

STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE

November 2003

WTCA Update

www.woodtruss.com

WTCA Introduces a New Insurance Broker Partnership Program by Suzanne Grundahl

We have put together a program for a select group of insurance brokers who have expertise in our industry, to provide our members with a group of agents who are best equipped to help them find the best and most cost-effective coverage possible.

Those who have been following WTCA's efforts in the insurance area are aware that WTCA's Business Insurance Subcommittee has had somewhat of an uphill battle over the past couple of years as we have worked to address the insurance crisis facing our industry. The fact that our industry is not alone does not provide much comfort, but the entire construction industry, as well as other manufacturing industries, is facing huge insurance premium increases and sometimes loss of coverage. Insurance companies are pulling out of certain industries, and the component manufacturing industry has been one of those hit. Many members have called saying they'd never even had a claim, yet they were dropped by their carrier based on the type of business they are in.

One thing we have learned in our efforts to provide a valuable program to members is that insurance brokers as a whole do not understand our industry and its unique risks. Based on this, we have decided to put together a program for a select group of insurance brokers who have expertise in our industry, to provide our members with a group of agents who are best equipped to help them find the best and most cost-effective coverage possible. We need an educated group of brokers with industry expertise who can go to bat for our industry with insurance carriers.

With this in mind, one of our BCMC 2003 educational sessions was entitled "Managing Your Insurance Broker." In it, Bob Bruns and Tom Carroll of Diversified Insurance Industries provided an inside look at what component manufacturers should reasonably require of their agents, as well as how to determine if they have adequate coverage. The session was well attended and provided a great deal of insight into the importance of partnering with your broker to ensure your component manufacturing operation is cost-effectively and thoroughly insured, and all risks are considered.

To begin the WTCA program, we created a survey form in June to help us learn about individual brokers' qualifications. Several brokers filled out the five-page form that covered the following areas:

- Component manufacturing, manufacturing and construction experience
- Services provided
- Loss control support
- Claims handling ability
- Costs and fees

We asked that brokers describe the benefits or cost savings that could be realized, if any, for those WTCA member companies that take advantage of WTCA's risk control and management programs and services such as:

- Delivering jobsite education and warning packages with each shipment of manufactured materials
- The In-Plant WTCA QC (quality control) program
- WTCA Truss Technician Training Certification
- WTCA Plant Safety Certification (program in process)

We also asked for them to tell us about any assistance they could provide as WTCA develops and refines its Plant Safety Certification program, and requested that they describe the willingness of the insurance companies they represent to work with WTCA and industry experienced attorneys and expert witnesses in claim handling.

After narrowing down the broker candidates who were most qualified in meeting our industry's needs, we set up individual face-to-face meetings in Chicago for each broker to sit down with the subcommittee to learn more about the program and their unique qualifications for serving our industry.

These meetings were very productive, and we have selected six brokers who will initially participate in the program. Their territories are not exclusive. Instead, the goal was to provide coverage for the entire United States.

- Bowermaster & Associates (covering AZ, CA, NV, OR, WA, UT, ID, NM, WY, CO, and MT)
- Broussard, Bush & Hurst (covering AL, AR, LA, MS, TN, and KY)
- Diversified Insurance Industries (covering MD, PA, VA, NJ, DE, WV, NC, SC, and NY)
- Horton Risk Management Services (covering WI, IL, IN, MN, IA, and MI)
- Sirak Financial Services (covering FL, IN, KS, KY, MO, OH, SC, and TX)
- Taylor, Turner & Hartsfield (covering GA and FL)

As a final step, we created a partnership agreement that lays out in more detail what each party will bring to the program.

WTCA will:

- Communicate, promote and support the Approved Insurance Broker Program to the component manufacturing industry overall.
- Each partner can write articles for SBC Magazine.
- Each partner can speak at WTCA chapter meetings, regional conferences and national

- conferences. WTCA staff will assist in implementation.
- Work cooperatively with each partner to help us to develop our risk management and liability avoidance best practices materials, online training and certification program and recommendations for structural building component manufacturers.

Insurance Broker Partners will:

- Have experience working with our industry.
- Join WTCA.
- Take specific industry online educational programs that will help them understand key industry issues and become familiar with Truss Technician Training, WTCA QC, the Job-site Safety Package, Building Component Safety Information (BCSI) and related B series documents.
- Attend local chapter meetings.
- Assist in the planning and development of additional industry risk management and safety programs to gain greater access to affordable insurance.

We are very enthusiastic about this new resource for members. Additional brokers will be added to cover areas of the country that the above companies do not. For detailed contact information for any of these broker partners, check www.woodtruss.com or call staff at 608/274-4849.

[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.

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).