses. We have created a website (www.sbcindustry.com/fire.php) that contains a lot of useful information. Two of the most popular resources are the *Fire Resistance Rated Truss Assemblies TTB* and *Fire Rated Cold-Formed Steel Truss Assemblies SSC*, which include tables summarizing the fire rated assembly reports that were tested with trusses.



The truss assemblies listed in these documents were tested with and without insulation. There are occasions when thermal and/or acoustical considerations require insulation in a floor-ceiling or roof-ceiling assembly that have been tested without insulation. To make a rational assessment of this modification, it is necessary to look at the properties of the insulation and the impact that its placement inside the assembly will have on the fire endurance performance of the assembly.

As is well known, the effect of insulation is to reduce the flow of cold air into heated spaces and the entry of hot air into air conditioned spaces. Since insulation restricts the flow of heat, its addition to a fire endurance assembly can facilitate heat build-up, which impacts the data produced from the test. Here's why.

The insulation will retard heat movement, and may also reduce the plenum space that was available for heat dissipation during the test. Because of this, it is likely that the protective gypsum layer will heat up more quickly resulting in an increased rate of hydration. This can lead to an earlier failure of the gypsum and consequent failure of the fire endurance assembly.

Does this mean that the installation of insulation should not be allowed in assemblies tested without it? Certainly not.

The logic path to adding insulation is:

- Since insulation will retard the flow of heat through it, incorporation of insulation in a rated assembly must be kept as far away from the gypsum surface as possible. This will minimize the heat build-up problem that causes premature hydration.

- Since the plenum cavity helps to dissipate the heat as it passes through the gypsum membrane, maintaining a plenum space that is greater than or equal to that of the tested assembly is critical to the field assembly's performance in a fire.

Therefore, to incorporate insulation into a tested assembly, an equivalent or greater plenum space should be maintained and the insulation must be held up and away from the gypsum surface.

As an example: A 12" deep truss assembly was tested and passes the 1-hour fire endurance requirement, with 5/8" Type X gypsum directly attached to the bottom chord and 5/8" plywood directly attached to the top chord. The resulting plenum space for this assembly is still 12". The actual truss application calls for an 18" deep truss to be used so this assembly with the added gypsum and plywood will still provide the tested fire endurance even though it is deeper.

If insulation is to be added to this hypothetical assembly without diminishing its fire endurance, consideration must be given to the following points:

- Pursuant to the UL Fire Resistance Directory – Design Information section, increasing the depth of an assembly does not adversely affect its fire endurance rating. In fact, increasing the depth may actually enhance performance through better heat dissipation properties, and through reduced chord stresses resulting from a larger moment of inertia for the truss section.
- The addition of insulation must be kept up away from the surface of the gypsum as previously explained and additionally there should be no additional weight on top of the gypsum that may contribute to a premature failure of the protective membrane.

Therefore, insulation can be added to this fire endurance

assembly in the following manner:

- Per the example above, since the depth of the assembly has increased to 18", the "extra 6" of space" can be filled in with insulation.
- The insulation would need to be attached 12" above the gypsum membrane.
- The type of insulation could be:
 - Batt insulation attached with stay wires 12" above the surface of the gypsum membrane.
 - Rigid insulation attached to the trusses 12" above the surface of the gypsum membrane.
 - Rigid insulation attached to the plywood or OSB sheathing so that it maintains a 12" plenum area.
 - "Blown-in" insulation onto any type of membrane that will hold the insulation 12" away from the surface of the gypsum membrane.
- This is a conservative approach and will maintain the original test plenum depth.

An argument could be made for the allowance of insulation within the 12" free plenum space, but this should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, since the final performance of the assembly is dependant on the insulation density, the type of gypsum used, the stresses developed in the chords of the trusses, etc. Obtain professional engineering assistance in situations like this.

Experience indicates that it is allowable to add insulation to an assembly provided that the depth of the truss is increased above what was tested to accommodate the depth of the insulation and that the tested plenum depth is maintained between the surface of the gypsum membrane and the beginning of the application of insulation. **SBC**

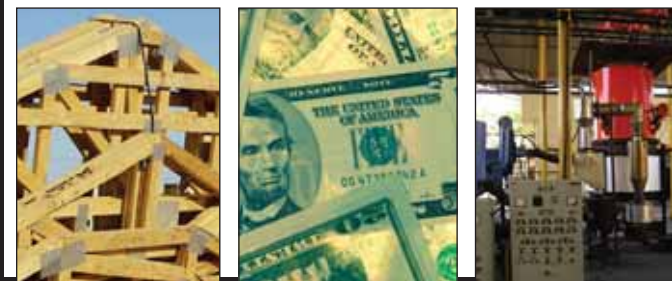
To pose a question for this column, email technicalqa@sbcmag.info. For information geared specifically to fire service professionals visit www.sbcindustry.com/firepro.php.

What is plenum space? Plenum space is the space that exists in the middle of the actual ceiling and the dropped ceiling, which is frequently made use of as an air duct for heating and cooling purposes.

at a glance

- To add insulation into a tested assembly, an equivalent or greater plenum space should be maintained and the insulation held up and away from the gypsum surface.
- Increasing the depth of an assembly does not adversely affect its fire endurance rating.

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Safety Scene

Handle with Care: HazCom & Material Safety Data Sheets

by Molly E. Butz

Wood and steel aren't the only dangers at your plant...make sure you protect employees from chemical hazards too.



Byond the sharp metal connector plates, heavy loads and other potentially dangerous items a component manufacturing facility can present is an entirely different species of hazards: chemicals. While necessary, it's important to remember that chemicals come with a wide variety of physical and health concerns, causing everything from explosions to cancer. OSHA's Hazard Communication Standard (HCS) 1910.1200 requires employers to protect their employees from these dangerous chemicals by providing and maintaining accurate information and thorough training for anyone at risk for exposure.

Check this: hazardous chemical products number more than 650,000! And with even more being created every year, it's estimated that more than 30 million workers are at risk for exposure to one or more of these dangerous substances. Even component manufacturing facilities contain hazardous products that can cause chemical injury or illness. These products include, but are not limited to: industrial cleaning agents, degreasers, greases, paints, pesticides, aerosols and compressed gases. However, potential exposures can be avoided by developing and implementing a written hazard communication (HazCom) plan.

The Written Plan

During an inspection, OSHA will ask to see the written HazCom plan developed **specifically for the location they're inspecting** and will use it as a basis for evaluating compliance with the HCS. The purpose of a written HazCom plan is to describe how the HCS will be implemented in the facility. Several concepts must be included in a written plan, they are:

- A list of the chemicals present in the facility
- Information regarding who is responsible for each part of the program
- The location where written materials will be stored and their availability to employees
- The requirements for labels and other forms of warning
- A library of material safety data sheets (MSDSs)
- A strategy for employee training
- A method for informing contractors on the premises

Hazardous Chemicals List

To start developing (or revising) a written plan, compile an inventory of the chemicals found in the facility. The easiest way to collect a thorough list is to survey the plant via walk-through. It's important to note **all** hazardous products including liquids, solids, gases and fumes. Don't forget about chemicals stored in containers, running through piping, generated through processes like operating a forklift and used during manufacturing, such as treated lumber. One method of documenting chemicals is to mark the location where each hazard is used and/or stored on a copy of your operation's floor plan. After the list is created, schedule an annual review to make sure the list is complete and up to date.

Continued on page 16

at a glance

- ☐ A written HazCom plan is the first step to creating a safeguard against chemical hazards.
- ☐ Each hazardous material in the plant must have a current Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) accessible to all employees.
- ☐ Educating employees and contractors about dangerous substances will prevent chemical related injuries and illnesses.

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Safety Scene

Continued from page 14

Assigning Responsibility

Keeping a HazCom program functioning efficiently requires designation of specific tasks. Here are several basic recommendations for assigning these responsibilities in your facility.

The CEO/Owner simply needs to ensure a HazCom program is developed and implemented. He or she is also responsible for holding the other manager(s) accountable for the implementation and annual review of the program.

The manager—production manager, safety coordinator or other supervisor in the facility—directly in charge of the HazCom program has a much broader list of tasks to execute. In addition to conducting the initial and ongoing inspections to locate all hazardous products, the HazCom program manager needs to make sure each substance is properly labeled, handled and stored. He will also be in charge of keeping all program materials up to date and available for the employees, including the master hazardous chemicals list, written program and MSDS library. Lastly, he will organize and present new hire and annual employee training and conduct an annual program review/update.

It's important to note here that even though the program will be audited and edited annually, the master chemical list and MSDS information should be updated **each time a new hazardous product is added to the facility**. This may also require additional training for one or more employees.

As is the case with all safety issues, your employees will also need to be held accountable for their part in the HazCom program. All employees at risk for exposure to hazardous chemicals in the plant need to know where the MSDS library is located. They also need to be able to read and understand the labels, warnings and MSDSs. It is critical that all employees handling hazardous substances follows all safe work practices and safety rules defined in their training, such as:

- Wearing the proper personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Using natural or mechanical ventilation when necessary
- Keeping chemical areas clean
- Cleaning up all chemical spills immediately
- Refraining from smoking, eating or drinking near hazardous products
- Notifying the HazCom manager if any labels, warnings or MSDSs are missing
- Asking questions if there is **anything** they don't understand

Labels & Warnings

Each container of hazardous chemicals stored in the plant must be labeled or marked in a clear manner with the identity of the material and all necessary hazard warnings. The "identity" may be a common name (bleach), trade name (Magic Surface Cleaner) or chemical name (1, 1, 1 trichloroethane). The hazard warning should be a short description

of the effects of the chemical, for instance "flammable" or "causes lung damage." Although there are no specific size or color requirements, the labels need to be in English, "legible and prominently displayed." Offering the information in other languages is not required, but is a good idea if you have non-English speaking employees.

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)

A significant part of the written program will be acquiring and maintaining an MSDS for each hazardous substance in the facility. An MSDS should come with each product the first time it is ordered/delivered to the plant. (Note that OSHA **does not** require an MSDS for products that are considered "household consumer products" such as Windex® or Wite-Out® when used under normal conditions.) The company supplying the product is required under the HCS to "obtain or develop a material safety data sheet for each hazardous chemical" they produce or import. And, although they can be formatted in a number of ways, each MSDS needs to be in English and contain specific, detailed information, including:

- Potential hazardous effects
- Physical characteristics
- Chemical characteristics
- Recommendations for protective measures such as PPE/ventilation

The library of current MSDSs must be easily accessible to employees within their work areas during their shifts. Keeping MSDSs in a binder is a simple solution; another option is to keep the information stored on a computer located in an area the employees can readily access. The only requirement regarding MSDS storage is that the employees have immediate access "themselves."

Employee Training

Employees exposed to hazardous chemicals must receive training and information on the HCS prior to working with them. The training must emphasize items beyond a simple summary of the HCS and written program. You can use this checklist as the foundation for a comprehensive employee training curriculum.

- Location of the written HazCom program
- Location of the MSDS library
- Physical hazards of each chemical (e.g., potential for fire or explosion)
- Health hazards of each chemical (e.g., severe skin irritation, lung damage) including signs/symptoms of exposure and medical condition that can be aggravated by exposure
- Controls, work practices and PPE available for protection against possible exposure
- Procedures to follow when cleaning up dangerous spills or leaks
- Direction on how to read and understand labels, warnings and MSDSs (see **Support Docs** at www.sbcmag.info for a pdf on how to read MSDSs)

- Location of each hazardous substance in the work area
- Emergency and first aid procedures to follow if employees are exposed
- Verification that all employees understand the information given
- An acknowledgment statement to be completed by each employee receiving this information and training and kept on file in the human resources department
- Refresher training conducted annually or as hazardous substances in the facility change

Informing Contractors

The final requirement for the written plan is a method for ensuring that outside contractors, like a forklift or equipment maintenance person, work safely in the component manufacturing plant. Any outside contractor will need to be provided with a list of hazardous substances they may be exposed to while working in the plant. This should also include any precautions the contractor should take to reduce the chances of exposure and all of the rules and regulations regarding the physical and health hazards associated with each substance. And although not required by the HCS, you may also want to ask your outside contractors to sign a simple form for your records stating they've received and understand the materials you've presented. (Visit **Support Docs** at www.sbcmag.info to download a form you can use for this purpose.)

An effective written HazCom program will not only satisfy OSHA's HCS requirements, it will also provide a safer workplace. Communicating with employees about hazardous chemicals gives them the information they need to properly handle dangerous products, allowing them to take all of the necessary steps to reduce exposures and help prevent the occurrence of chemical injury or illness. Safety first! **SBC**

To pose a question for this column, email wtca@sbcindustry.com.

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Bcmc & Your Business Plan

The Industry's Launch Pad for New Products

by Emmy Thorson-Hanson

BCMC is the premier stage for your new product's debut performance.

Each year exhibitors display the latest in products and equipment at BCMC. You can count on the show floor being filled with the most recent technology and up-to-date products. Often exhibitors choose BCMC as the stage to unveil their newest machine or updated software. Last year in Columbus, there was a lot of buzz on the show floor about one new product in particular: a robotic truss assembly system from TCT Manufacturing of Mount Dora, FL.

Doug Johnson, Sales Manager for TCT, a company that specializes in automation and robotics, explained why they chose to display their revolutionary technology at BCMC. "[Robotics] was a totally new concept in truss manufacturing, so we wanted to show the marketplace what we were doing and kick-start our product." He added, "BCMC was the natural place to do this since component manufacturers attend BCMC more than any other show."

TCT was confident that the show offered the best marketplace exposure in the industry. According to a poll of 145 attendees in 2007, the company is dead on. 78.6 percent listed new equipment as one of their primary reasons for coming to BCMC, and over half also listed new software technology as a draw.

Where else do exhibitors get the chance to establish their new products with essentially their entire market present? Not only is it convenient to have everything in one location, but it also helps that attendees are able to witness the new product's operation first-hand, leaving a very impressive and lasting image, as well as generating questions that can be addressed immediately.

Attendee interest in the exhibitors is why most attendees spend the majority of their time on the show floor. Over 90 percent spent more than four hours on the show floor, which means there is almost always a steady stream throughout the hall. TCT can attest to the flow of component manufacturers stopping by its booth. "We had excellent traffic at the booth, and the interest level in the robotics exceeded our expectations," said Johnson. "We were flooded with responses afterwards, people wanted more info."

The success that so many find at BCMC is due to the fact that a large majority of attendees play a major role in purchasing new equipment. At the 2007 show for instance, 89.6 percent of BCMC attendees either make recommendations for purchasing or are the decision maker.

And you can bet the decisions will be a little tougher to make this year. "As turbulent as the market has been, it has shaken up the industry," Johnson commented. "Companies are coming out with more ways to set themselves apart and take more market share."

In order to compete in this market, companies are stepping up their game, and one way of doing it is to offer a unique service or innovative new product. "The show is the place to reveal innovative products that can create new dynamics in the market," he said.

And these new products and services will in turn act as a tool for the component manufacturers to improve their business and gain market share. Component manufacturers can look forward to Denver being a great demonstration of just how everyone is responding to this rough patch, and how they can evolve to stay on board. We look forward to seeing you in Denver! **SBC**

Exhibitors: If you are planning to introduce new equipment or services in Denver let us know! BCMC offers additional exposure and marketing opportunities for exhibitors debuting new products at the show. Contact Stephanie at swatrud@quallim.com or 608/310-6721 for more information.

at a glance

- Many exhibitors choose to reveal new products at BCMC because it is the best place to reach component manufacturers.
- Over three-quarters of BCMC attendees list seeing "new equipment" as the primary reason for attending the show.
- The steady flow of attendees on the show floor gives each product maximum exposure to its target market.



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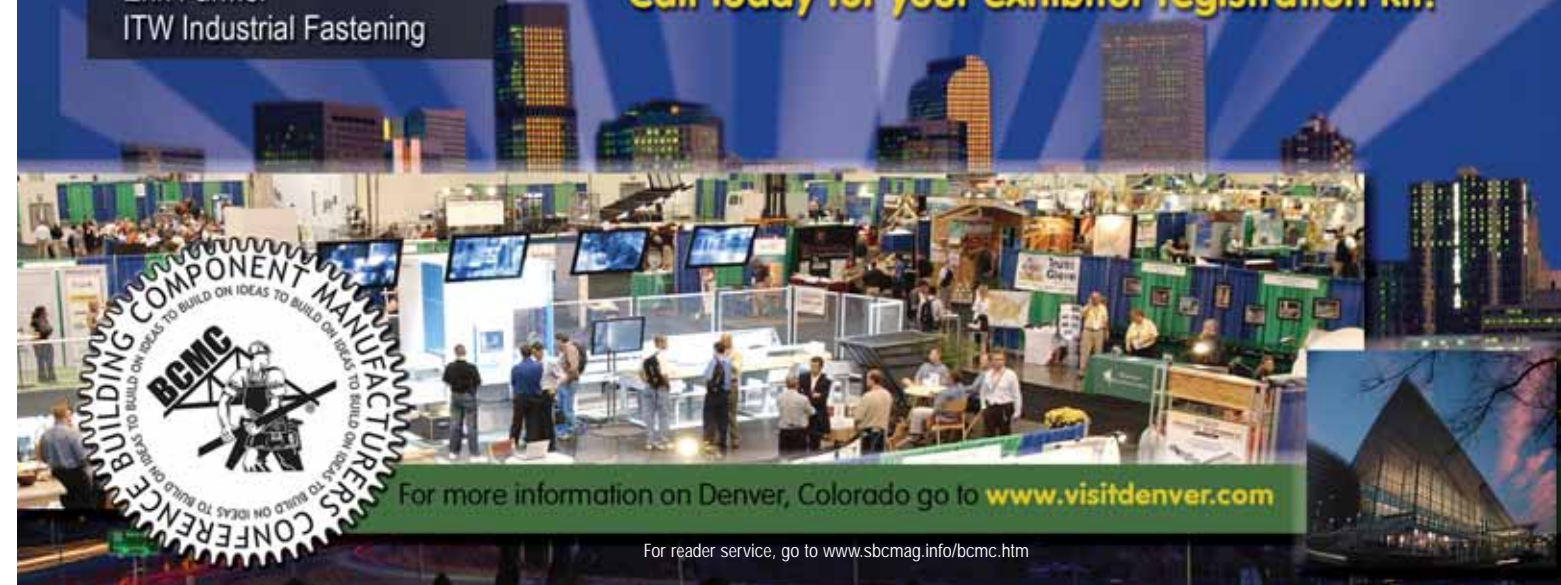
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"BCMC has been a great way for us to connect with the players in one of our key focus markets. Each year, the show floor is filled with true Truss and Panel professionals. We have been able to reach out to these parties at the show and see them again at all the outside functions. It has always been a great experience!"

Erik Farmer
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Wtca Update

Benefit from Questioning the Value of Your Association

WTCA members who become WTCA staff wish they knew then what they know now.

by Marisa Hirsch

In the 25 years since WTCA was first established, a large number of member requests for products and services have been filled. While this is what WTCA aims to do, it means that there are now so many available resources that members sometimes may not even know a particularly useful one exists. On the other hand, WTCA staff encounters these products and services on a daily basis—leading many to have an in-depth understanding of several and an awareness of almost all.

This contrast becomes especially apparent when WTCA members become part of WTCA staff. After getting more intimately acquainted with the products and services offered, they begin to realize the amount of valuable time, effort and money they could have saved at their previous jobs.

WTCA staff currently includes two people who, once joining staff, vocalized their regret at not having known about or taken advantage of some of these resources: Keith Hershey, formerly operations manager at Alliance TruTrus in Tolleson, AZ, and Larry Wainright, formerly design manager at Trussway, Ltd. in Sparta, MI. Hershey has been with WTCA since February 2006 as director of research and development and industry projects. Wainright has been a WTCA staff member since October 2007, working in technical education and as codes manager.

Tackling Technical Difficulties

Hershey said that before he came on staff, he didn't understand the value of being involved in WTCA. He was completely focused on the production operations at TruTrus, and thought that implementing programs or products would cost too much money and time and wouldn't make a difference to the bottom line.

"I did some minor things, but never really got involved with WTCA past going to BCCM shows," he said. "I had all kinds of excuses: I'm too busy, I don't need to spend the money, I'm not looking for machinery."

Wainright said that while his plant did use many of WTCA's programs (such as Truss Technician Training, ORisk and In-Plant WTCA QC) and he knew there were Professional Engineers on staff, he didn't realize they would be willing and able to assist with some of the issues he was struggling with.

"I didn't really know [WTCA engineers] were a resource for me," he said. "I knew they did training, but just the idea of calling them up and asking a technical question—I never would have thought of that. We'd called in the past and asked questions, but there are a lot of questions that I didn't know anyone here would know or care about."

For example, Wainright said it wouldn't have ever occurred to him to call WTCA for help on code issues relating specifically to Michigan. Instead, he spent significant time researching and interpreting these issues whenever Trussway salesmen contacted him with a code question. He did the research, interpreted the codes and came up with the answers—usually on his own.

"I could have called [WTCA] and talked to people who...had more research than I could have gotten on my own, especially dealing with code officials," Wainright

Technical Assistance: To view and read WTCA Tech Notes, please visit www.sbcindustry.com/technotes.php. To request help with a technical question or issue not addressed in a current Tech Note, please contact Ryan Dexter (rdexter@qualtim.com or 608/310-6744) or Jim Vogt (jvogt@qualtim.com or 608/310-6703).

said. "[Staff] talks to code officials all the time, and they have relationships with many of them. They can get in contact with [officials] and get information quickly and take care of any problems before they become issues."

Hershey also mentioned WTCA engineers as a resource he didn't know he had during his time at TruTrus. He and several others at the company spent serious time battling code issues and individual inspectors about things that are addressed within WTCA's Tech Notes. "We have policies, notes and documents in place at WTCA that address [those issues], or previous emails and statements that have been made that were consistent for the industry," he said.

Hershey also said that not being aware of WTCA resources led TruTrus to do work they didn't need to do. It took employees a long time to work through some of the code battles. "As a company, I felt we were alone battling these things because of my lack of involvement [in WTCA]," said Hershey.

Both Wainright and Hershey said that taking advantage of WTCA's engineers' expertise was the number one thing they wish they'd done at their plants.

"We didn't even think to ask questions that WTCA engineers would probably have known the answers to and had answered 100 times before," said Wainright. "We were thinking that the issues were just related to us, or Michigan, and that they were not national issues. We just assumed that."

Both of them also said they encourage current WTCA member companies to take advantage of what they didn't. "The long and short of it is, do you want to be an individual or do you want to fight [codes] with an industry stance?" Hershey said.

High Quality & Specific Programs

There were some WTCA resources that Hershey said he was aware of, but was unsure of their value and the time and money trade-off. In-Plant WTCA QC was one of these. His plant had its own QC program in place, so they stuck with it and always found an excuse not to use WTCA's. Hershey said that even though they knew there were things they really liked about the program, they talked themselves out of participating.

"I thought, why should I spend time on this QC program when it just slows me down?" Hershey said. "We were trying to maintain a program by ourselves, but run it quickly, and had not done as thorough of a job as we thought."

Once Hershey began working at WTCA and got to know the QC program better, he started urging Alliance TruTrus to seriously consider using it. The plant became WTCA QC-certified in December 2007. Don Hershey, director of Alliance TruTrus, said that he originally doubted that the WTCA QC program was superior to the plant's in-house program, and was surprised to see an increase in quality post-certification.

"When we did go with [WTCA's program], I was surprised when we improved the quality amongst our employees and did a better job monitoring plate placement,"

Continued on page 22

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at a glance

- ❑ Some former component manufacturers that have joined WTCA staff now see that there are many more programs and services available than they realized.
- ❑ The engineering, technical and code assistance offered by staff for WTCA members are among the most valuable and time-saving for CMs.

WTCA Update

Continued from page 21

said Hershey. "Frankly, we ended up doing a better job. Our quality today is better than it's ever been as far as plates."

Another resource Keith Hershey said he wishes he'd taken advantage of is Operation Safety. He said that although insurance companies frequently offer their own programs, they are often geared toward the construction industry in general and are not specifically for component manufacturing plants—such as WTCA's Operation Safety program is.

"The program, if used correctly, will walk you right into setting up a very personal safety program for your plant, and you have ongoing materials that you can work with," said Hershey.

With Operation Safety, plants can get support and guidance through WTCA and end up with a well-developed and specific program for their own operations. "It still requires follow through and doing the work, but it's more geared toward the company and isn't just a document sitting on the shelf," he added.

Taking the Time

Hershey said he recommends that people who are interested in learning more about the resources available to them should start by getting involved in their local chapters and attending those meetings. And not just attending—but participating. The link between local chapters and WTCA is what makes it possible to approach issues with a united front.

"[Attending local meetings] will bring out some of those code-related things that everybody's battling," he said. "That could help WTCA focus, and focus for your needs."

Wainright said that before joining WTCA staff, he simply didn't know what was being accomplished. "The gist of it is that, when I came here, I didn't realize the volume of work that gets done, the number of people that were here—but also the volume of things that get done and the resources that are available."

He said his main recommendation is that members take the time to find out if WTCA can help them tackle any issues they're facing. "If you've got any questions of the technical nature, absolutely call or email," Wainright said.

Hershey said that once he joined WTCA's staff, he realized he could have benefited from being a more involved member. "I always came up with that time excuse, but what I didn't realize was the time I was wasting in the plant trying to do the same stuff," he said. "To me, it wasn't worth my time or effort. But when I came to this side of the fence, all of a sudden I realized how I missed the ball there. I could have been a much better tool for my company and WTCA by being more involved." **SBC**

Additional WTCA Resources:

WTCA can help with many of your questions, problems and/or business-related issues. Please feel free to use the list below to determine who can best help you regarding many topics.

ANSI/TPI standard:

Ryan Dexter (rdexter@qualtim.com)

Building Codes/Technical:

Ryan Dexter (rdexter@qualtim.com)

Agron Gjinolli (agjinolli@qualtim.com)

Jim Vogt (jvogt@qualtim.com)

Larry Wainright (lwainright@qualtim.com)

Chapters & Member support, Truss Technology

Workshops and plant tours:

Melanie Birkeland (mbirkeland@qualtim.com)

Dani Bothun (dbothun@qualtim.com)

Cindy Kotajarvi (ckotajarvi@qualtim.com)

Trish Kutz (tkutz@qualtim.com)

Anna Stamm (astamm@qualtim.com)

Financial Performance Survey and Wage & Benefit Survey:

Melanie Birkeland (mbirkeland@qualtim.com)

Fire-related questions and Carbeck:

Melanie Birkeland (mbirkeland@qualtim.com)

In-Plant WTCA QC:

Tony Piek (tpiek@qualtim.com)

JOBSITE PACKAGES and other WTCA publications:

Brooke Kutz (bkutz@qualtim.com)

Eric Monson (emonson@qualtim.com)

Mike Younglove (myounglove@qualtim.com)

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Sean Shields (sshields@qualtim.com)

Operation Safety:

Brooke Kutz (bkutz@qualtim.com)

ORisk Program:

Libby Maurer (lmaurer@qualtim.com)

Plant Operations and Management:

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SBC Research Institute & Testing:

Keith Hershey (khershey@qualtim.com)

Michael Oftedahl (moftedahl@qualtim.com)

Dan Hawk (dhawk@qualtim.com)

SCORE:

Marisa Hirsch (mhirsch@qualtim.com)

Truss Technician Training and In-Plant Basic Training:

Dani Bothun (dbothun@qualtim.com)

Cindy Kotajarvi (ckotajarvi@qualtim.com)

TRUCK Program (driver training):

Sean Shields (sshields@qualtim.com)

Molly Butz (mbutz@qualtim.com)

WorkForce Development:

Sean Shields (sshields@qualtim.com)

WTCA website:

Emily Patterson (epatterson@qualtim.com)

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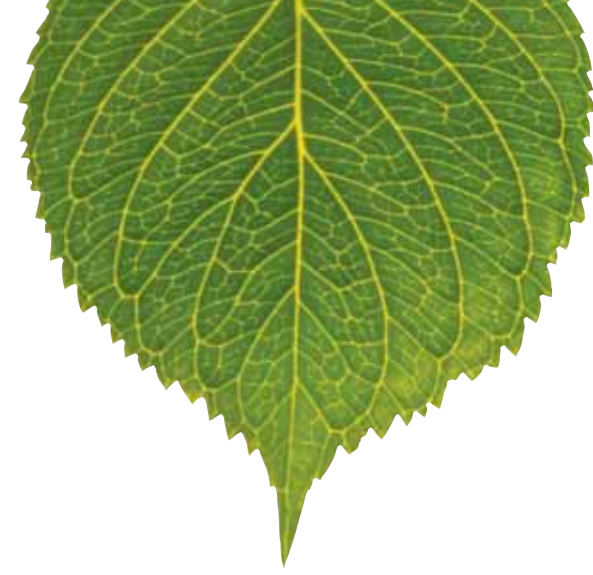
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The Big Picture

SBCRI Steering Committee Priorities: Going with the Flow of Loads

by Kirk Grundahl, PE.

"All knowledge comes from experimentation"
– Richard Feynman,
Nobel Prize winning physicist

This is our industry's first ever issue of **SBC** devoted to structural component research and testing. As many of you know, the Structural Building Components Research Institute (SBCRI) was created to give some serious thought to the engineering behind many of the critical decisions affecting our industry. The performance of our finished products has generally been based on small-scale and full scale "single element" testing. This data is then used to create computer models that produce all manner of structural building component designs through solid engineering judgments and extrapolation, deriving safe but conservative engineering design. Yet the reality is that the real answers are far from known quantities.

Several years ago, we did some QC testing that taught us much more than we expected about truss performance in the context of QC criteria. The WTCA Executive Committee believes that this is generally the case with testing; far greater industry benefit comes out of it than is expected.

The knowledge developed by WTCA, TPI and anyone else who desires to be involved in the testing that we do, will add great value to our industry and yield solid returns on investment through improvements made in:

- A much better understanding of flow of loads and internal truss flow of forces.
- Optimizing the resistance to the applied loads by our manufactured components and their related structural connectors.
- Optimizing how the system of components, as they are applied in the field, resist loads that are applied onto them.
- Integrated mechanics of materials performance data that can be used in whole house software, currently under development, to provide accurate resistance models. If we don't know how loads actually flow through a structure, it is hard to develop software that accurately designs the lateral and gravity load resisting system.

The knowledge gained by WTCA staff will have lasting industry value to critical issue problem solving, the code change process, legislative activities and **SBC Magazine**. Our membership (component manufacturers and suppliers) needs an outlet to be able to find solutions to key industry issues with which they struggle.

The article on page 30 describes a superb example of the value SBCRI brings to component manufacturers and the building construction industry in general. As you'll read in that article, SBCRI staff developed a solution to an engineering problem that traditional analysis techniques would suggest is unsolvable because a buckled truss is a failed truss from the standpoint of its ability to carry its design load. Yet through testing we devised a way for the truss to carry its design loads similarly to the way this set of trusses was expected to perform in the field from a capacity and deformation perspective.

In February, the SBCRI Steering Committee met and began to develop a plan for industry testing. What follows is a brief overview of our industry testing concepts being put into a formal test plan with estimated timelines and costs. TPI and WTCA have committed funding for this work and intend to accomplish as much as we can inside the constraints of time and our industry testing budgets.

Project #1

Our goal is to determine how to accurately measure axial forces in both tension and compression truss webs and chords. There are several ideas regarding how best to do this and we have also developed a new fixture (see figure 1) that has good potential.

If we can accurately measure axial flow of forces internal to the truss, engineering model development will be far more robust.

Project #2

Once we have the ability to accurately assess flow of loads internal to our test trusses, we will assess how the flow of loads changes as we integrate the test trusses into a system through this series of test steps:

Step 1: Use ten trusses (see figure 2) and test all of them to get precise load-deflection and lateral deformation load data.

Step 2: Systematically place each of the ten trusses into an assembly setup. We will test each truss individually using the same reference deformation (i.e., center of the bottom chord deformation) with typical OSB roof sheathing attached to the top chords and determine the applied load that it takes to achieve identical deformations.

Step 3: Test each truss using the same reference deformation with typical OSB roof sheathing attached to the top chords and a typical gypsum wallboard ceiling. Again, we will determine the applied load that it takes to achieve identical deformations.

Step 4: In Step 1 above we'll load each single truss shown in figure 2 in a series of load increments and measure the lateral forces in each web member under a series of prescribed web member lateral deformations.

Step 5: Integrate the single trusses into the system and proceed with Steps 2 and 3 and develop identical deformation load data to see what change there is in the flow of forces in the web member when it is placed in a roof system.

Step 6: Repeat Step 1 and modify the trusses by placing our axial force measuring devices in the top chord and bottom chord and one web.

Step 7: Proceed again with Steps 2 and 3 with measuring the axial forces generated in the trusses.

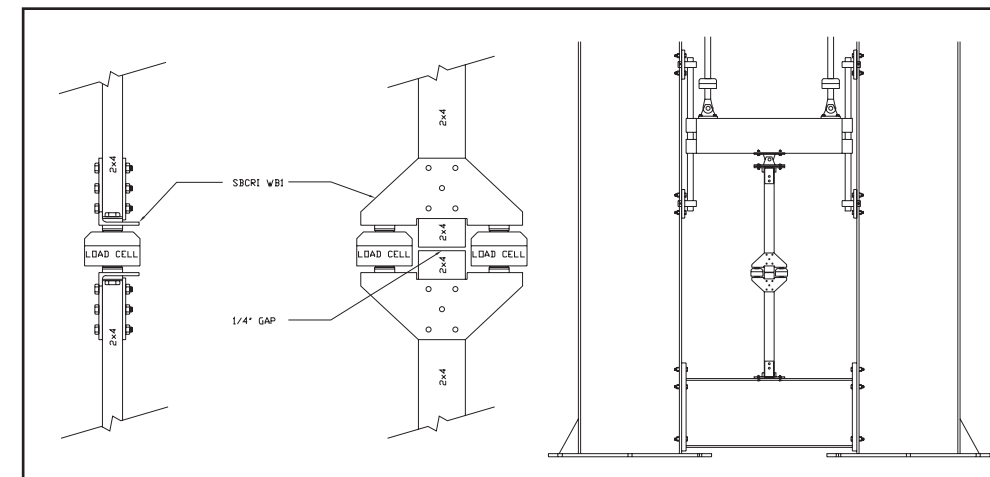
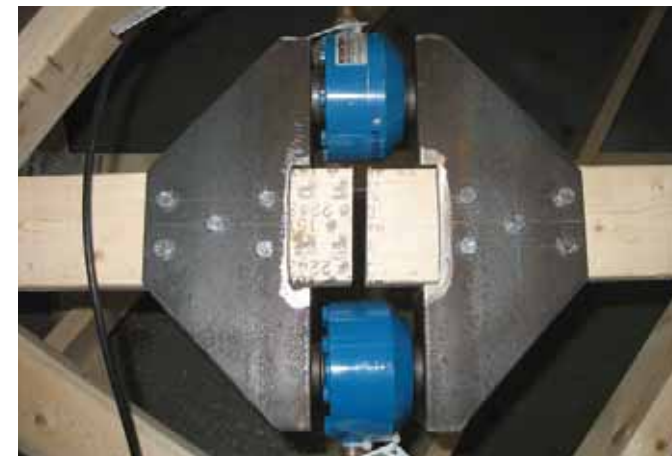


Figure 1. Design drawings for new fixture to be used in project #1. Photo above depicts the completed fixture.

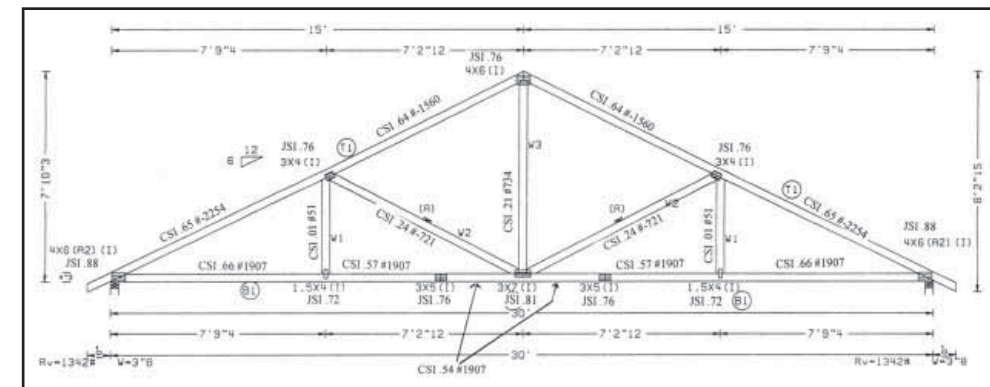


Figure 2. Design drawing for trusses to be tested.

Step 8: Finally we will use the trusses on our roof and wall assembly to evaluate the diaphragm performance of the roof trusses with an OSB and gypsum diaphragm. Our goal is to:

- Determine how the load transfers from the truss to the diaphragm and provide design data that the engineers that are designing diaphragms can benefit from.
- Evaluate the flow of loads through blocking at the heels. We'll load the end wall of the structure that the truss is bearing which is the shear collector. We'll use our assembly and load the wall perpendicular to the trusses under various load and deformation combinations. We'll evaluate the connection of the truss to the wall and the flow of forces in a standard truss and also a series of

Continued on page 28



at a glance

- ❑ Single element component testing does not accurately portray the way components resist forces and transfer loads.
- ❑ SBCRI was built to test and analyze the flow of loads through an entire structure, not just through a single component.

The Big Picture

Continued from page 27

raised heel trusses. The testing conditions will account for forces in three axes.

- Wind parallel to the truss.
- Wind perpendicular to the truss.
- Uplift and gravity forces with wind parallel and perpendicular to the trusses.

- We'll also evaluate the lateral load transfer at the truss peak where there is a pitch change. The question is: How much load can the truss plate transfer in shear from one truss to the next through the sheathing? When is blocking required?

We'll use our lateral load application system to evaluate the roof and wall assembly:

- laterally without sheathing
- laterally with sheathing on one slope
- laterally with sheathing to the second slope
- laterally with sheathing on both slopes and the gypsum ceiling
- laterally with sheathing on both slopes and the gypsum ceiling and we'll also evaluate various wall assembly bracing configurations.

Project #3

Next we will use ten parallel chord trusses (see Figure 3) and repeat Steps 1 through 7 above.

This will provide us with data on any differences between pitched chord and parallel chord truss system performance as a baseline.

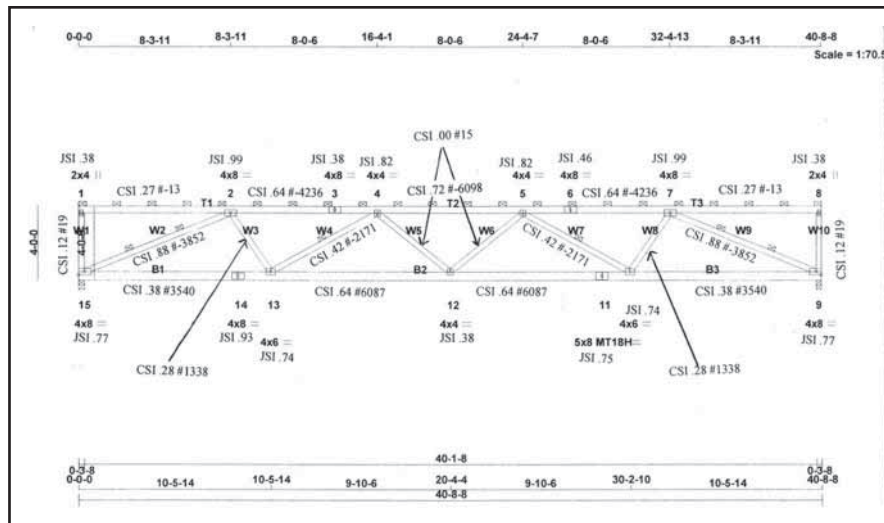


Figure 3. Design drawing of parallel chord trusses to be tested.

Since we opened in June, we have been working on getting all our systems in place to undertake single element and system testing as efficiently and affordably as possible. We are making systematic progress toward that end. Four proprietary testing projects have allowed us to test elements in unexpected and beneficial ways, which have all proven the value of SBCRI and the testing procedures that we use, particularly our ability to precisely know all the applied loads into the test structure, the flow of loads through the structure and all the loads flowing to reaction load cells. For any testing facility, accuracy of applied loads in and out is a key testing quality control standard and at SBCRI, using our total flow of loads system, we are confident that our testing QC is precise. **SBC**

For more information about SBCRI projects or proprietary testing, visit www.sbcrl.info or call 608/274-4849.

Since we opened in June...four proprietary testing projects have allowed us to test elements in unexpected and beneficial ways, which have all proven the value of SBCRI and the testing procedures that we use....

Proprietary & Industry Testing:

SBCRI is a for profit corporation that is wholly owned by WTCA, which is itself a non-profit corporation. SBCRI leases its own facility and all the testing equipment is owned by SBCRI. As is the case with WTCA, Qualtim, Inc. under a written contract manages and provides services, in terms of manpower, to SBCRI. As a point of similarity, many other organizations are managed by management companies, like the National Lumber & Building Material Dealers Association (NLBMDA), Metal Building Manufacturers Association (MBMA), WoodWorks and Wood Promotion Network. Structural components industry testing that is undertaken by SBCRI is funded jointly by WTCA and TPI under the terms of a written Testing Joint Venture Agreement. All of the test data and results from such testing is available to WTCA members. Given this organization, many have inquired about whether or not SBCRI can undertake for hire or proprietary testing, whether requested by a WTCA member or non-member. The answer is: Yes.

For those for hire or proprietary tests that are to be conducted at SBCRI, the person or entity requesting the testing will enter into a written contract with Qualtim that among other things clearly establishes that the testing and the test data and results shall be confidential and shall not be disclosed or used for the benefit of others. Qualtim will in fact contract to use efforts not to disclose such information. Qualtim will also provide and report test data and results only to the person or entity requesting the testing and such test data and results shall become the property of such person or entity and they may use the test data and results in any way they see fit in the conduct of their business.

SBCRI Testing Reports:

SBCRI, in cooperation with Qualtim, Inc., has developed what is being called our Testing and Engineering Report. Our goal in developing this report is to allow all of our SBCRI testing customers to have documentation that they can immediately use to provide product performance credibility in the markets they intend to serve. Since we have control over the contents of this analysis and reporting process, our goal is to have this Testing and Engineering Report completed within 36 hours of the successful completion of testing.

Finally, SBCRI is also working closely with IAPMO and its Evaluation Service program. SBCRI is accredited by IAPMO for performing testing of all types of structural building components for typical structural applications.

In the near future, SBCRI will also be accredited as a testing facility by A2LA, which has been a testing facility accreditation service for over 30 years. For many years they were the only accreditation organization in the U.S. A2LA is the name in accreditation. When completed, SBCRI will be a recognized testing facility for those that recognize the Asia Pacific Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (APLAC), the European Cooperation for Accreditation (EA), the Inter-American Accreditation Cooperation (IAAC), and the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC).

Our hope over time is to develop close working relationships with customers and all of the various certification and evaluation organizations around the world. We have a very unique facility that can easily serve a wide variety of needs world-wide.



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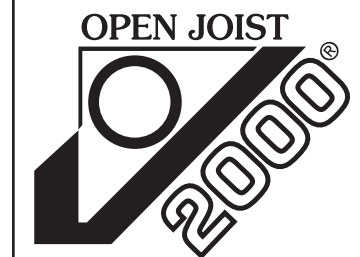
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A Whole New Bag of Tricks

by Molly E. Butz & Kirk Grundahl, P.E.

As time progresses, building codes, engineering and design programs and construction materials are becoming more complicated and more sophisticated. And although structural building components have more than 50 years of tried and true performance behind them, they are still very new in the grand scheme of construction materials and there is still much for us to understand about their performance.

This is one of the reasons that the June 2007 opening of the SBC Research Institute (SBCRI), a 5,730 sq. ft. testing facility, was a monumental event. Developed to facilitate critical testing projects, SBCRI is helping our industry acquire more comprehensive knowledge about many complicated structure-related concepts, from how systems of building materials work together in a structure to how loads flow through these structures.

SBCRI is helping us simplify many of these concepts. For instance, Figure 1 illustrates a concept that has never been thoroughly understood by the construction community. That's right—for almost 60 years now, we have been engaged in what you might call a flow of loads guessing game.

In the past, engineers have tested smaller elements to understand structural performance: one lumber member, one nailed joint, one truss plate, one truss joint, one steel member, one wall or one header.

This information was then combined into an engineering model that applied the data derived from this small scale testing performance into a much broader array of engineering design capabilities. This led to standardized tables

developed from theoretical equations that were intended to make selecting the appropriately designed member a 30-second procedure for building professionals. A good example of these "tables" are the catalog truss design drawings of the 1960s and '70s, I-joist-sized selection tables, the IRC joist and rafter tables and the AISI steel beam tables. Soon the equations making up these tables made their way into Excel spreadsheets, making them easier to use and provide for greater accuracy. However, this new portable technology still relied on the same, previously established, simplified assumptions.

SBCRI provides a way for our industry to go beyond the simplified assumptions based primarily on single element testing information. Full-scale, whole system testing will provide a far better understanding of the real flow of loads through any structural system, with less guessing. Until we understand exactly how loads flow through an entire structure, it will be impossible to precisely provide the optimal resistance to the real flow of loads. (See sidebar on page 36 for more details about flow of loads.)

Putting SBCRI to the Test

On December 21, 2007, an interesting "flow of loads" situation presented itself to SBCRI, just in time for the holidays. Until SBCRI opened, this sort of dilemma left industry professionals with limited alternatives, often followed by costly and risk averse engineering solutions.

Continued on page 32

"One test is worth
1000 expert opinions."
—Tinius Olsen

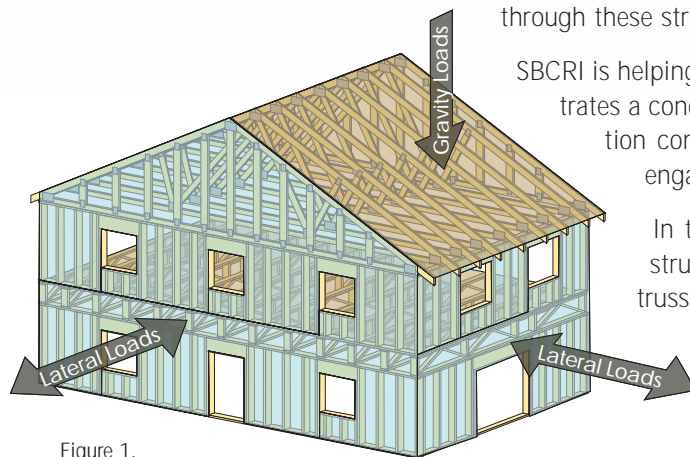


Figure 1.

at a glance

- ❑ The vast resources of SBCRI have the ability to give us more answers than ever before about the nature of structural performance.
- ❑ In one case, SBCRI helped provide a timely and cost-effective solution to a structural problem that benefited everyone.
- ❑ In this situation, the analysis done at SBCRI allowed the building to remain open to the public while a structurally sound solution was executed.



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Photo 1. Buckled top chords of supporting trusses in piggyback system resulting from a failure to install diagonal bracing in top chord plane.



Photo 2. Bottom chords of "cap" trusses are deformed to same general shape as the top chords of the supporting trusses.



Photo 3. Broken top chord joint in one of the trusses. The diagonal brace attached to the web at this joint kept the webs from moving laterally with the top chord.

SBCRI: A Whole New Bag of Tricks

Continued from page 30

This brings to mind a critical concern: What happens when a structural situation presents itself for which there are no previously defined prescriptive methods for solving the problem, or worse, the prescriptive methods of the past aren't an option? Let's take a look at how SBCRI is providing our industry with better information and a whole new supply of engineering options; truly accurate solutions that go beyond the old tricks of the trade.

Early last December, the staff at a ten-year-old commercial building contacted the building's contractor stating that the room dividing partitions in one area of their facility were stuck in their tracks and couldn't be moved into position. While attempting to correct the facility's issues by adjusting the upper tracks from inside the roof, the contractor realized that the cause of the partitions' performance problems likely stemmed from a much bigger issue.

After a brief inspection by the contractor, it was clear that numerous long-span piggyback trusses had been improperly installed in the large, middle section of the building. The portion of the supporting trusses directly beneath the cap trusses, essentially 12' tall x 40' long parallel chord trusses, had been installed without any permanent diagonal bracing in the top chord plane and insufficient continuous lateral restraint and diagonal bracing in the web member plane. In turn, this lack of diagonal bracing had allowed the top chords of the supporting trusses to buckle in the classic "S" shape. The top chords had buckled 7" out of plane on one side of the "S" and 5" out of plane on the other. (See photos 1-3.)

On December 19, the contractor, original component manufacturer and the building designer met at the site to assess the damage. Later in the week the component manufacturer called in a structural engineer to investigate the facility and analyze its structural integrity. It was uncertain what should happen next, but the outlook was grim.

The engineer's immediate recommendation was to close off the affected areas of the facility and begin working on a plan to straighten and properly restrain and brace the compromised trusses. This plan, as explained to the general contractor, would involve supporting the trusses from below and taking off of them as much load as possible. Then each buckled truss would need to be straightened back into plane, while replacing or repairing any truss that was, or would be, damaged through this process. All of the engineer's calculations indicated that the current trusses' S-curved top chords jeopardized the facility's safety and needed to be restored.

Both the contractor and the component manufacturer felt there had to be another way. In this case, at least, asking the owners of the commercial building to close down this critical area of their facility was going to be a huge financial liability. They pushed for alternatives to remedy the situation; could



Photos 4 & 5. In order to make this testing possible, once the foundation was set, each truss was manually distorted into an "S" shape to imitate the trusses installed in the building, and then braced to retain that shape.

anything be done with the original buckled trusses? Enter SBCRI.

On Christmas Eve Day, just three days after the engineer's inspection, the decision was made to use SBCRI to test a series of six trusses, constructed to simulate the trusses in the field, in order to find a better solution. In the meantime, an interim bracing plan was executed in the commercial building to keep the trusses from further deforming. With the cooperation of the original component manufacturer, the trusses were built and delivered to SBCRI by Thursday of Christmas week.

In the week following the New Year, the truss set-up, test fixturing, load cells, string pots and data acquisition were put in place and tested before the structure testing began. This can be a more difficult task than you might imagine and, for this project, was further complicated by the fact that the testing involved "S" buckled trusses. In order to make this testing possible, once the foundation was set, each truss was manually distorted into an "S" shape to imitate the trusses installed in the building, and then braced to retain that shape. (See photos 4 and 5.)

It's important to point out that there were differences between the actual components installed in the field and the trusses tested at SBCRI. However, the staff felt that they could replicate the field conditions adequately and conservatively using only the 40' truss length that was buckled, rather than reproducing the entire roof structure.

Once set up, manually-buckled and braced in the facility, the same "interim bracing plan" was implemented to mimic the field installation and testing began. SBCRI staff worked to determine the locations within the system that were most compromised by the buckled, out-of-plane configuration. Forces were applied through pneumatic actuators onto wiffle trees to evenly distribute the load; next, the loads coming into and going out of the structure were measured to ensure accuracy. Key deformations and lateral loads were evaluated along the way so the staff could fully understand how to best stabilize the six-truss test assembly. Essentially, the goal was to create a load-carrying system that would only deform vertically like a normal truss system deforms.

Practically limitless options meant that a large variety of tests could be run, from light 100-lb loads to a full design load of 18,315 lbs. Twenty-seven tests were performed in all, some 20- and 40-minute tests, others three- or six-hour shifts. Some

Continued on page 34

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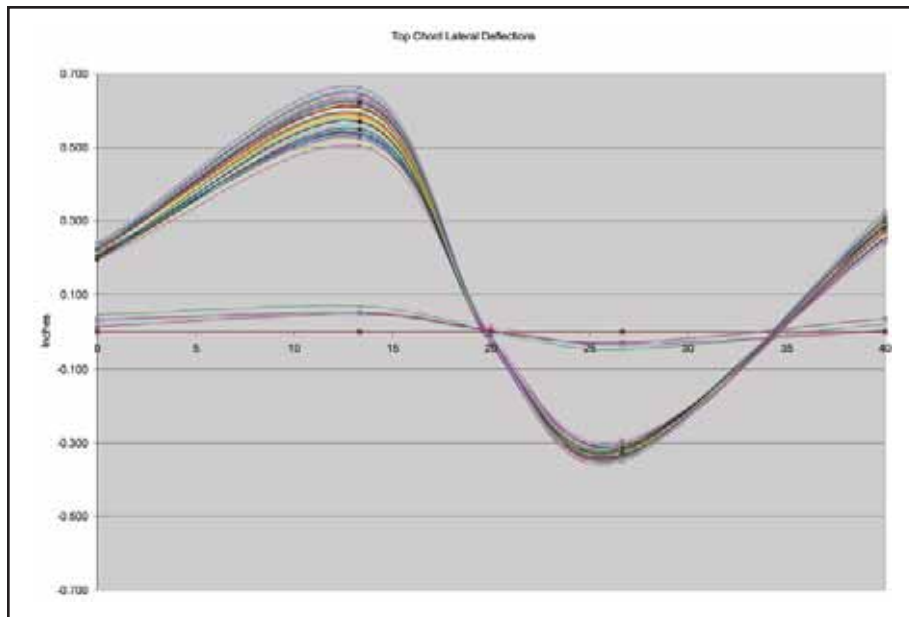


Figure 2. This chart shows the monitoring that was done of the deformations of the top chord of the truss at the deformation acquisition points of 0', 13.5', 20', 26.5' and 40'. This deformation was recorded multiple times during full design load applications over a total of more than 25 hours of load application when accumulated. The width of the series of lines is the range of deformation that this assembly experienced during the series of loading events over the 25 hours of load.

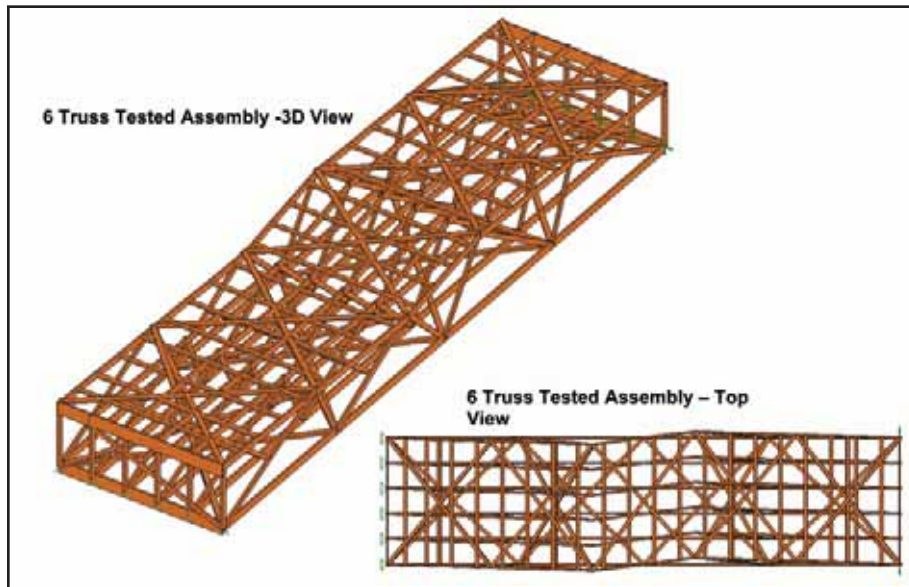


Figure 3. Top chord and web member plane bracing.

SBCRI: A Whole New Bag of Tricks

Continued from page 33

tests added small increments of weight every few minutes, while others held large amounts of load on the trusses over time.

It became clear, after the first series of testing, that the interim bracing plan was not going to be sufficient for maintaining long-term, sound, structural performance. The first in a series of new lateral restraint and diagonal bracing concepts was developed based on the load and deformation data gathered, and then another and so forth, each time refining the resistance to the loads and deformations that were being seen. The ultimate goal was to provide lateral restraint and diagonal bracing that

would stabilize the truss system in its current state while being easy to implement inside the roof. To accomplish this, over the next three weeks the lateral restraint and diagonal bracing thought process was revised, re-installed and tested twelve times. Once the final bracing plan was decided upon, the remainder of the testing focused on long-term hold tests to validate the final plan.

On January 28, 2008, the component manufacturer, along with the building contractor, made the trip to SBCRI to meet with staff and go over the results. Per the outcome of the numerous tests, the new plan would meet the goals, yet require significant diagonal bracing of the top chord and web member plane in groups of six truss sets similar to the test set-up in the facility. (See Figure 3.)

For all parties involved, SBCRI provided some eye-opening results, and as the reports were finalized in mid-February, less than two months after the initial discovery, it became clear how valuable our industry testing facility will be in the future. This isn't the first time a real-world situation like this has presented itself, but in this case the tools available in SBCRI helped to present a long-term solution that would not have been an easy or optimal option in the past. Before we had the ability to perform the evaluation needed through real-life testing, our industry professionals were limited to equations with simplified assumptions. For this unique scenario, SBCRI provided a recommendation that wrapped an accommodating and economically reasonable engineering solution around a potentially expensive and time-consuming repair.

Had these trusses been discovered a year ago without the advantage of SBCRI's testing, the most likely, best case scenario would have involved the engineer's major roof overhaul. In comparison, salvaging the original trusses saved time and money in a number of areas. SBCRI's flexible facility and staff's fast response time reduced what could have cost a small fortune to a minimum. When presented with a real life situation that raised numerous questions and concerns about how to fix an installation error in the field, SBCRI gave our industry the opportunity to put together a much better plan with a whole new bag of tricks. **SBC**

Supporting the Structural Building Component Industry's Next Generation of Testing and Growth

Thank you, SBC Research Institute sponsors. Your support helps advance the body of knowledge that will improve the structural integrity and cost efficiency of buildings, and ultimately increase the presence of building components in the marketplace.



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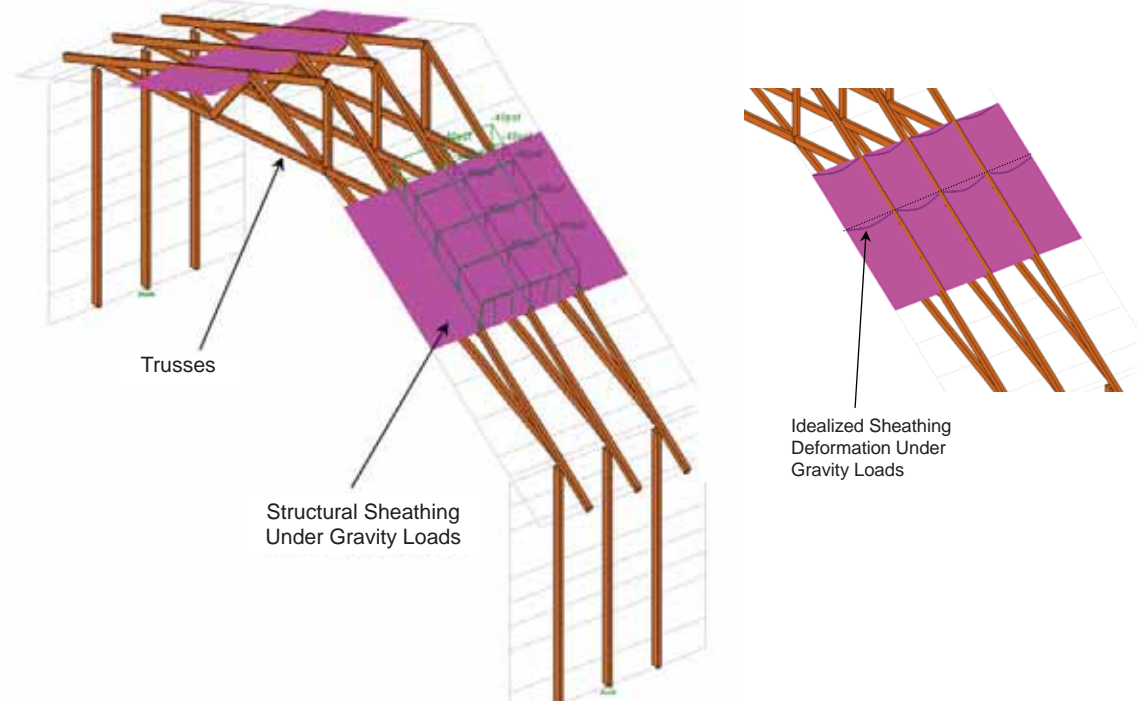


Understanding Flow of Loads

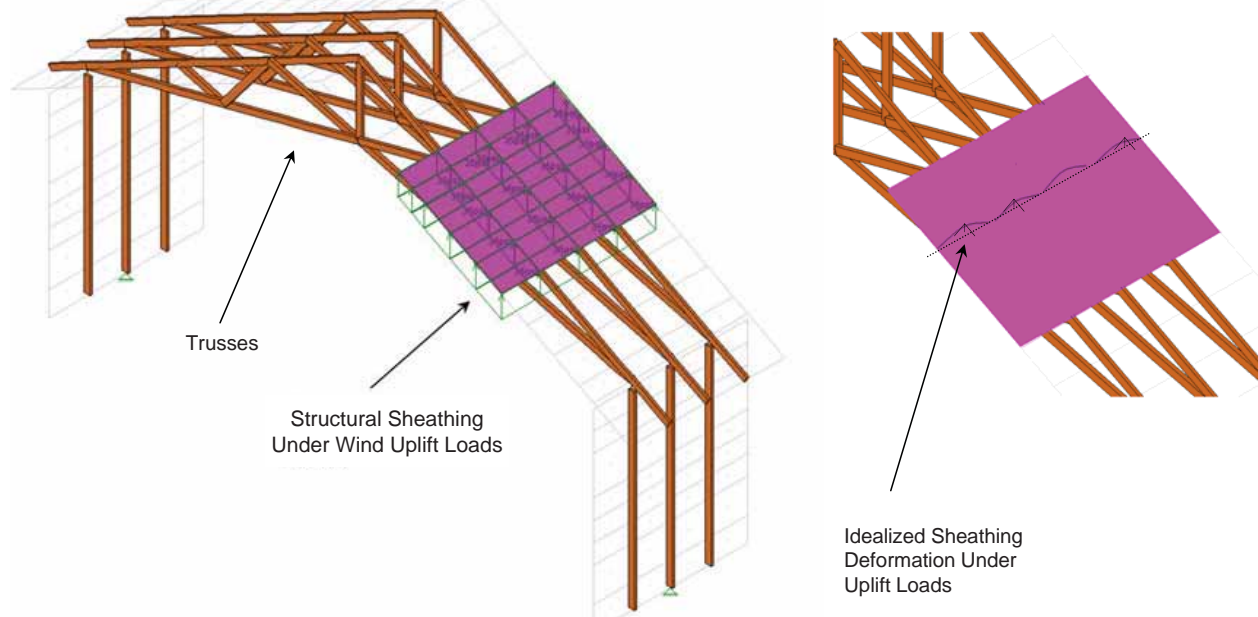
By Kirk Grundahl, P.E.

For those of us close to the SBCRI testing, there has been a metamorphosis in the way we think about engineering, especially as it relates to how loads flow through structures. The best way to understand this change is for each of you to consider the following questions:

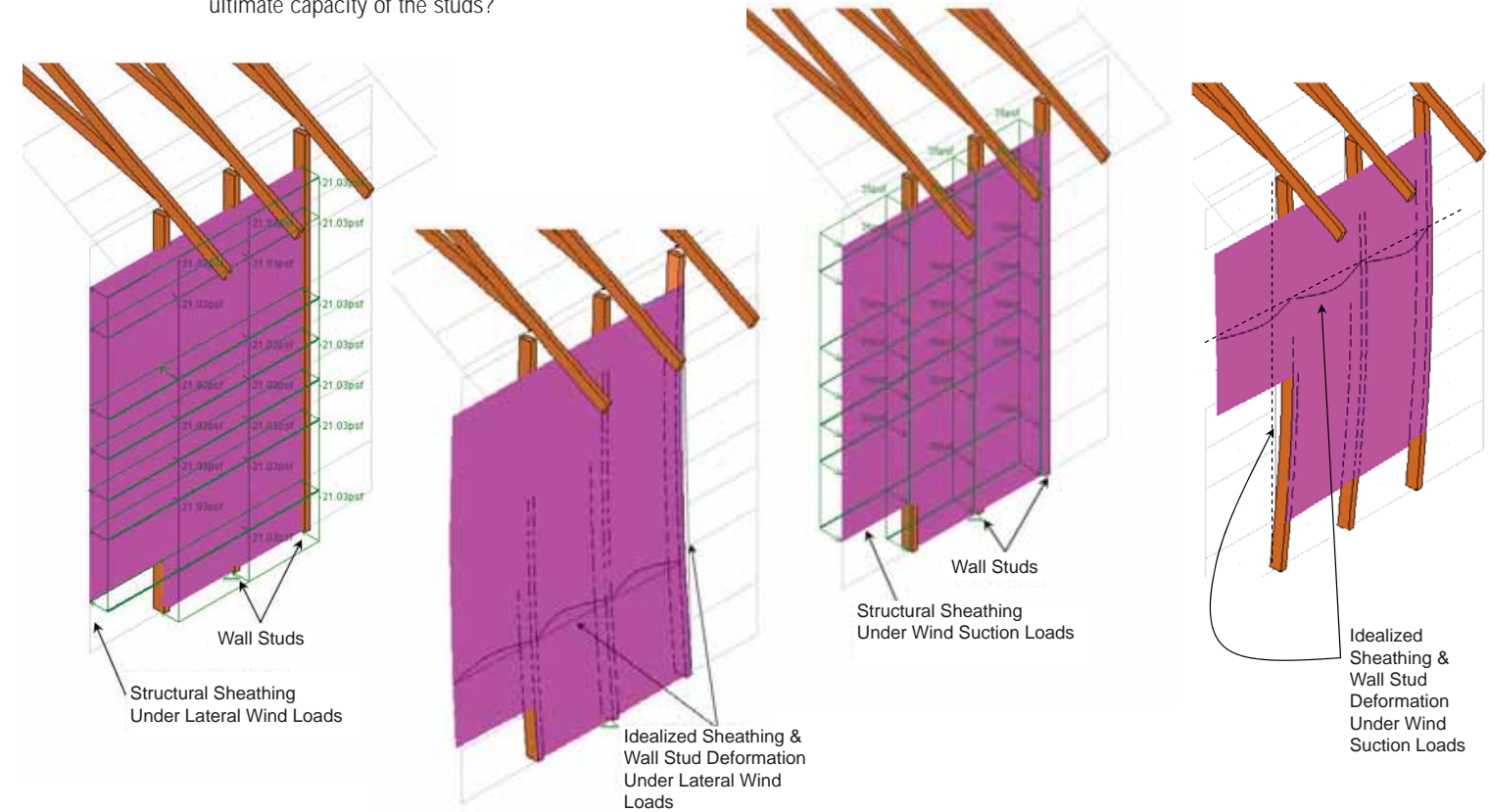
- A.** Do you believe that 7/16" OSB roof sheathing is strong enough to adequately transfer environmental loads (e.g. snow) so that the trusses will reach and exceed their ultimate load carrying capacity? In other words, will the load carrying capacity of the OSB sheathing be able to transfer enough load to define the ultimate capacity of the trusses?



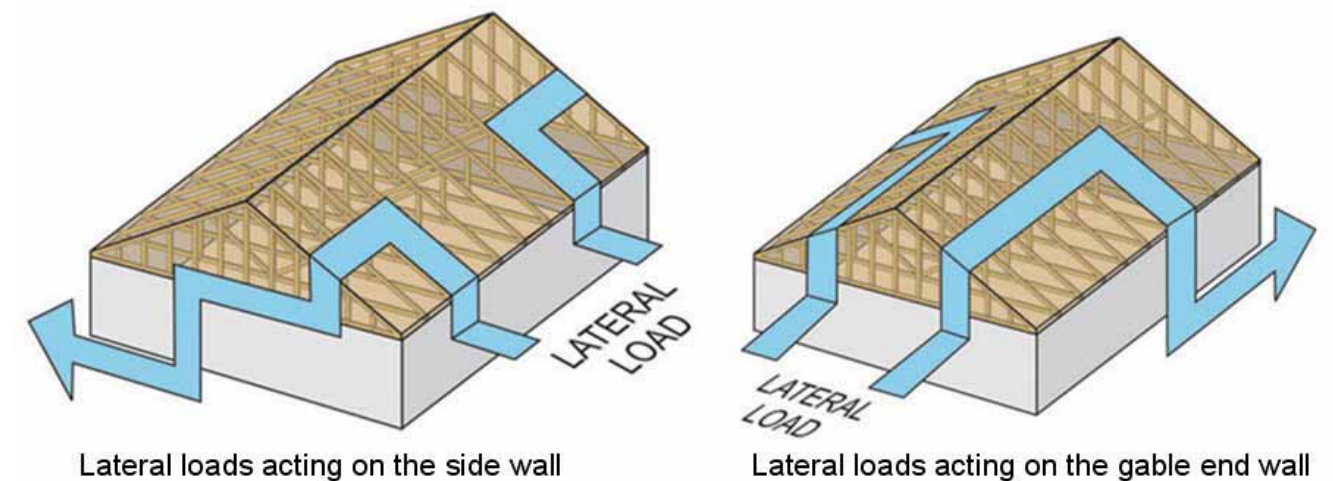
- B.** Do you believe that 7/16" OSB roof sheathing and its attachment is strong enough to fully transfer the uplift loads that are needed to be applied to it to load trusses to their uplift capacity? In other words, will the wind suction that is applied to the sheathing be able to transfer enough uplift load to fail the trusses in an uplift-related failure mode?



- C.** Do you believe that typical wall sheathing/siding is strong enough to fully transfer the wind loads so that the wall studs can be loaded to their ultimate capacity? In other words, will the load carrying capacity of the OSB sheathing be able to transfer enough load to define the ultimate capacity of the studs?



- D.** Finally, do you believe that roof trusses placed on top of the walls will have no bearing on the ability of those walls and related connection hardware to resist the lateral loads that are applied to those walls by wind?



As you can imagine, this is just the beginning of a long list of questions that can be asked with respect to the flow of loads through the real-life building system. The answers generally make good common sense, yet the engineering we perform today does not generally look at the flow of loads in a global and comprehensive manner. At SBCRI we are excited about the future because we have learned so much in such a short period of time. Stay tuned and visit us often. **SBC**

Reduce Risk & Increase Revenue: Wall Panel Plant Personnel Hiring & Training

(Part 3 of 6)

by Jim Boyle

When staffing a new plant, it's important to retain the employees you hire.

Last month in part 2 of our series we discussed several elements that should be considered during the layout and design of a new wall panel plant, and production assembly line. In part 3 of this series we will cover personnel hiring and training; and will look at the techniques that can be used to hire, train and keep the very best production, staff, and management personnel.

An employee has the potential to become either your greatest or worst business asset! Hiring the best people available is one of the most difficult aspects of any business venture. Because the success and growth of your business is dependent on the people who surround you, this difficult task should be a top priority.

Hiring the best people should be a defined process; just like any quality control process you would set up when assembling components on the production line. As a new business owner, you will quickly find that labor costs are a significant expense to your business. After tracking the costs of interviewing, hiring, training, and providing wages and benefits, your goal should be to retain employees.

As with most things, your hiring process will require a delicate balance between securing the right amount of labor and finding the right worker for a particular job. This can be very challenging! However, there are a number of hiring best practices to guide you. There are common factors to consider when recruiting your staff. Make sure you are clear on your requirements before you start, then make sure you know enough about the person you've chosen before offering them a job!

Here is a "best hiring practices" checklist:

1. Prepare a written job description—before you do anything else. This should include the following:
 - a. Function: What do you want to achieve at that workstation?
 - b. Process: What are the steps required for completing the workstation task?
 - c. Responsibilities: What additional duties will an employee be accountable for when at their workstation?
 - d. Qualification Standards: What are the necessary skills to perform the workstation task?
2. Choose how and where to advertise. Choices include:
 - a. Websites, in your shop window, recommendations from current employees, local newspapers, trade magazines/journals, staffing agencies, job fairs
3. Screen your applicants thoroughly. Have a short standard set of questions for each type of applicant (i.e., production, administrative, design, and management, etc.). Depending on the position, consider screening your applicants yourself on the telephone.
4. Once you have a list, arrange a face-to-face interview. It helps to have a colleague present at the interview so that two people can gather impressions of the interviewee, and compare them afterwards.
5. Make sure you are prepared for the face-to-face interviews with a set of questions to establish everything you need to know about the candidate. I have between 30 and 40 standard questions that I ask an interviewee covering four categories:

- a. General questions
 - b. Behavior questions
 - c. Customer service questions
 - d. End of interview questions
6. Check their references. It's amazing how many employers fail to do this!
 7. Once you have chosen a candidate, make them an offer. Ensure that all the legally binding administrative formalities are completed.

Now that you have hired your new employee, what's next? Put them on the production floor to train with a veteran employee? That's one way...but what about trying something that gives new employees greater confidence, superior beginning production skills, and a genuine feeling of belonging within your organization?

In the wall panel shops I've managed, I have required all new employees to attend classroom training before being allowed to work on the production floor. Management and design personnel are also required to complete this training. A good practice is to have a training program for each employee that covers both production methods and quality control procedures. The production portion should outline step-by-step processes and procedures required to cut, detail and assemble exterior, interior, and "specials" wall panels to $\pm 1/16"$! It should be simple to understand, and clearly define each individual cutting, detailing, and assembly process.

Once the classroom training is completed, each new employee (including management and design personnel) spends one full day observing production at each work station. At this point in the training, new employees should have a solid plant-wide understanding of the process flow; and the fundamental requirements and quality control standards expected when manufacturing wall panels! Next the new employee is positioned on his/her permanent workstation for on-the-job training with a qualified production worker.

There are many ways to approach training your new workforce. Don't hesitate to experiment with different training methods and involve supervisors and other managers to share their feedback on what works and what doesn't.

Tracking Performance

You may find that appraising the performance of new hires is helpful as a way to track progress and whether that person



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is a good fit for your operation. I hire new employees with the understanding that they are on probation for the first 90 days. During that 90 day probation period, a new employee will have three performance reviews; the first is at ten days (you should have a very good impression of an employee's performance after the first ten days), the second is at 60 days, and the third is at 90 days. The performance characteristics I evaluate are:

- Quality/quantity of work
- Safety/housekeeping
- Motivation/attitude
- Knowledge of work

at a glance

- Appraising the performance of new hires is helpful in determining whether that person is a good fit for your operation.
- Your hiring process should balance securing the right amount of labor and finding the right worker for a particular job.

Continued on page 40

Reduce Risk & Increase Revenue

Continued from page 39

- Problem solving/communication
- Attendance

If an employee is marginal at the end of their first ten days...let him/her go; don't prolong the agony and expense! The same holds true for 60 or 90 days. Remember, it costs a company too much money to keep marginal performers! Incidentally, I recommend having more detailed performance evaluation criteria for the 6- and 12-month personnel evaluations. Also, the hourly and staff employees should be evaluated on different subjects than management. Try not to miss a scheduled personnel evaluation period; the employee is generally looking forward to it, and you want to leave them with the impression that they are important to the company's success.

Compensation

Wall panel start-ups often ask about compensation for hourly employees. Realistically, there will be times when keeping your best hourly production workers may come down to wages. What can be done that is fair for everyone? Again, have a defined process for achieving higher levels of compensation! For example:

- Start everyone at the same hourly wage during the probation period.
- Set a minimum and maximum hourly wage schedule; with the maximum amount achievable based on performance.
- Eligibility for the first pay raise after the 90-day probation period.
- Subsequent raises are reviewed every 6-12 months.
- Raises are based on performance appraisals...not longevity (time on the job).
- Consider an incentive program that is linked to production volume, quality, and/or safety record.

Having a hiring, training, and compensation process that can be replicated will give you less exposure to employee attrition, less product rework in the plant, and less warranty issues once the products have been delivered to the jobsite. You will also develop a reputation in your community of being a very fair and desirable place to work.

Next month we will discuss quality control and quality assurance throughout the manufacturing plant. **SBC**

Jim Boyle is a wall panel business startup and process improvement consultant. He has worked as a wall panel plant operations manager, sales manager and general manager, and has started facilities for two separate investment groups. Boyle can be reached at 541/771-7075 or jmb@jmb-panelman.com.

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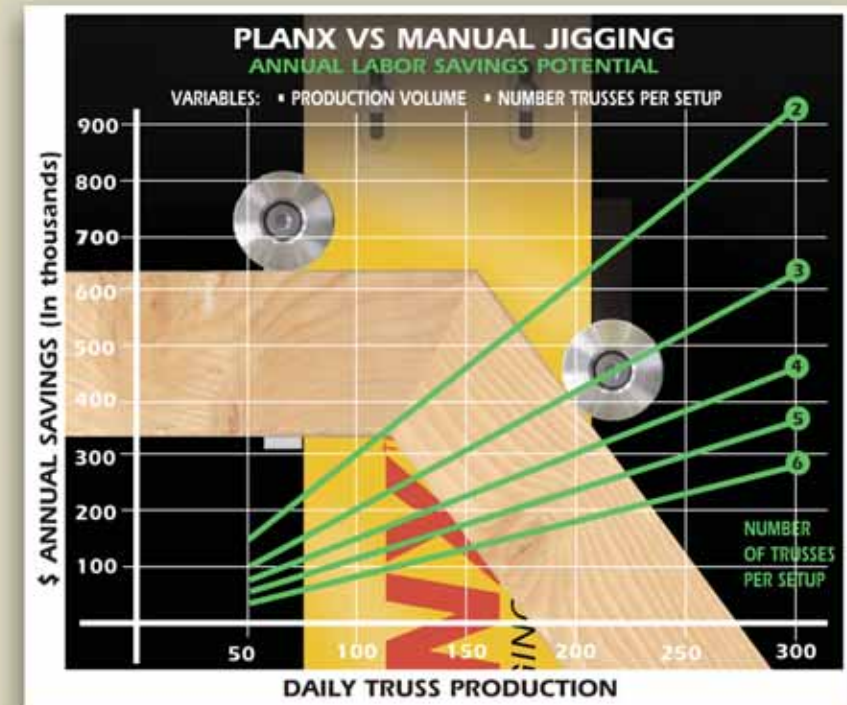
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by Emily Patterson

Plant tours are one of the most effective and fun ways to educate your marketplace.

A field trip is the highlight of just about any kid's school day. Even once we're adults, travelling to see and learn something first hand from an expert isn't just a fun change of pace, it's one of the best ways to learn about a topic. In the spirit of field trips, component manufacturers (CMs) are using plant tours to educate construction industry professionals about the structural building components industry. The second in a series on WTCA's Truss Technology Workshops (TTWs), this article looks at how CMs are bringing this TTW format to professionals and educating them about component construction by opening up their plants.

Educating Professionals

Plant tours stand out from other educational formats because tours can foster an environment to show the structural building components industry on a personal level. "They have a whole new appreciation for the level of engineering and quality that goes into trusses," said Tracy Roe of Stock Components in Hampshire, IL, about the way attendees reacted to tours that his plant has hosted.

In October 2007, on behalf of the WTCA-Illinois Chapter, Stock hosted a tour for members of the Arlington Heights Illinois Fire Academy, as the result of a Carbeck Structural Components Institute (CSCI) initiative to increase the number of tours offered to this audience. Last year, CSCI began contacting fire academies across the country to see if their members would be interested in attending a plant tour. The feedback was positive, so CSCI and WTCA worked with the local WTCA Chapters to pair interested groups with CMs.

During the tour, managers of the engineering, manufacturing, delivery/distribution and scheduling departments explained each area of the plant and addressed attendees' questions about the business. Roe said the group was particularly interested in the manufacturing process, and that the tour proved to be the perfect opportunity for attendees to see components in a new light. "They honestly came in thinking that trusses are like a commodity. They thought that someone calls up and says, 'I want some trusses' and we pull them off a shelf," said Roe, commenting that this is a common misconception about trusses.

Roe said attendees were impressed with the tour and the level of custom engineering and code compliance involved in designing and manufacturing components. It was eye-opening for the tour group. "[The firefighters] were surprised at the customization involved. Just as big a surprise was the level of quality control," he noted. Roe explained to the group that his plant is In-Plant WTCA QC certified. The Illinois Chapter also provided the group with binders of information about components created specifically for firefighters, which included a host of industry resources such as a Carbeck CD, fire service resources flyer, WTCA member listing and SBC articles.

Stock's tour also included a plant tour favorite—a plate pulling contest. This activity is a good way to get attendees involved so they can literally see and feel the strength of a truss joint. Not only is it fun, it is important to demonstrate the strength of the product to audiences who, like firefighters, tend to be skeptical toward the industry. "We took two 2x4s and spliced them together with a plate and had a hammer handy for them to try to pull them apart. That's a huge hands-on thing where they can see

What Are Component Plant Tour TTWs?

A component plant tour is a live walking tour through a component manufacturing facility led by the person most familiar with the facility—you! This makes the process easy because the person most knowledgeable, proud of and able to talk about the facility is involved. With stations situated throughout the tour, participants gain a first-hand understanding of the industry. Plant tours are appropriate for all groups because they illustrate that this is a high-tech and creative industry with a commitment to quality that fosters built construction to be what it is today.

WTCA can help your facility plan, organize and put on a successful plant tour. WTCA staff is here to help in areas such as:

- Assisting with invitations
- Recommending and compiling handout packages
- Providing ideas and resources of stations at a tour, such as WTCA's barrel burn protocol

And just like any other live TTW, truss plant tour TTWs can qualify for continuing education (CEU) or professional development hour (PDH) credit for the group you are educating. WTCA staff can help qualify a tour for the specific CEU/PDH requirements of your audience. Be sure to contact WTCA in advance to allow time to research and complete the steps to qualify your tour.

To start planning your next plant tour, contact Trish Kutz at WTCA at 608/310-6768 or tkutz@qualtim.com.

how strong the plates are," said Roe.

At the end of the tour, attendees said they saw the value in other firefighters receiving the same training. "They were very appreciative," said Roe. And reaching out to this group also proved fruitful with a request to set up permanent training for the academy. Two of the attendees, who are in charge of training for the department, raised the idea of arranging additional tours. "In a follow up conversation, they said they would be interested in making this a regularly scheduled event as part of their yearly curriculum," said Roe.

TIP: Inviting groups into your plant often opens the door for ongoing educational opportunities that put a positive human face on our industry.

Changing Minds

Component manufacturers often credit plant tours with clearing up any misunderstandings that attendees may have about components. In September 2007, the WTCA—Northeast chapter hosted a plant tour for a half dozen instructors and administrators of the New Hampshire Fire Academy. Hosted at LaValley Building Supply in Newport, NH, the tour proved to be the perfect venue to help attendees take another look at components.

"A lot of them had never been to a plant where trusses were manufactured," said Chris Smith of LaValley. The tour followed a truss's progression from a stick of lumber all the way through the shop to a finished product and then followed up



Photo courtesy of Coua Early

with a live barrel burn demonstration based on protocol developed by WTCA. The chapter sponsored lunch for the group and handed out TTW folders that included a sample JOBSITE PACKAGE, along with BCSI B-Series Summary Sheets B5 through B11.

Smith said the tour changed some attendees' perceptions of trusses, noting, "A lot were amazed at how much goes into manufacturing them." He recounted how one attendee changed his mind about trusses as a result of the tour. Early in the day, Smith approached the attendee to see how he thought the tour was going. At that point, the attendee wasn't impressed. "He said, 'This isn't anything I haven't heard or knew already,'" explained Smith. During the course of the tour, that same attendee did hear and see things that were new to him. "By the end of the day, he was one of the gentlemen who asked if we could come to his department [for additional training] because he realized that there was a lot more to manufacturing components," said Smith.

A member of his local fire department, Smith knows first hand that the information firefighters receive about trusses is often cast in a negative light due to a lack of knowledge about our industry. He credits the plant tour format for giving firefighters exposure to new and accurate information. "A lot of times you give a presentation to the group and they say, 'That's just something you staged or set up,' but when you show it in front of them, they really see it," he said.

TIP: Having an employee in your operation who is also a volunteer firefighter host a plant tour for the fire service provides even greater industry credibility.

Educating the Next Generation

While tours often focus on educating today's construction industry professionals, they can also help educate the next generation. In December 2007, Florida Forest Products in Largo, FL hosted a tour for a class of CAD students from the Pinellas Technical Education Center (PTEC), a local trade school. The class instructor, a former contractor, had worked with Florida Forest Products previously, and approached the company to

Continued on page 46



Photo courtesy of Coua Early

at a glance

- ❑ Going to see and learn something first hand from an expert is an effective way to learn about a topic.
- ❑ Plant tour attendees at an Illinois manufacturer's TTW event were awed by the custom engineering and code compliance involved in component design and manufacturing.
- ❑ A plant tour in New Hampshire led to an invitation for one manufacturer to present further component education for a local fire department.
- ❑ WTCA staff can assist manufacturers setting up a plant tour in many ways: compiling targeted handouts, providing signage or qualifying the event for CEUs.



Photo courtesy of Coval Early

Truss Plant Tour TTWs...

Continued from page 46

help supplement the class's course work on roofs.

"We showed what trusses are and how they relate to what they're learning in school," said Rick Cashman of Florida Forest Products. Since the attendees were CAD students, Florida Forest Products focused its tour on design. Cashman pointed out that this tour was structured a bit differently than tours they've traditionally done for audiences like fire-fighters because the technical school students already had a good understanding of CAD. "Normally we don't spend a lot of time in the design area. We skip to the fun stuff," joked Cashman. "I think many had some experience coming in but maybe didn't know all the details," he said, noting that one student had worked in a truss plant but hadn't been involved in design.

Highlighting how the company uses truss design software and AutoCAD, Steve Chesley, a senior truss technician and former PTEC student, showed a truss's development from design to manufactured component on the shop floor. Students were able to see how AutoCAD and the trade they are learning can be used in the business world. "We worked with our software and showed how we actually use AutoCAD," said Cashman. "We printed some shop drawings and cut sheets for jobs being built in the shop, so they could compare the sheets to the trusses being assembled." Florida Forest Products also worked with WTCA to customize a handout package for the students which included BCSI-B1, the Encyclopedia of Trusses, the How to Read a Truss Design Drawing TTB, Engineering Components for Efficient Framing and a Florida Forest Products brochure.

TIP: Introducing students to component manufacturing operations promotes careers in our industry and encourages industry knowledge so that wherever they work they will view our industry positively.

Addressing Industry Issues

While many tours aim to educate professionals about the industry and dispel any misconceptions they may have, plant tours are also a great way to address a specific issue. The Northeast Chapter and Reliable Truss & Components, Inc. in New Bedford, MA used a tour in March to open the lines of communication with a building labeling advocate. As anyone who has been involved with discriminatory truss building labeling initiatives can testify to, this is a topic that merits the attention of component manufacturers.

The idea for the tour came about last year when Chief Gallagher of the Acushnet, MA Fire/Rescue Department wrote an article in a local newspaper expressing his belief that trusses with long spans posed a greater safety risk to firefight-

ers than other types of building construction. In the article, Chief Gallagher also called on citizens to support a proposed building labeling bylaw that would require commercial and industrial buildings in the city with trusses to be designated with a specific label. The WTCA-Northeast Chapter rallied on this issue and had chapter member Doug Jeffers attend the hearing. The building labeling ordinance later passed, but the chapter pressed on, setting up the tour with Chief Gallagher to open the lines of communication and work toward building a relationship. Reaching out to the fire service is also a good way to expand the building labeling concept into one similar to the International Fire Code proposal that could enhance fire ground safety.

David Thomas of Reliable Truss says that a plant tour is just the venue for tackling a critical issue such as building labeling and giving an honest portrayal of the industry. "I'm hoping it's going to educate them about what actually goes into the whole process of making a truss that they encounter in the field," he said.

Bringing together attendees' experience with components along with manufacturers' background and expertise, plant tours give participants a much broader view of the industry. "I think the best thing, with any party, is to bring them in and physically show them what you do and what the industry does. It's not just me as a manufacturer; it's a whole industry behind what actually goes into manufacturing and the whole process of building trusses and shipping them," said Thomas.

TIP: Hosting a plant tour is the perfect opportunity to enhance dialogue and find common ground for current and future collaboration.

Resources for Hosting a Plant Tour

To help component manufacturers make the most of their plant tours, WTCA has developed a new section of the WTCA website—www.sbcindustry.com/planttour—offering information on how to host a successful tour. Presented as a how-to guide, this online tool walks members through the steps necessary to plan, coordinate and present a successful plant tour based on a tour's target audience.

"WTCA had some good ideas on the work stations and information and things other people had done," said Cashman. In preparation for his tour, Cashman reviewed a draft of the tour guide before it was added to the WTCA site.

Smith credits WTCA materials with helping his tour go so well. "There are resources out there so you don't have to do it all by yourself," he said. **SBC**

To view WTCA's truss plant tour guide, visit www.sbcindustry.com/planttour. If you have questions about plant tours, contact Melanie Birkeland at 608/310-6720 (mbirkeland@quallim.com) or Trish Kutz at 608/310-6768 (tkutz@quallim.com).

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What component manufacturers supplying commercial and residential jobs need to know before going green.

Above: The photo above is lumber certified through the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). These boards are left over from a job recently done by Shep Campbell at Glaze Components in Winchester, VA.

- at a glance**
- ❑ There are two major green standards for commercial building, and two for residential construction are in the works.
 - ❑ Before you can decide whether green is good for you, it's important to understand the standards and the system.
 - ❑ To become authorized to handle certified lumber, evaluate proper identification of certified material, segregation of certified material, processing of certified material and thorough record keeping.
 - ❑ WTCA has a new webpage dedicated to the topic of green building: www.sbcindustry.com/greenbuild.

To build green, or not to build green? That is the question facing many commercial and residential builders today. Public awareness of the effects of environmental degradation, coupled with rising energy and electricity costs and less available open land, is beginning to create a viable market for "green" buildings. The first article in this series briefly introduced some of the major green building initiatives and the various forest certification programs available in the North America. With that background, this segment will discuss what you, the component manufacturer, will have to consider doing if you want to get in on the green building market.

You've undoubtedly heard the term "Chain of Custody" (CoC). It's used extensively in association with lumber certification systems specified in green building standards. It is the reason you will need to take steps to become qualified to handle the certified lumber required by a standard. True, CoC is simple in concept, but as you'll see below, the green building standards that employ CoC are not so simple.

Commercial vs. Residential

Previously, we touched upon the three major green building standards: the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System, the Green Building Initiative's (GBI) Green Globes System and the National Association of Homebuilders' (NAHB) National Green Building Standard (NGBS).

For almost a decade, LEED and Green Globes have had viable point-based rating systems for new commercial projects. However, no equivalent rating systems for residential construction existed—until now. It appears residential green building standards are not far off, which makes this topic all the more timely for component manufacturers.

Just how timely is it? Since the first article in this series was sent to print—in early February—a residential LEED standard has been issued for public comment. Further, GBI announced in January that they are partnering with NAHB and making their proposed National Green Building Standard the residential standard for Green Globes. What does this mean? There are now two major standards for commercial buildings (LEED and Green Globes) and two being developed for residential (LEED and Green Globes/NGBS).

These new residential standards are apparently well timed. Ben Hershey, TruTrus, echoed the comments of other component manufacturers interviewed when he said, "during the current slowdown one national builder we work with is reviewing the

by Sean D. Shields

products they offer, and they are considering the idea of offering homes certified by a green building standard once the market improves." However, they will need an approved residential standard to do it.

This article is not intended to be an evaluation or endorsement of these green building standards, but it's vital to explore these standards in greater depth so you can better evaluate whether you want to get involved in green building projects.

LEED Commercial & Residential Standards

LEED is a point-based rating system. For new commercial construction, there are 69 total points available. LEED certification designations are assigned using the chart provided in the margin. (Note: some specific commercial projects, public schools for example, use a slightly different scale.)

LEED Rating System for Commercial Construction:

- 26 to 32 points is LEED Certified
- 33 to 38 points is LEED Silver
- 39 to 51 points is LEED Gold
- 52 to 69 points is LEED Platinum

First, in order to qualify for LEED designation, builders have to fulfill seven mandates, which range from preventing pollution on the construction site to providing a space for storage and collection of recyclables.

It's a long list, and none of those mandates earn them a single point toward their designation. There are only two mandatory points, which relate to improving energy efficiency beyond an established baseline. The remaining 24 points can then be earned through a wide variety of methods or materials that range from installing ultra-efficient HVAC systems to using renewable or sustainable materials in their building framework.

For new residential construction, the proposed LEED standard is very similar. Again, it is point based with 136 total points available. The various LEED certification designations are assigned using the second chart in the margin.

LEED Rating System for Residential Construction:

- 45-59 points is LEED Certified
- 60-74 points is LEED Silver
- 75-89 points is LEED Gold
- 90-136 points is LEED Platinum

The standard is supposed to measure the overall performance of a home in eight categories: Innovation & Design, Location & Linkages, Sustainable Sites, Water Efficiency, Energy & Atmosphere, Materials & Resources, Indoor Environmental

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Quality, and Awareness & Education.

While homebuilders will be concerned with all these categories, component manufacturers will likely only be involved in one area: Materials & Resources. In this regard, you have the potential to provide components that will qualify for points towards their certification designation.

Green Globes Commercial & Residential Standards

Green Globes is also a point-based rating system. It is also quite progressive in that the entire certification process for builders can be accomplished using their online questionnaire-based software. For commercial projects, the points are based on seven areas of assessment: Energy, Indoor Environment, Site, Water, Resources, Emissions and Project Management. If you're supplying one of these jobs, you will likely play a role in just the Resources category.

Their commercial standard is based on 1000 total points and certification designations are based on the percentage of points attained.

Green Globes Rating System for Commercial Construction:

- 85-100% is 4 Globes
- 70-84% is 3 Globes
- 55-69% is 2 Globes
- 35-54% is 1 Globe

The Resources portion of the Green Globes assessment is worth up to 100 points, and like LEED, is focused on renewable or sustainable materials. However, one substantial difference is that Green Globes considers the life cycle of materials while LEED does not.

As mentioned earlier, the Green Globes residential standard is

Continued on page 50



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So You Want Your Lumber Green?

Continued from page 49

now the NAHB's proposed National Green Building Standard. Powered by the same online questionnaire-based software, this standard uses criteria established through a collaborative process sponsored by the NAHB's Research Center.

This residential standard is not based on overall points, but rather point levels attained in each of seven areas: Lot Design, Preparation & Development, Resource Efficiency, Energy, Water, Indoor Environmental Quality, Operation, Maintenance and Homeowner Education, and Global Impact. For example, as the chart to the right shows, in order to obtain a Silver des-

ignation, you would have to earn ten points in Lot Design, 60 in Resource Efficiency, 62 in Energy Efficiency, etc., in each Guiding Principal. In addition, you would have to earn 100 additional points from any of the categories.

Due to NAHB's close involvement in the development of this standard, it is tied to the local green building initiatives sponsored by regional Home Builder Associations (HBAs). In cases where there is a local HBA green building standard, the HBA acts as an independent verifier or third-party agency.

Scoring Points

Assume your company has made the decision to proceed with supplying components built with certified lumber for either residential or commercial jobs. Your job is to help your customer score points. While at first glance there appears to be many ways to obtain a large number of points, in reality most builders are scraping points together to achieve their targeted green standard designation.

For example, they may qualify for 72 LEED points (three points shy of achieving a gold level) with all the work they've done on design, site development and energy use. They've maxed out those categories to where doing anything more would be cost prohibitive. So, now they're looking to obtain at least three more points somewhere else. They decide they want to use pre-fabricated roof trusses (worth one point), and if they can get them made with FSC-certified lumber, they can get two more points and with these three additional points they earn their LEED Gold designation.

Guiding Principal	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Lot Design, Preparation and Development	8	10	12
Resource Efficiency	44	60	77
Energy Efficiency	37	62	100
Water Efficiency	6	13	19
Indoor Environmental Quality	32	54	72
Operation, Maintenance and Homeowner Education	7	7	9
Global Impact	3	5	6
Obtain additional points from sections of your choice	100	100	100

With the Green Globes/NAHB residential standard, let's say a builder has 53 points under the Resource Efficiency category through other means, and their goal is to obtain the 60-point "Silver" designation. They receive three points for using pre-fabricated roof trusses, and three additional points if the trusses are made out of a renewable material like wood. That still leaves them with 59 points. However, they can qualify for four additional points if the wood is from a recognized certification program (all those listed below qualify). That will get them over the threshold with 63 points, well done.

Certiably Certified

As the previous article discussed, there are a number of recognized forest certification systems available in North America. The most significant are: FSC (Forest Stewardship Council); SFI (Sustainable Forestry Initiative Program); PEFC (Pan European Forest Certification); ISO (International Organization for Standardization); CSA (Canadian Standards Association); and ATFS (American Tree Farm System).

Under the two proposed residential green building standards, pre-fabricated components made from wood will qualify for points whether the wood is certified or not. However, when points are at a premium, builders are looking for components made from certified sources. Currently, if they are trying to obtain a LEED designation, they are looking for FSC certified lumber because it is the only one recognized under LEED. Under Green Globes/NAHB's residential standard FSC, SFI CSA and ATFS are all recognized and treated the same.

If your builder customer is going for any type of green certification, you are likely to find one of these acronyms in the job specs. Pay close attention to this prior to submitting a bid for the project.

As mentioned in the introduction, in order to provide components made with certified lumber, you have to become certified yourself. In essence, you must become part of the Chain of Custody (CoC). The CoC is a bureaucratic process that, in this case, documents the voyage of a stick of lumber from the moment the tree is cut down to the when it arrives on the jobsite as part of a component. It provides reasonable assurance to the builder/customer that the wood in the components provided is indeed from a forest managed by the approved certification process (FSC, SFI, etc.).



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In talking with various component manufacturers, it is not difficult to become certified. However, it takes upfront money (approximately \$2500 for FSC), and may require some time to adequately document your manufacturing and delivery processes.

First, the cost: both FSC and SFI contract with approved third-party agencies to monitor and preserve their CoC. For example, FSC uses a company called SmartWood to inspect and certify manufacturers using FSC certified wood. If you want to become part of the FSC CoC, you hire SmartWood. SFI is very similar, although their list of approved third-party agencies is considerably longer.

With any of the certification processes, you will be required to assess four main areas of your operations: proper identification

Continued on page 52



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So You Want Your Lumber Green?

Continued from page 51

of certified material, segregation of certified material, processing of certified material and thorough record keeping. In other words, you will have to be able to adequately document how you will differentiate certified lumber from the rest of your stock from when it arrives at your facility until it is delivered to the jobsite. Shep Campbell, Glaze Components, said, "it was simple, we already had that process in place. We just handled [the FSC lumber] like we do our fire retardant treated lumber."

Once you become certified, you will need to find a distributor or mill to provide the specific certified lumber you require for the job. Some component manufacturers who had already

participated in this process suggested this may actually be the most difficult task. Brian Johnson, Structure Systems, explained, "I come from the lumber side of things and I know typical wholesalers and mills don't have a lot of FSC inventory, so it's sometimes a real pain to find. Eight out of ten times I can find SFI, a lot of engineered wood products are SFI certified, but FSC is difficult because their requirements are so rigid."

Shep added, "For our first job we needed FSC certified southern yellow pine, but according to our lumber coop there's only one mill in the U.S. that supplies it. We were able to get the wood from them, but they were able to dictate the terms of the purchase."

For your first green building job, there is the strong possibility you will have to inform the builder there will be an extra long lead time in providing the components. "For us, we estimate that between getting FSC certified and then ordering the special FSC lumber, it would add eight weeks onto the length of time for the first job we did," said Tom Lambert, Roberts & Dybdahl, Inc.

Overcoming Challenges

The green building movement is still relatively young. The leading commercial standards covered here are still being tweaked, and the residential standards are just being introduced for the first time. There is also plenty of debate in the scientific community, as well as with end users, as to what factors do and do not contribute to making a building truly "green." In addition, there's disagreement about how heavily these different factors should be weighed in relation to each other.

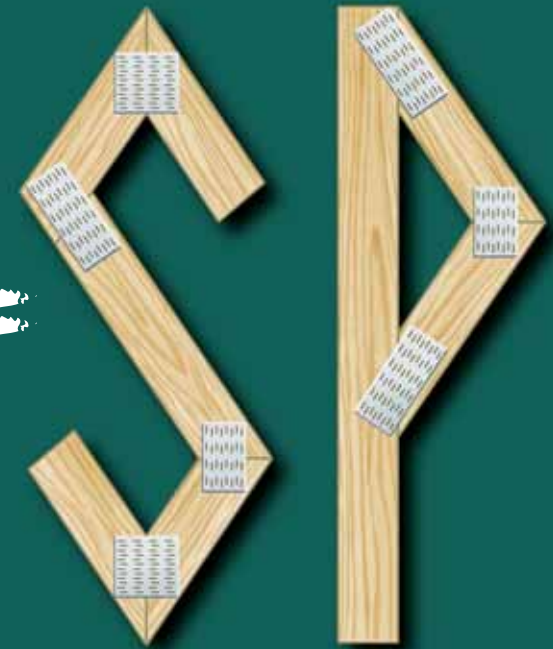
Yet, momentum appears to be growing behind these concepts, and it is a good time

to evaluate whether you want to begin participating at the leading edge of this trend. LEED and its requirement of FSC lumber currently has the greatest commercial market penetration, but the Green Globes/NAHB residential cooperative and its acceptance of SFI and other readily available lumber may have an edge among home builders.

So the ultimate question for you is: To be certified, or not to be certified. Only you can answer that question. But if you have other questions about the green building movement, WTCA has developed a new webpage devoted to the subject, you can access it by going to www.sbcindustry.com and clicking on www.sbcindustry.com/greenbuild. **SBC**

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11 Questions

with Jim James

by Libby Maurer

Get to know the new leader of ITW Building Components Group.

Fifteen years ago, Jim James went to work for a company called Illinois Tool Works (ITW). No one would have guessed back then that two of the component industry's largest manufacturing and software suppliers would one day be joined as part of ITW. Soon after Truswal Systems Corporation and Alpine Engineered Products came together in 2006, James was appointed head of the new ITW Building Components Group, a position he had unknowingly trained for his entire career. A fresh face to the industry, he has brought an equally fresh perspective to ITW.

For working at a large-scale international company, James' management style is surprisingly hands-on because he knows it works. "We can't help people in this industry if we don't get to know their businesses," he insists. Here, James talks about what will come of Truswal Systems and Alpine Engineered Products and why he feels so strongly about instigating changes that he believes will send ripples across all trades in the construction supply chain.

Here's more of my interview with Jim James.

SBC: Tell me about your background and how you came to ITW. After getting a degree, I started my career in engineering. I have worked in several different industries including metal fabrication, aerospace, construction adhesives and now component manufacturing. Previous positions include sales and various management jobs at production, sales, project and executive levels.

I've been with ITW for approximately 15 years now. My last position with ITW was in construction adhesives (drywall/subfloor adhesives). Almost two years ago, I accepted the position of Group President of ITW Building Components Group. My duties include worldwide management and coordination of the group's business units in the U.S., Canada, the United Kingdom, Asia, Australia, and South Africa.

SBC: A lot has changed in the past few years in the building components industry. What attracted ITW to the industry and where do you see us headed? The building components industry has come a long way since 1952. Yet there are still tremendous opportunities for those that are ready to take the next step and help the industry progress. ITW is leading the way by making changes that will create more overall value. We see the component industry as the driver of structural framing change.

SBC: What have the Truswal and Alpine acquisitions brought to ITW? Defragmenting the very fragmented construction industry is what attracted ITW to make a substantial investment in Truswal and Alpine. The investment will also strengthen the position of all ITW's construction products.

I will say that when we acquired Alpine our intention was to have it remain decentralized. With the steep decline in the market, we had to change our approach. While ITW doesn't usually roll-up different company operations, we combined the Truswal and Alpine manufacturing plants and sales forces to help cut costs and keep service levels high.

That said, we don't see any advantage in forcing customers to switch software brands.

Instead our programmers are cooperating, sharing the unique strengths of each brand to provide every one of our users more robust and effective software tools.

SBC: You talked about the industry being fragmented. What segments do you see coming together in near future? Everything and everyone within the construction industry can be better connected—engineers, component manufacturers, permitting authorities and so on—to eliminate waste as well as save time and money. The entire process is begging to be streamlined.

SBC: So who do you see coming together as the next step? For the whole industry to work together as one team we have to start with the design process. We see the creation of a robust 3D model that everyone can access as the critical first step. Once the 3D model is created, we can use it in every phase such as adding windows, doors, etc.—integrating the complete process.

We are not proposing a new format; we are talking about making sure everyone is speaking a common language. We believe that when we are all talking the same language, we can eliminate waste in the process. That is why we bought Ameri-CAD and hsbCAD; both have products built on AutoCAD technology.

SBC: What is the biggest obstacle to making these changes? By far, getting people to look at things differently is the biggest challenge. Change will be necessary for all of us to grow as an industry. I am confident that ITW has the talent and resources to speed the transition and limit any pain.

Our long-term outlook is very positive. Even with many manufacturers currently experiencing less demand, over the next ten years most industry analysts are predicting that starts will be strong. As part of a \$16 billion company, ITW is fortunate to have the wherewithal to endure the current downturn. We look forward to working to bring about the positive change that will position our industry to be even stronger.

SBC: How will this help the production side of our business? You saw it at this year's BCMC—from automated equipment to production information systems, data is driving everything in the office and the plant. We think the key is a common language that helps eliminate the possibility for slow-downs and errors.

SBC: So how will engineering be a part of the solution? Engineering has always been and will continue to be the cornerstone of modern construction. It just makes sense to optimize everything in a building. To do that you need to understand forces down to the most finite detail; even how a single plate tooth will affect a truss. That is our specialty. Looking at it from that standpoint, it also makes sense to optimize the engineering process of home building.

I really believe the component industry is best suited to streamline the process and have the biggest impact in this market. That's because we're the only segment of the industry that touches all other trades. You can be sure that ITW will continue to create tools to help component manufacturers provide more value. Our focus is helping to grow the total market and bring more of the process into component manufacturers' hands.

SBC: How does the Building Components Group of a big company like ITW (with 750 businesses located in 49 countries) stay focused on serving the needs of manufacturers? The management team from the Building Components Group meets three times a year for in-depth planning sessions and our CEO, David Speer, attends all of them. When we need capital for a new acquisition, he understands our business and our direction which helps us to get what we need and move quickly. Listening to our customers is key.

SBC: When you think about your future, where do ITW and the components industry fit? I entered this industry at the perfect time to help with change. I see a lot of opportunity for



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Alpine and Truswal customers to grow as we streamline construction processes. I am looking forward to being a part of the industry as we take on new and challenging issues.

SBC: It sounds like a very exciting time to be involved in the industry. This is an exciting time for everyone. When you break down the top builders in the U.S., small builders still make up the majority of the new construction going on in the country. Many small to mid-size component manufacturers are those builders' best suppliers. We can't lose sight of the importance of focusing on the future, because the market will rebound.

One big advantage of ITW coming into this industry is that we are the new kid. We're fresh and willing to invest in new things that will help this industry. We are coming at this in a nontraditional approach. We think it's an exciting time and a real opportunity for our customers. **SBC**

at a glance

- ITW formed its Building Components Group (BCG) following the 2006 acquisitions of Truswal and Alpine.
- Jim James heads the BCG, and brings a fresh perspective to the company.
- ITW believes the building components industry is poised to streamline parts of the construction process.



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WTCA CHAPTERS

Alabama Component Manufacturers Association
Shelby, AL • 205/669-4188

Arkansas Structural Building Components Association
Fort Smith, AR • 479/783-8666

California Engineered Structural Components Association
Oceanside, CA • 760/967-6171
www.wtca-calca.com

Central Florida Component Manufacturers Association
Sanford, FL • 407/323-6990

Colorado Truss Manufacturers Association
Lakewood, CO • 303/944-8436
www.ctmachapter.com

Component Manufacturers Association of the Rio Grande
Anthony, TX • 915/790-5900

Georgia Component Manufacturers Association
Oxford, GA • 770/534-0364

Inland Empire Truss Fabricators Association
Rathdrum, ID • 208/687-9490

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Acheson, AB • 780/962-4484
www.all-fab.com
edm@all-fab.com

Startek Enterprises Ltd. ▼
Vulcan, AB • 403/485-6104
www.startekenterprises.com
startek.ent@hotmail.com

TrueBeam Structures
High Prairie, AB • 780/523-4110
www.truebeam.ca
dhowie@truebeam.ca

Western Integrated Building Systems Inc
High River, AB • 403/652-1772
www.everythingprefab.com
global@platinum.ca

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www.pacificbuildingsystems.com
lorne.winslip@pacificbuildingsystems.com

Truline Truss ▼
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U.S. Components, LLC - A Pro-Build Company
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www.pro-build.com

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mawer@viceroy.com

West Coast Home & Truss Ltd
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www.westcoasttruss.ca
gsdhesi@westcoasttruss.ca

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www.all-fab.com
winnipeg@all-fab.com

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manufab@portage.net

Hospitality Homes Ltd. ▼
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www.hosphomes.com
info@hosphomes.com

Iowa Truss Manufacturers Association
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Mid Atlantic Wood Truss Council
Telford, PA • 215/723-5108

Mid South Component Manufacturers Association
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Minnesota Truss Manufacturers Association
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www.mtmawca.com

Missouri Truss Fabricators Association
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North Florida Component Manufacturers Association
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Northwest Truss Fabricators Association
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www.nwfa.com

South Carolina Component Manufacturers Association
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South Florida WTCA
Palm City, FL • 772/781-8104
www.sfwitca.org

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marcl@kenttruss.com

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garyl@locketruss.com

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www.rockettlumber.com
stephen_rockett@rockettlumber.com

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Courtice, ON • 905/434-1900
www.rockettlumber.com
harry_sillen@rockettlumber.com

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rpmagc@soomill.com

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abeurman@tandelletruss.com

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www.timberfieldrooftruss.com
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Watford Roof Truss Ltd.
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kirk@adamgroup.com

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info@clyvanor.com

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www.toituremauricienne.com
mike@openjoist2000.com
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www.modulex-international.com
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Structures Canatruss
Thetford Mines, QC • 418/338-2888
www.canatruss.com
info@canatruss.com

Structures RBR Inc ▼
Saint Anges, QC • 418/253-5454
kathypoulin@structuresrbr.ca

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Laurier Station, QC • 418/728-3449
www.ultratec.qc.ca
estimation@ultratec.qc.ca

MSR Lumber Producers Council
Helena, MT • 888/848-5339
www.msrlumber.org
msrlpc@msrlumber.org
See ad on page 13.



NAHB Research Center
Upper Marlboro, MD • 301/249-4000
www.nahbc.org

National Association of Home Builders
Washington, DC • 800/368-5242

National Frame Building Association
Lawrence, KS • 785/843-2444
www.nfba.org
nfba@nfba.org

National Lumber & Building Material Dealers Association
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www.dealer.org
nlbmda@dealer.org

Northwestern Lumber Association
Minneapolis, MN • 763/595-4055
www.nlassn.org

Southeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association **SLMA**
Forest Park, GA • 404/361-1445
www.slma.org
steve@slma.org

Southern Forest Products Association
Kenner, LA • 504/443-4464
www.sfpa.org
mail@sfpa.org
See ad on page 53.



Truss Plate Institute ▼
Alexandria, VA • 703/683-1010
www.tpinst.org
mcassidy@tpinst.org



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rscsa@hawaii.rr.com

ASSOCIATION

American Forest & Paper Association
Washington, DC • 202/463-2700
www.awc.org
awcinfo@afandpa.org

American Institute of Timber Construction
Centennial, CO • 303/792-9559
www.aitc-glulam.org
info@aitc-glulam.org

Association of Minnesota Building Officials
Fairmont, MN • 763/531-5122
www.ambo-icc.org
raxel@ci.new-hope.mn.us

Canadian Wood Council
Ottawa, ON • 613/747-5544
www.cwc.ca
info@cwc.ca

Carbeck Structural Components Institute
Madison, WI • 608/310-6732
www.carbeck.org

The Evergreen Foundation
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www.evergreenmagazine.com
jim@evergreenmagazine.com

Florida Building Material Association
Mount Dora, FL • 352/383-0366
www.fbma.org
mail@fbma.org

Housing Inspection Foundation
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hif@iami.org

MSR Lumber Producers Council
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mail@sfpa.org
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www.tpinst.org
mcassidy@tpinst.org

Membership Directory

Associate Members

As of March 13, 2008

Please note that WTCA Associate Members are categorized based on the classification notes on their WTCA Membership Application. In many cases, these companies may provide more services than that classification indicates. Look for a detailed "Associate Member/ Product Listing" in the 2008 Buyer's Guide & Supplier Showcase to be polybagged with the November issue of *SBC Magazine*.

Western Wood Products Association

Portland, OR • 503/224-3930
www.wwpa.org
info@wwpa.org

BANDING/STRAPPING/COVERS/WRAP SUPPLIER

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www.boss-strapping.com
blake@boss-strapping.com

Cordstrap USA Inc.
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www.cordstrap.net
sales.mn.usa@cordstrap.net

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www.strapandwrap.com
info@strapandwrap.com

BUILDER

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kimhanseok@gmail.com

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Houston, TX • 713/974-0183
www.gbllc.com
lrankiem@gbllc.com

Greene Building Company ♦
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www.greenebuilding.com
jgreene@greenebuilding.com

Integrated Structural Concepts
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www.integratedstructural.com
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Jack Hager
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jhager1@ec.rr.com

Miles Homes, Inc.
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info@weyerhaeuser.com

LP Building Products
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www.lpcorp.com
ben.midgette@lpcorp.com

BUILDING OFFICIAL

Code Officials Association of Alabama ♦
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www.coaa.com
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jherring@jenackill.com

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www.holtecsusa.com
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desaw@socket.net
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www.dietrichs.com
w.dancey@dietrichs.com

Eleco PLC
Ware, HS • +44 1920 443834

hsbCAD North America
Montreal, QC • 514/341-2028
www.hsbcad.com
jm@hsb-cad.com

Infinity LLC
Largo, FL • 727/403-1925
admin@contractorclasses.com

Keymark Enterprises, LLC
Boulder, CO • 303/443-8033
www.keymark.com
sales@keymark.com

Nascor International Ltd
Calgary, AB • 403/243-8919
www.nascorinternational.com
brad@nascor.com

OptiFrame Software, LLC
Greenwood Village, CO • 303/221-1200
www.optiframe.com

Progressive Solutions Inc.
Richmond, BC • 604/214-8750
www.progressive-solutions.com
info@progressive-solutions.com

Smart-Evolution Corp
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www.smart-evolution.com
sales@smart-evolution.com

CONNECTOR/HANGER MFR

Quick Tie Products Inc.
Jacksonville, FL • 904/732-9377
www.quicktieproducts.com

Simpson Strong-Tie Co. ♦
Pleasanton, CA • 925/560-9000
www.strongtie.com
sales@strongtie.com
See ad on page 81.



USP Structural Connectors
Burnsville, MN • 952/898-8679
www.uspconnectors.com
info@USPconnectors.com

CRANE MANUFACTURER

Elliott Equipment Company
Omaha, NE • 402/592-4500
www.elliottequip.com
info@elliottequip.com

National Crane Corporation
Shady Grove, PA • 717/597-8121
www.nationalcrane.com
msvoboda@nationalcrane.com

Tadano America Corporation
Houston, TX • 281/869-0030
www.tadanoamerica.com
higa@tadano-cranes.com

ENGINEERED WOOD PRODUCTS DISTRIBUTOR

American Pole & Timber Co
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www.poleandtimber.com
eric@poleandtimber.com

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Montreal, QC • 866/817-3418
www.nordicewp.com
info@nordicewp.com

Roseburg Forest Products Co.
Roseburg, OR • 541/679-3311
www.rfpco.com
bob@rfpco.com

Trim Fit LLC
Owensville, MO • 573/437-4848
www.trimfillc.com
trimfillc@hotmail.com

ENGINEERING/TECHNICAL/FORENSIC CONSULTANT

Apex Technology
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www.apextechnology.cc
mike@apextechnology.cc

Merv Aranha
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m.aranha@sympatico.ca

Arce Engineering Company, Inc.
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arceengineering@comcast

Felten Group, Inc.
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www.feltengroup.com
greg.felten@feltengroup.com

Florida Design Solutions
Apopka, FL • 407/814-2125
www.flds.cc
mdixon@flds.cc

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Fuhrmann Engineering Services, LLC
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tfengr@earthlink.net

GWZ Engineering
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Harris & Sloan Consulting Group, Inc.
Sacramento, CA • 916/921-2800
www.hscgi.com
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higrp@aol.com

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jdblock@imbris.net

John Arthur Consulting, Inc.
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Jordan Engineering Group, LLC
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rjordan@jordaneng.net

KRW Consulting Group, LLC
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www.krweg.com
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www.lbbe.com
hansb@lbbe.com

Lukoff Engineering Associates
Cherry Hill, NJ • 856/424-5206
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rich@leambc.com

McClancy Engineers
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www.mcclancyeng.com

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Phillips Wood Truss Engineering
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gary.sweatt@gmail.com

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Alpine Equipment Finance
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cwlaw@comcast.net

Vision Financial Group ♦
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www.vfgusa.com
info@vfgusa.com

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www.biomasscombustion.com
info@biomasscombustion.com

Builders Automation Machinery Co., LLC
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www.buildersautomation.com
rmitvalsky@buildersautomation.com

Clark Industries Inc.
Monett, MO • 417/235-7182
www.clark-ind.com
general@clark-ind.com
See ads on pages 49 & 75.

Commercial Machinery Fabricators, Inc.
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www.cmfstealth.com
info@cmfstealth.com
See ad on page 47.

The Hain Company
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See ad on page 31.

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info@klaissler.com
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Koorsen Manufacturing, Inc.
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www.koorsenmfg.com
koorsenmfg@msn.com

The Koskovich Co. Inc.
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www.KoskovichCompany.com
frans@omnisaw.com
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sales@lmsaws.com

Mango Tech Pty Ltd
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www.mangotech.com

PFP Technologies
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www.razerusa.com
joetuson@pfptech.com.au

Pacific Automation Ltd - MiTek
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www.pacificautomation.ca
aahmadi@pacificautomation.ca

Panels Plus
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www.panplus.com
sales@panplus.com
See ad on page 50.

Randek BauTech AB
Falkenberg, • 46/380-566500
lea@randek-bautech.se

S. Huot Inc.
Quebec City, QC • 418/681-0291
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macoser@macoser.com

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Calendar of Events

Check out WTCA's web site at www.sbcindustry.com for the most current calendar information.

April

- **16:** WTCA-Arizona Chapter Meeting. For more information, contact Chapter President Keith Azlin at 520/882-3709 or keith.azlin@us-components.com.
- **16:** WTCA-Northeast Chapter Meeting. For more information, contact Anna at WTCA, 608/310-6719 or astamm@qualtim.com.
- **17:** Georgia Component Manufacturers Association (GCMA) Chapter Meeting. **Date changed from April 16.** For more information, contact Mike Fowler at 770/787-8715 or fowler@trysssystemsinc.com.
- **17:** North Florida Component Manufacturers Association (NFCMA) Chapter Meeting. For more information, contact Anna at WTCA, 608/310-6719 or astamm@qualtim.com.
- **17:** Southern Nevada Component Manufacturers Association (SNCMA) Chapter Meeting. For more information, contact Anna at WTCA, 608/310-6719 or astamm@qualtim.com.
- **17:** WTCA-Indiana Chapter Meeting. For more information, contact Anna at WTCA, 608/310-6719 or astamm@qualtim.com.
- **17:** WTCA-New York Chapter Meeting. For more information, contact

- Anna at WTCA, 608/310-6719 or astamm@qualtim.com.
- **17:** Truss Manufacturers Association of Texas (TMAT) Chapter Meeting. For more information, contact Anna at WTCA, 608/310-6719 or astamm@qualtim.com.
- **18:** WTCA-New York TTW. Educational presentation for Westchester Fire Marshalls & Inspections Association. For more information contact Melanie at 608/274-4849 or mbirkeland@qualtim.com.
- **23-24:** Wood Research Workshop. ASCE's Committee on Wood Research is holding a 1-1/2 day workshop titled "Wood Engineering Challenges in the New Millennium—Critical Research Needs" in cooperation with USDA Forest Service in Vancouver, Canada. For more information, visit <http://content.asce.org/conferences/structures2008/PreCongress.html>.
- **29:** Mid South Component Manufacturers Association (MSCMA) Chapter Meeting. For more information, contact Dani at WTCA, 608/310-6735 or dbothun@qualtim.com.
- **30:** WTCA's Wisconsin Chapter TTW. Educational presentation for the Madison Area Home Builders Association. For more information contact Melanie at 608/274-4849 or mbirkeland@qualtim.com. **SBC**

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Chapter Corner

For more information about WTCA Chapters and how to become more involved, contact Anna L. Stamm (608/310-6719 or astamm@qualtim.com) or Danielle Bothun (608/310-6735 or dbothun@qualtim.com). Contributions to Chapter Corner, including pictures, are encouraged. Submissions may be edited for grammar, length and clarity.



Chapter Spotlight

The Iowa Chapter's Carbeck Challenge

by Anna L. Stamm

Since 2002, the Iowa Chapter has challenged all WTCA Chapters to match its annual contribution to the Carbeck Structural Components Institute and many chapters have done just that, including Arizona, Illinois, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Northwest, Southern Nevada, South Florida and Texas. The initial contributions started at \$1,000, but in 2006, Iowa upped the ante to \$1,500, Northwest countered with \$2,000, and Southern Nevada raised the bar with a \$5,000 contribution.

Even with the downturn this year, Iowa is committed to continuing its annual Carbeck contribution and urges all chapters to do the same. For 2008, Iowa has pledged \$2,000.

Now more than ever, Carbeck is gaining recognition in the fire service community for its exceptional educational material. Several requests come in each month via the Carbeck website (www.carbeck.org) for copies of the "The Fire Performance of Wood Trusses" CD. Interest in truss plant tours is gaining momentum too, with several scheduled each month. Some of these tours are combined with actual fire demonstrations, too.

Furthermore, Carbeck's educational material continues to expand. Soon there will be another educational presentation which you may review and forward, based on (and made possible by) the Iowa Chapter's Live Fire Demonstration – Test Burn and Truss Plant Tour, held in conjunction with WTCA and the Fire Service Training Bureau in Ames and Story City, IA last August. There were over 100 attendees including the engineering research group at Harvey Mudd College (in Claremont, CA). The data it obtained from instrumenting the floor assembly demonstrations will be used in a new Truss Technology Workshop (TTW) presentation as well as several technical articles. The Iowa Chapter generously sponsored this event, too!

For chapters that have contributed in the past, we don't need to tell you about the value of Carbeck. To chapters that have not yet invested in Carbeck, please discuss an annual contribution at your next chapter meeting. The value of providing accurate information on the performance of our products to fire professionals across the country cannot be overstated. More information leads to better understanding, and it can only help protect and grow the market for structural building components. **SBC**

Chapter Highlights

Colorado Truss Manufacturers Association

The new Colorado Chapter website, www.ctmachapter.com, is live. A standing invitation to join the chapter for a meeting is posted: CTMA meets quarterly on the 2nd Tuesday of March, June, September and December at the Four Points Sheraton in Denver unless otherwise noted. Join the chapter and your first dinner is free! A copy of the chapter's membership recruitment brochure is posted on the homepage, too. The industry news ticker from SBC was included also to give visitors a taste of current headlines. Chapter members have been encouraged to review the site and pass along any additional requests.

The Colorado Chapter is pleased to announce that 2008 marks its 10th anniversary! A special logo was designed for review by the members at the chapter's March meeting: CTMA (1998–2008) Ten Years and Growing Strong. This will also be posted on the chapter's website once it is approved.

In 2008, CTMA is looking forward to being the host chapter for BCMC on October 1–3 in Denver. While you're checking out the Mile High Performance of exhibitors, be sure to stop by the WTCA booth to chat with CTMA members. The chapter is looking into sponsoring a coffee break during the show's educational sessions, too. You're also welcome to attend one of this year's quarterly chapter meetings on June 10, September 9 and December 9.

Southern Nevada Component Manufacturers Association

The Southern Nevada Chapter's January meeting featured several updates from the chapter's Code Committee. Committee Co-Chair Rich Menge, PE, reported that there are no new changes to the IBC/IRC 2006 code, and that the Clark County TG12-06 issue remains unresolved as to two wet seals being required for revisions whereas only one wet seal is required on the original submittal. The chapter will continue to seek clarification on TG-12. Committee Co-Chair Bill Bolduc, PE, informed the group that Clark County's old ICC Evaluation Services reports, Legacy 1994, are outdated but remain on file and are at the discretion of the building official when applicable. Also among the updates: the Structural Engineers Association of Southern Nevada (SEASoN) has been inactive for about a year so it may be disbanded. An update was provided regarding ANSI/TPI 1 consensus development work on Chapter 2, which is being rewritten to clarify design responsibilities of permanent bracing among other key responsibility items; changes in the draft document may be viewed online. The new California building code is basically the same as IBC 2006, but some additional documentation may be required when shipping product into that state. The Nevada Engineering Board remains opposed to electronic seals.

The chapter was also looking forward to its participation in EduCode, a conference held by the Southern Nevada Chapter of the International Code Committee (SNICCC). The event was directed toward building

officials in Clark County but permission for Nye County officials to attend was being sought. The chapter was allotted an all-day session on understanding trusses from the ground up and arranged for Jim Vogt, PE, of WTCA staff to teach the seminar. Members expected that it would help building officials determine what merits their attention on an inspection and what does not.

Truss Manufacturers Association of Texas

The Texas Chapter welcomed international author and educational speaker Bryan Dodge to its winter membership meeting. Recognizing that the most valuable assets a company has are its employees, Bryan delivered a presentation designed to help members enhance their productivity and well-being. The chapter thanked him for an excellent evening.

At the meeting, the 2008 chapter officers were introduced to the membership. Paul Johnson moved to the role of Past President and Gary Walls took on the job of President. Garry Tebbens moved up to Vice President, Donald McDavid took the Treasurer's position and David Marquez became Secretary. The complete list of Board members is posted on the chapter's website at www.tmatchapter.com.

For the fourth year in a row, TMAT won the #1 Recruiting Chapter category in the WTCA Annual Membership Drive and kept the traveling trophy. Having also won the title in 2002, the chapter's name is engraved five times on the marble monolith. Members have until August 31 to meet their recruitment goals so that TMAT can capture the title for another year and not have to surrender the trophy to another chapter.

The 2008 TMAT meeting dates have been set. The next meeting will be held in conjunction with a golf tournament at River Crossing Golf Club in Spring Branch on April 17. The summer membership meeting will be held on June 19 and the fall golf tournament will be held on September 18.

Wisconsin Truss Manufacturers Association

The Wisconsin Chapter held its first quarterly meeting of 2008 on February 13, with a nice turnout. Chapter President Steve Johnson opened the meeting and welcomed new and existing members. The treasurer's report and the past meeting minutes were approved. Next, the chapter discussed old business items such as a couple of outstanding letters with the State of Wisconsin code council, new code updates, membership list cleanup and the Green Bay fire fighter death and corresponding meetings and training from that incident. New business included upcoming WTMA-sponsored training programs. This is an exciting time for our membership to be involved in the organization promoting our industry as a unified group with great exposure for our members. WTMA will be presenting training in Baraboo for the Wisconsin Association of Home Inspectors on March 13, in Madison for the Madison Area Builders Association on April 30, and for the Arnold & O'Sheridan Consulting Engineers on July 9. WTMA welcomed potential new members Steve Szymanski of Truss Systems and Dennis McCarthy of Best Built Construction Components. The next meeting will be held in Madison on May 8 at WTCA with the goal of having a speaker from the WI Code Council update members on the latest code changes and then tour the new SBC Research Institute testing facility.

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Please see our website for further details and past meeting notes at www.wiwtca.com.

Wood Truss Council of Michigan

At their January meeting, Michigan Chapter members agreed upon a comprehensive plan for educating the marketplace. WTCM will prepare binders of WTCA publications for building designers. Members will be able to hand-deliver or ship the customized binders to the architects, structural engineers and designers that they contact. The customized binders will contain copies of the JOBSITE PACKAGE, Metal Plate Connected Wood Truss Handbook, the design responsibilities document, and of course a list of WTCM members. A cover letter will explain that assistance is only a phone call away, so building designers will be encouraged to contact chapter members for more information. The chapter agreed to cover the cost of 325 binders; if requests significantly exceed that amount, members may be asked to help subsidize the cost. A survey was distributed to collect member input on contact lists and quantities, so the results will be discussed at the chapter's next meeting on April 10.

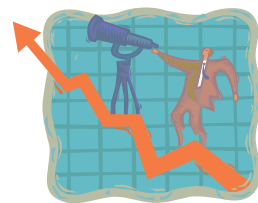
The members in attendance also agreed upon a memorial for long-time Chapter President Phil Luneack. A scholarship fund will be established at Alma College in his name and the chapter will contribute to funding it. If you would like more information on the scholarship fund, please contact Anna at WTCA.

Finally, the chapter changed its regular meeting schedule. Moving the dates ahead by one month, chapter meetings will now be held on the second Thursday of January, April, July and October.

Wood Truss Council of the Capital Area

The Capital Area Chapter's February meeting promised an economic outlook for our industry and the guest speaker was Stephen Fuller, Dwight Schar Faculty Chair and University Professor, George Mason University. Dr. Fuller is Director of the Center for Regional Analysis at the George Mason School of Public Policy and his areas of expertise include economic forecasting, regional economies, urban planning and public management. Chapter members were encouraged to bring additional members of their sales and management teams so that they

Continued on page 78



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	Dec	Jan08	Feb	
All Items	.4(r)	.4	.0	3.1
All Items Less Food & Engery	.2	.3	.0	2.3

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Unemployment Rate

Nov	4.7%
Dec	5.0%
Jan08	4.9%
Feb	4.8%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Producer Price Index - Customized Industry Data

An inflationary indicator published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics to evaluate wholesale price levels in the economy.

Engineered Wood Mem. (exc. truss) Mfg.	Annual07	Jan08	Feb08	Truss Mfg.	Annual	Jan08	Feb08
Eng. Wood Mem.	93.7(P)	89.1(P)	90.4(P)	Truss Mfg.	111.0(P)	108.8(P)	108.4(P)
Primary Products	111.1(P)	105.6(P)	107.1(P)	Wood Trusses	107.3(P)	104.7(P)	104.1(P)
Other	111.0(P)	105.3(P)	107.3(P)	Primary Products	107.3(P)	104.7(P)	104.1(P)
				Secondary Products	100.4(P)	98.1(P)	100.4(P)

(P) = preliminary Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Producer Price Index General

% changes in selected stage-of-processing price indexes

Month	Total	Ex. Food & Energy
Nov	2.6(r)	0.2(r)
Dec	-0.3(r)	0.2
Jan08	1.0	0.4
Feb	0.3	0.5

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

U.S. Prime Rate

Month	2008	2007	2006
Nov 1	-	7.50%	8.25%
Dec 1	-	7.50%	8.25%
Jan 1	7.25%	8.25%	7.25%
Feb 1	6.00%	8.25%	7.50%
Mar 1	6.00%	8.25%	7.50%

Source: Federal Reserve Board



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Industrial Production Index

The industrial production (IP) index measures the change in output in U.S. manufacturing, mining, and electric and gas utilities. Output refers to the physical quantity of items produced, unlike sales value which combines quantity and price. The index covers the production of goods and power for domestic sales in the United States and for export. It excludes production in the agriculture, construction, transportation, communication, trade, finance, and service industries; government output, and imports. The IP index is developed by weighting each component according to its relative importance in the base period. The information for weights is obtained from the value added measures of production in the economic censuses of manufacturer and minerals industries, and from value added information for the utility industries in Internal Revenue Service statistics of income data. The weights are updated at five-year intervals to coincide with the economic censuses. The current index base year is 1992. (r= revised)

	Nov	Dec	Jan08	Feb
Industrial Production Total Index (% change)	0.4	0.2(r)	0.1	-0.5
Capacity Utilization Total Industry (%)	81.5	81.6(r)	81.5	80.9

Source: Federal Reserve Board

CM News

STOCK BUILDING SUPPLY OPENS NEW LOCATION IN VIRGINIA

Stock Building Supply, the industry's second largest pro dealer, recently opened a new location in Yorktown, VA. The 10,500-square-foot facility will serve commercial contractors with hollow metal frames and doors, wood doors and commercial hardware. Staffing will include an architectural hardware consultant and a certified fire door inspector. The Yorktown location, which opened on March 3, will be the 299th U.S. branch for Raleigh, N.C.-based Stock.

"I look forward to introducing Stock Building Supply into the Tidewater area and enhancing our relationships with builders and contractors in this market," Jim Herrmann, general manager for Stock, said in a written release.

Stock's most recent financial figures, released by parent company Wolseley on Jan. 21, showed a loss of \$49.3 million for the five-month period ending on Dec. 31, 2007. Sales for fiscal 2007 were reported at \$4.6 billion. [Source: www.homechannelnews.com, 3/4/08]

Housing Market Index 2007-08 (HMI)

The HMI is a weighted, seasonally adjusted statistic derived from ratings for present single family sales, single family sales in the next 6 months and buyers traffic. The first two components are measured on a scale of "good" "fair," and "poor," and the last one is measured on a scale of "high," "average" and "low." A rating of 50 indicates that the number of positive or good responses received from the builders is about the same as the number of negative or poor responses. Ratings higher than 50 indicate more positive or good responses.

Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan08	Feb	Mar
33	30	28	24	22	20	19	19	18	19	20	20

Source: National Association of Home Builders

PROBUILD ACQUIRES NORTHEAST PANEL & TRUSS AND COLLINS TRUSS SYSTEMS, INC.

Denver-ProBuild Holdings, the nation's largest supplier of building materials to professional contractors, recently announced it has purchased the assets of Northeast Panel & Truss, LLC and Collins Truss Systems, Inc., manufacturers of roof and floor trusses and wall panels. Terms of the sale have not been disclosed.

Kingston, NY-based Northeast Truss is a full service manufacturer of truss and wall panels. Founded in 2000, the company has built a successful distribution network into the Hudson Valley, a market ProBuild currently serves from 10 locations.

"This acquisition allows ProBuild to extend our truss capabilities to national and regional builders in our Hudson Valley markets," explained Buddy Ables, president of ProBuild's East region. "We're committed to maintaining the high standards of service established by the Northeast Truss team." Ables added, "An important part of this opportunity is the retention of the key leadership of Tom Christensen and Robert Namias".

"Our people are looking forward to becoming an important extension of the Hudson Valley ProBuild team, an organization that will provide our employees with long-term growth opportunities," said Ed Collins, owner of Northeast Panel & Truss and Collins Truss Systems.

Northeast Panel & Truss was founded in 2000 by Edward Collins. One year later, daughter Sandra Collins joined in the business. Neither intends to remain with the company after the sale. Throughout Northeast Truss's existence Ed and Sandra Collins excelled in supplying components and engineered wood products to professional builders, remodelers and contractors in the Hudson Valley region. [Source: denver.dbusinessnews.com, 3/5/08]

Visit www.sbcmag.info for additional industry news!

Housing Starts

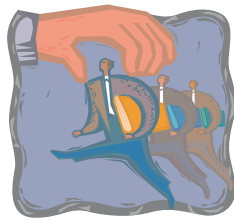
February housing starts decreased 0.6% to 1.065 million (SAAR). The decrease in total starts was muted by the strength in multi-family housing, which was up 14%, while single family activity fell 6.7% to 0.707 million (SAAR). Permits continue to slide, down 7.8% to 0.978 million (SAAR), the slowest pace in almost two decades.

U.S. Housing Starts				
Millions - Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rate (SAAR)				
U.S. Totals	Feb	Jan (rev.)	% Change	
Starts	1.065	1.071	-0.6%	
Permits	0.978	1.061	-7.8%	
Single Family				
Starts	0.707	0.758	-6.7%	
Permits	0.639	0.681	-6.2%	
Multi Family				
Starts	0.358	0.313	14.4%	
Permits	0.339	0.380	-10.8%	
Starts and Permits By Region:				
NE	Starts	0.102	0.141	-27.7%
	Permits	0.103	0.129	-20.2%
MW	Starts	0.159	0.159	0.0%
	Permits	0.142	0.182	-22.0%
S	Starts	0.555	0.534	3.9%
	Permits	0.503	0.544	-7.5%
W	Starts	0.249	0.237	5.1%
	Permits	0.230	0.206	11.7%

Analysis & Outlook: Year over year, single family starts are down 40%, while permits are down 42%. Single-family activity is at its lowest point since 1991. Inventories are at 10+ months and growing as foreclosures continue to increase. As the housing correction continues, we hear more about the possibility of a recession, or that one has already started. The key to the U.S. economy is consumer spending because it makes up 65-70% of our GDP. Anything that impacts what is spent on consumption or investment can and will impact the economy. Things like the subprime mess are now spreading to other parts of the financial sector—note the recent Bear Stearns and Carlyle Group implisions. We are seeing a classic "credit crunch," where lenders will not lend unless there is very little risk involved. The Fed lowered the Fed funds rate 75 basis points on March 19, which will help some, but it doesn't address the "credit risk aversion problem" that permeates the market today. As noted by Mark Zandi (*Dismal Scientist*, 3/11), "until the mortgage markets and financial markets stabilize, the economy will struggle." He also noted that we will need further movement by Congress and the Bush Administration to deal with the worsening foreclosure problem and bring some semblance of "confidence" to the credit markets. I would agree, but I'm not sure how they will do that without a massive transfer of risk/liability from the private sector to the federal government. For housing to return to normal, we need the financial and credit markets to settle down—that will help to ease the foreclosure problem which is needed to bring inventories into a better balance. Better balance will help mitigate the fall in home prices, and that also mitigates the foreclosure problem. In my opinion, the financial/credit markets won't settle down until the federal government (the Bush Administration) takes the lead and addresses the problem in a forthright and decisive manner. I believe they will take more decisive action in the future (the tax rebates won't even pay for the added cost of gasoline according to Dr. Zandi); they are the ones in the best position to do this. **SBC**

This housing starts report is provided to SBC on a monthly basis by SBC Economic Environment columnist Al Schuler. Visit www.sbcmag.info for more economic news.

For an in-depth explanation of this summary, go to <https://ism.ws/ISMReport>.



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Chapter Corner

Continued from page 75

could gather an accurate regional economic outlook to use as a backdrop for business planning. Indeed, the attendees commended Dr. Fuller on his excellent presentation and an afternoon well spent.

Also on the agenda, the members reviewed the chapter's plans for providing educational presentations and copies of BCSI for the Maryland Building Officials Association (MBOA) and the Virginia Building and Code Officials Association (VBCOA). Seminars were being scheduled and several chapter members had committed to delivering the presentations. With assistance from WTCA staff, the chapter was also researching the best ways to become included in the information dissemination processes of MBOA and VBCOA so that we can continually forward important educational and technical information from our industry to the building officials in their jurisdictions. More information and details on the educational presentations would be determined by the chapter's next meeting on April 9.

WTCA—Arizona

The Arizona Chapter was pleased to sponsor two educational events for the Structural Engineers Association of Arizona (SEAoA) in January. Held in Tucson and Phoenix, the lunch and dinner meetings, respectively, drew many engineers from across the state. Featuring Kirk Grundahl, PE. of WTCA staff, the focus of the presentations was "Current Issues with Structural Building Components (SBC)" and they included: ICC code development, ANSI/TPI 1 Chapter 2 Design Responsibilities, Structural Building Components Research Institute (SBCRI) testing facility and system testing, and an open discussion of SBC-related applications, design and/or code issues.

At the brief chapter meeting following the second presentation, the members quickly addressed any outstanding chapter business. The chapter board will investigate the options for doing a mailing to building designers, to offer educational information, publications and an SBC subscription. It was also agreed that the chapter elections would be moved to the next meeting on April 16.

WTCA—Indiana

The Indiana Chapter kicked off the new year with a great chapter meeting in January. Held at Timberland Components in Brazil, IL, which focuses on custom-built wall panels and roof trusses, the members were treated to a tour of the facility after the meeting. Topping the

agenda at the meeting was the chapter's action plans involving the WTCA JOBSITE PACKAGE. In December, a sample JOBSITE PACKAGE was mailed to all component manufacturers in Indiana and the chapter continued to work with WTCA to create an informational sheet for framers. The objective of this flyer is to more effectively communicate the value of the JOBSITE PACKAGE and encourage framers to review the contents and follow its recommendations. Once all comments have been received from the chapter meeting, a final draft will be prepared; the flyer will be made available to all WTCA members.

The Indiana Chapter is also making name for itself when it comes to marketplace education. Members discussed the groups that the chapter is pursuing to offer presentations and/or truss plant tours, and they were encouraged to suggest additional groups that they would like to contact. The chapter's education committee is planning a large event for building officials and the fire service in Indianapolis on July 17 to coincide with the chapter's summer quarterly meeting. Details for this event will be discussed at the next chapter's next meeting on April 17.

WTCA Ohio Chapter Association

This winter, the Ohio Chapter continued providing educational information to the marketplace by fulfilling requests from building inspectors and fire officials from several jurisdictions across the state for copies of BCSI and the Carbeck CD. The chapter also sponsored a presentation and booth at the Northwest Ohio Building Officials Association 18th Annual Joint Conference on February 10–12 in Toledo. Though turnout was lower than usual at the conference, feedback on the seminar, "Introduction to the Structural Building Components Industry: A Metal Plate Connected Wood Truss Inspection Checklist," taught by Stan Koehlinger, PE., remained strong. In addition to the general information on structural building components, the building officials appreciated learning more about bracing. Many good questions were asked at the seminar and the attendees were reminded that the chapter is available to deliver additional presentations for contractors and building inspectors when needed. The chapter expects to return to the conference again next year when it is held in Cleveland.

For more information, about WTCA Chapters, contact Anna L. Stamm (608/310-6719 or astamm@qualltim.com) or Danielle Bothun (608/310-6735 or dbothun@qualltim.com). Contributions to Chapter Corner, including pictures, are encouraged. Submissions may be edited for grammar, length and clarity. SBC



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Simpson Strong-Tie Showcases New Possibilities at BCMC



There was much to be discovered at Simpson Strong-Tie's BCMC booth this year with several new and expanded products for the Component Industry. Visitors to the booth saw first hand how these products offer new possibilities for building faster, safer or more cost effectively.

"The BCMC Show is a highlight for us every year," said Tawn Simons, National Manager for the Engineered Wood Industry at Simpson Strong-Tie. "It's the perfect opportunity to showcase our new products and applications for the coming year, giving attendees a sneak preview of what's ahead. In addition we also enjoy networking with our valued customers and industry leaders at the Show and this year was no different. Even with the slowed building economy, the quality of attendees made the Show a big success. We already look forward to next year's BCMC in Denver!"

A few of the products Simpson Strong-Tie showcased at BCMC were:

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Steel Strong-Wall® Shearwalls
Simpson's booth reached new heights this year thanks in part to its new Steel Strong-Wall shearwalls for two-story stacked and balloon framing applications.

If you missed BCMC or would like more information about Simpson Strong-Tie products, visit www.strongtie.com.

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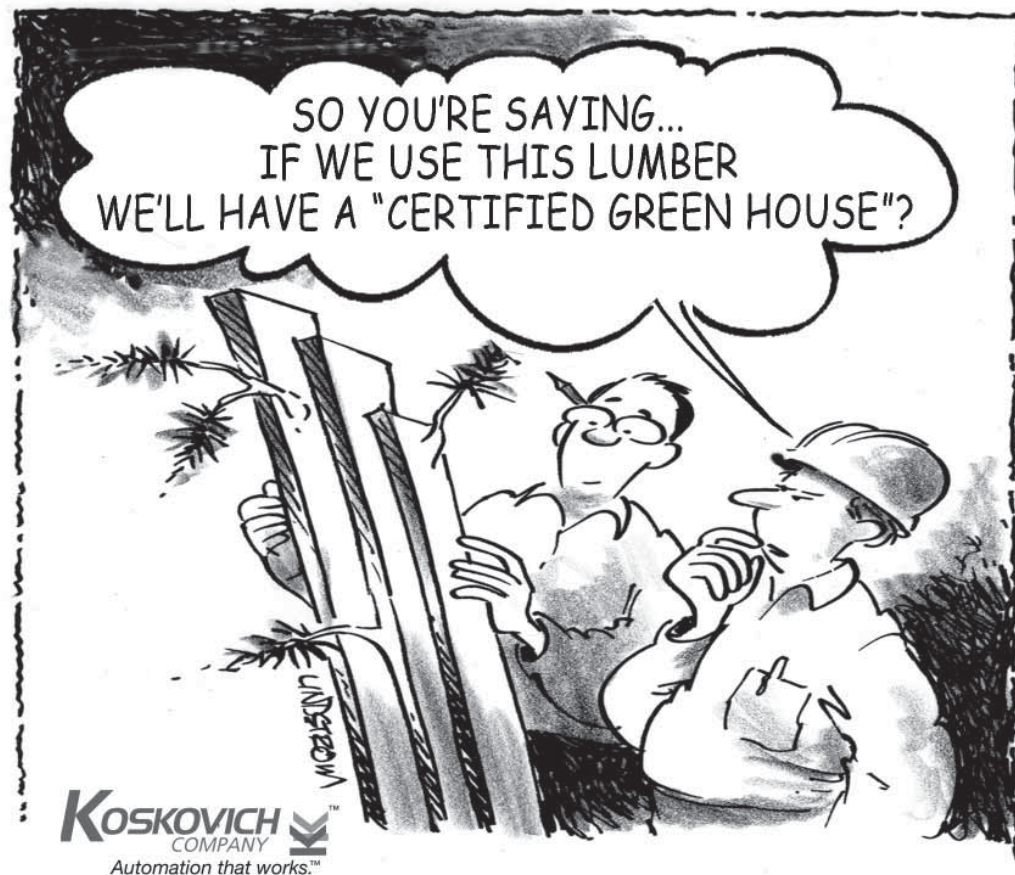
Snow Removal

This winter has dumped record-breaking amounts of snow in some parts of the U.S., with loads threatening the structural integrity of some buildings. Clearing the snow off the roof is a necessary measure to ensure the structure doesn't become damaged under the enormous snow load. WTCA member Jason Groft of R&R Components in York, PA snapped this shot of a seemingly brave man precariously clearing the snow from a roof at a jobsite. We think the cold might have gotten to his head!



Saw Blade Storage

Another member, Bill Arnott of McGinnis Saw Service in Dewey, AZ, went to a customer's component shop to pick up these saw blades to be serviced. It appears that someone tossed the blades onto a pallet and then lumber was piled on top (to keep the blades well protected of course!). McGinnis said, "This is not how you store your spare blades for a change over." **SBC**



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