

# STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE

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## Director's Message



### The Business of WTCA by Kirk Grundahl, WTCA Executive Director

From your perspective, what business is WTCA in? From the perspective of those who are close to WTCA's operations, our work really boils down to three primary activities: industry-wide risk and safety management; customer, marketplace and member education; and looking toward the future to provide knowledge about the growth and diversification opportunities available to our industry. We strive to look at each of these activities from a single point of view—through the eyes of structural building component manufacturers and sellers. There is no other group whose sole purpose is to view the world in this specific manner.

In this issue of SBC Magazine we focus on the risk side of the structural building components industry. Following are the risk management activities in which one or more of our members have asked staff to become involved:

#### MOLD

This is an emerging issue, which our industry must watch carefully and, in my opinion, react to in a similar manner. The market norm could otherwise become whatever any single truss manufacturer is willing to do when a question is raised regarding mold on trusses. In other words, the first truss plant that remediates mold could set the stage for a market, region or even the entire industry. If there was ever a time to take a detailed look at your contracting process, this is it. Remember that everyone in the industry is best served if you ask your customers what they want, and explicitly define your scope of work with respect to mold. Following is a simple customer quote to illustrate my point:

- 1) "State-of-the-art" truss package for \_\_\_\_\_ exclusively per component manufacturer scope of work as defined in WTCA 1-1995 = \$X.
- 2) "State-of-the-art" truss package for \_\_\_\_\_ exclusively per component manufacturer scope of work as defined in WTCA 1-1995 and mold free at time of delivery = \$X multiplied by a percent mold treatment mark- up, or \$Y.
- 3) "State-of-the-art" truss package for \_\_\_\_\_ exclusively per component manufacturer scope of work as defined in WTCA 1-1995 and with a mold free five-year warranty = \$X multiplied by a percent mold treatment mark-up, plus the cost of insurance to cover the warranty period, or \$Z.

Which choice do you think your customer is going to make from these options? At least the choice is theirs and perhaps you have been compensated for the risk of incurring the cost of remediating mold. Obviously, for all of your written contracts, you will need to consult with your attorney to ensure that your contract language complies with your state laws.

## QC TESTING

The work that we have done in revising the ANSI/TPI 1 QC standard has been based on improving your ability to more accurately and easily conform to the industry standard. The natural by-product of this work is greater reliability and reduced risk.

## PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING

Because we are an industry that produces a sophisticated engineered product, we are subject to the possibility of close scrutiny by the professional engineering community as well as engineering regulatory boards. This year we have dealt with multiple engineering related issues in Missouri, Florida and Texas. So far, all of the outcomes have been favorable to our industry. Much of the reason for our success is the hard, behind-the-scenes work of WTCA Legal Counsel >Kent Pagel, WTCA's Management, Technical Business and ERC Committees, WTCA staff and our Truss Technician Training™ and WTCA QC™ programs.

Additionally, our work in Florida has allowed us to develop a relationship with the Chair of the Board of Professional Engineers. This is extremely valuable to our industry, as the Chair has committed to working with us to rewrite what was a very convoluted law regarding the use of a single sealed cover sheet for engineering design drawings. (This law is yet another requirement imposed on our industry in Florida without the broad experience and wisdom available from our industry. See the ["President's Message"](#) for Mike Ruede's discussion on the Florida Building Code.) Further, we will work together on moving the sealed engineering process into the digital age by using electronic seal and signature technology.

## DESIGN RESPONSIBILITIES

If you are not integrating the language found in Standard Design Responsibilities in the Design Process Involving Metal Plate Connected Wood Trusses into your jobsite packages and contracts, you are missing a great opportunity to accurately define your scope of work, which will help everyone understand their responsibilities. Very soon we will have a new version of this document completed that dramatically improves upon the current version and directly benefits everyone.

## EDUCATION

Our industry has a duty to educate and advise. As everyone knows, it is impossible for us to dictate how others are going to carry out their work. We can only dictate our own responsibilities. Given this, we have integrated information into a package of tags and TTBs that seeks to completely fulfill our duty to advise.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

Finally, we manage risks by taking on national legislative issues and working with our chapters on regional and local issues that impact all of our businesses.

Just like you cannot compel your customers to handle, install and brace your products in a specific manner, WTCA staff cannot compel our industry to create a plan using the tools that the best minds in the industry have created to help you protect yourself from the everyday risks that you face. If you choose to consider this type of approach, you will be able to take advantage of your association's resources to protect and grow your business. We strongly believe that this will pay for itself a thousand times over the next time your customer makes a mistake and wants you to pay for it. We'd love to assist you in developing your business risk management package—just let us know what you need from us and we will help!

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[SBC HOME PAGE](#)

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