

# STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### Changes to the In-Plant WTCA QC Program by Tony Piek

It seems that lately there have been a lot of interesting changes going on in the structural component industry. The Truss Plate Institute has recently unveiled its updated ANSI/TPI 1-2002 standard. WTCA has introduced web-based Truss Technician Training, a completely revised 3rd Edition of the Metal Plate Connected Wood Truss Handbook, an updated ANSI approved Design Responsibilities (ANSI/TPI/WTCA 4-2002) document, as well as numerous Truss Technology in Building brochures. With all these new products, we have received many questions. The following is an example.

#### QUESTION:

I heard that a new quality standard is coming out soon and that the In-Plant WTCA QC program is being upgraded. How is it going to be different and what is the timeline involved?

#### ANSWER:

I will answer the timeline question first. The new quality standard, found in ANSI/TPI 1-2002 Chapter 3, was approved March 25, 2002 and became available to the public last month at BCMC. Numerous articles in SBC Magazine have been written on the new quality standard. Since late July, work has begun in order to update the Wood Truss Council of America's Quality Control program (In-Plant WTCA QC). Version 4.0 of the In-Plant WTCA QC program is currently in the works. Simultaneously, plate suppliers throughout the country are working on upgrading their design software.

To refresh your memory, the plate suppliers' goal is to have the software print out a Joint QC Detail on an 8½" x 11" sheet of velum. This detail will include a position tolerance polygon, a plate rotation tolerance, and a dimensioned circle for each member from which one could figure out the amount of ineffective teeth. The plate suppliers' goal is to have this done prior to May 1, 2003, the implementation date of the new standard, and then in turn, we would like to have our new program up and running soon after. How will the program differ? The new standard will allow inspections to be performed at a more efficient rate without compromising the integrity of the data. The challenge on the software end is to make the program fit exceptionally well to the new quality standard. To do this, new inspection forms have been created based on our research and feedback and suggestions from component manufacturers. In the actual software, we want to maintain quality data collection, but make the program more efficient and effective for the user.

The new In-Plant WTCA QC software is easier to navigate and extremely user-friendly. In order

to accomplish this, we needed to speed up the data entry process. We've included more option boxes and shortcuts to more quickly select data and save time. For example, every lumber combination in the new program will already be in the software. This will eliminate time spent entering lumber types and tracking down lumber properties. The new software accepts lumber substitutions for a lumber type whose properties are equal to or greater than the specified type. Similarly, plate size upgrades are also accepted. This eliminates a great deal of time going back to the Truss Designer to see if indeed the lumber substitution or plate substitution is acceptable.

Besides making it easier to enter inspections into the computer, we are working to improve reporting methods and to provide more report features. Additionally, we are updating the manual to provide more information, with the goal of making it easier to understand how the program works. In conclusion, we are very excited about the In-Plant WTCA QC Version 4.0 program. Our goal is to make the new WTCA QC version easier to understand and more effective. The updated software will be a valuable tool for tracking quality at truss plants. Please contact [wtcaqc@woodtruss.com](mailto:wtcaqc@woodtruss.com) with any questions or comments regarding the In-Plant WTCA Quality Control program or new software.

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To pose a question for this column, email us at [faq@woodtruss.com](mailto:faq@woodtruss.com). To view other questions visit the [WTCA website](#).

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