

### WTCA Update

[www.woodtruss.com](http://www.woodtruss.com)

## Bracing Technology: The Old & the New by Carl Schoening, WTCA Membership Committee Chair

I want to take the time to share an opportunity. If you are thinking, "Truss bracing isn't new and there certainly isn't any technology involved," then keep reading; you may find there is something to be learned on both issues. Many component manufacturers don't get worried about truss bracing until there is a jobsite accident or until someone in a uniform serves them with an order to appear. Occasionally, there are those who attend a WTCA member function or chapter event and learn the importance of proper truss bracing and what the role of the component manufacturer is in this area of our business.

### A NEW STANDARD

The long awaited new standard, ANSI/TPI-2002, is complete and in effect as of May 1, 2003. The new standard has a lot of very positive changes: improving the cost effectiveness of truss design and manufacturing overall and enhancing the ability of all component manufacturers to more reliably safeguard assets. You may not know however, that there is also an industry project committee (BSR/TPI 3) working on a revision of DSB-89, the Recommended Design Specification for Temporary Bracing of Metal Plate Connected Wood Trusses. DSB-89 is the design basis for industry temporary bracing documents. The project committee has been charged with updating and expanding DSB-89 to include permanent bracing design along with updating the existing temporary bracing design information based on the new knowledge that is now available from research on this topic. This will form the basis for a new bracing standard called Design Specification for Bracing Metal Plate Connected Wood Trusses (ANSI/TPI 3-200x). The committee is a very diverse group with members representing component manufacturers, plate suppliers, connector manufacturers and engineers from around the country.

But why do we need a new bracing standard? Why can't we continue with what we have? Both questions can easily be answered by anyone that has visited a jobsite lately to see what is really being done and not done in the realm of bracing. That is the primary motivation behind WTCA's development and publication of WTCA-B2: Always Diagonally Brace for Safety, a document that has very detailed color graphics. Currently we are refining WTCA's entire line of temporary bracing literature to ensure that all have a solid engineering foundation and are comprehensive. The initiatives that the TPI Task Force on Bracing and Publications and WTCA Executive Committee have defined and agreed to with respect to this work are:

1. Create a single set of documents that will serve as an information base when dealing with the storing, handling, installing, bracing and loading of the metal plate connected wood trusses.

2. We are doing our corporate, association and professional duty to properly educate and warn users of the safe and proper use of our products.
3. Our goal is to provide information for those who do the actual storing, handling, installing, bracing and loading of trusses and give them guidance on the proper methods of adding stability for any installation technique, while meeting their expressed need for a simplified presentation regarding these issues.

## THE IMPLICATIONS OF NEW BRACING PRODUCTS

As the year moves closer to BCMC 2003, the release of more new bracing products is anticipated. Most of you have seen the lateral bracing products available as well as a diagonal bracing product and a "T-bracing" product. Some of these new alternatives to wood provide better compression and tension values and most provide field labor and installation cycle time improvement. These new products will give component manufacturers access to a new market segment that has historically been handled by selling installation contractors wood temporary and permanent bracing. These new products can be marketed and sold as a value-added package by the component manufacturer. The question that always comes up is "who will specify these products?"

The truss plate suppliers are as interested in proper truss bracing as component manufacturers. Specifying the location of permanent lateral bracing has been in truss software forever. One truss plate supplier has been specifying alternate temporary lateral bracing products for a few years and their software created a bracing layout for this product as well. By BCMC 2003, it is commonly held that most—if not all—truss software will have the ability to provide a temporary and permanent bracing layout and will be specifying alternates to wood bracing elements. This added value will improve truss bracing implementation and give component manufacturers another value-added service and line of products to sell.

While the requirements for truss bracing have been around a long time, there is new information that is aiding in the creation of an emerging technology enhancement. The component industry has been long held as the most sophisticated part of the construction industry. We will be proving it once again as we move truss installation safety—through proper bracing—to its logical next level. I hope all of you see the huge opportunity that exists in this area for expanded business whose goal is to ensure that both temporary and permanent bracing can be done safely, effectively and economically.

---

[SBC HOME PAGE](#)

Copyright © 2003 by Truss Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. For permission to reprint materials from SBC Magazine, call 608/310-6706 or email [editor@sbcmag.info](mailto:editor@sbcmag.info).

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 of structural building components to ensure growth and continuity, and to be the information conduit by staying abreast of leading-edge issues. SBC will take a leadership role on behalf of the component industry in disseminating technical and marketplace information, and will maintain advisory committees consisting of the most knowledgeable professionals in the industry. The opinions expressed in SBC

are those of the authors and those quoted solely, and are not necessarily the opinions of any of the affiliated associations (SBCC, WTCA, SCDA & STCA).