



Safety Scene

Lightning Safety

Don't let lightning strike you out.

by Molly E. Butz

It might surprise you to be reading about lightning safety and structural building components; however, lightning can affect any and all of your business operations, inside and out. And, with more than 100,000 thunderstorms a year, it's a good idea to be prepared for the hazards lightning can present.

Lightning can strike anywhere. As a matter of fact, the National Weather Service estimates that there are 25 million lightning flashes each year. Annually, these numerous flashes cause property damage in excess of one billion dollars and are also responsible for an average of 73 deaths and countless injuries. In addition, lightning can develop at any time during the year, even though many of us associate thunderstorms, the main source of lightning, with spring and summer. In southeastern states like Florida, where it's warm and humid much of the time, lightning strikes even more frequently.

Staying Safe Outside

It's likely that at least part of your daily operations require some of your employees to go outside, even if your main manufacturing areas are located inside. From stacking bundles of finished trusses to retrieving lumber for the next job, if your employees leave the safety of their shelter, a lightning strike is possible. So whether your employees spend the majority of their time outside or only leave the building every now and then, it's important to monitor weather conditions. And if you live in a particularly storm-prone area, you might consider purchasing a portable weather radio. They are often inexpensive and provide the most up-to-date storm information for your area. (Several websites also offer regular weather updates, see inset.)

The Weather Channel
www.weather.com

Weather Underground
(also offers Wunder Radio, a listing of online NOAA Weather Radio stations):
www.wunderground.com

National Weather Service
www.nws.noaa.gov/

Intellicast
www.intellicast.com

AccuWeather
www.accuweather.com

It's also important to remember that lightning doesn't only strike where it's raining! The National Weather Service reports that lightning can strike up to ten miles away from an area of rain. Thunder and lightning, however, usually go hand-in-hand. And, since most humans can hear thunder roughly ten miles away, encourage your employees to report thunder when they hear it closing in.

Most importantly, if someone at your facility gets struck by lightning, get emergency medical help immediately! Several very serious medical conditions can occur when lightning strikes a person including burns, nerve damage, cardiac arrest and other cardiac irregularities. And, contrary to some old wives' tales, people who have been struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge and are safe to touch.

Power to the People

Beyond the potential for structural damage to the outside of your building, lightning can also wreak havoc on the inside! A direct lightning strike to your building (or an indirect strike to a power source nearby, such as a transformer) may cause a power surge. These instantaneous spikes in voltage travel rapidly through electri-

Continued on page 16

at a glance

- The National Weather Service estimates that there are 25 million lightning flashes each year.
- Burns, nerve damage and cardiac arrest can happen when lightning strikes someone.
- Invest in surge protectors to protect computers and other electronics for power surges.



SAFE • FAST • FLEXIBLE

VERSATILITY

- Straight Cuts
- Single and multiple mitre cuts
- Single and multiple bevel cuts
- Infinitely long scarfs and ripping
- Infinitely short 4-cut webs
- Birdsmouth and taper cuts
- Valley chords
- Trench and slot
- Floor truss members

FLEXIBILITY

- Left-right or right-left material flow
- Single, double or side by side stacking
- Volume production or small custom runs
- Interface to all major design software
- Upgrade path from modular design
- Zero set-up time

SAFETY

- Fully enclosed cutting chamber
- Chamber door interlocked to blade rotation



**IMPROVED,
FASTER
VERSION 5
SAW NOW
AVAILABLE!**

**For USA & Canadian Sales
& Service contact:**

Outback Machinery Services
Tel: (423) 923 2881
www.outbackms.com



CALL 1-888-88-RAZER
www.razerusa.com info@razerusa.com

For reader service, go to www.sbcmag.info/pfitech.htm





Safety Scene

Continued from page 14

cal wiring, cable and phone lines and can damage or destroy your phones, computers, manufacturing equipment and other electronic devices.

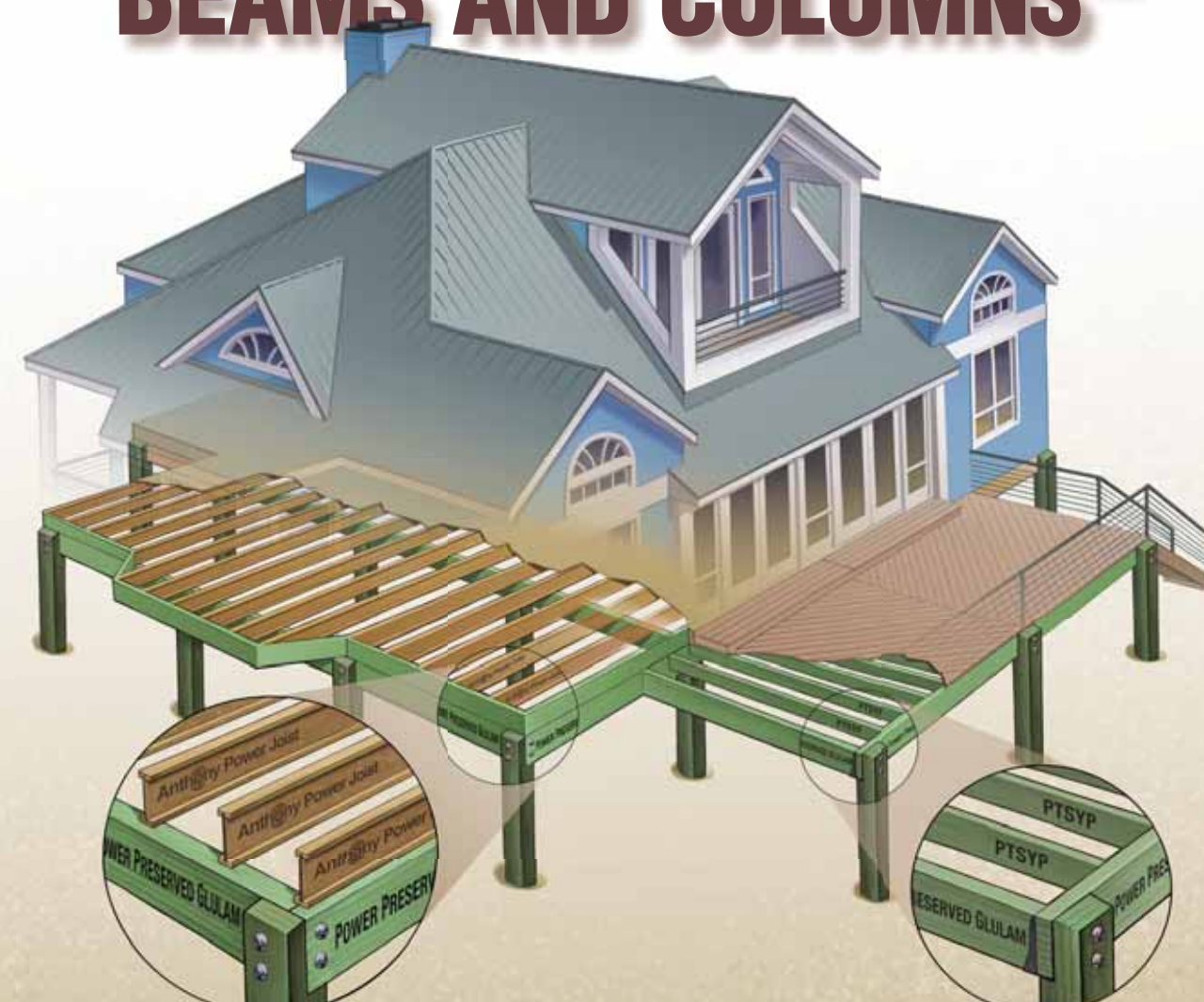
Thankfully it's fairly easy, and in the long run inexpensive, to protect your equipment! An effective surge protector will "divert" the excess voltage created by the power surge away from your equipment and prevent it from becoming damaged. A common misconception is that all "power strips" are also surge protectors. Unfortunately, not all power strips are cre-

ated equally. Here are few things to look for when purchasing a surge protector for your company's various electronic devices:

- Price: If it's cheap, say, less than \$10, it's probably not going to offer very much protection. Plan to spend at least \$25 or \$30 for minimum capabilities.
- Function: You won't need all of the bells and whistles to ensure you're protected, but look for a model that has an indicator light so you know if/when your surge protector is functioning correctly.
- Underwriters Laboratories (UL) Ratings: Look for surge protectors that have a UL listing. Specifically hone in on the models listed as "transient voltage surge suppressors"; these surge protectors have to meet UL's "minimum performance standard" and offer much better protection than non-UL listed models.
- Multiple plug-ins: Surge suppressors may also include a phone jack or cable plug-in. Specifically for computers, this kind of unit makes it easy to protect your PC from every angle.

Experts estimate that there are as many as 2,000 thunderstorms occurring around the world at any one time. Moreover, there are roughly 100 lightning strikes every second! For a business, a lightning strike can be a costly natural disaster, from property damage to personal injury. The best protection? Be prepared. Safety first! **SBC**

POWER PRESERVED GLULAM™ BEAMS AND COLUMNS™



- Available in 3 1/2" and 5 1/4" widths at IJC and dimension lumber depths
- 24F Industrial Grade - zero camber - balanced beam and **Power Preserved Column™** combination #50
- Meets FEMA's guidelines for "Flood Resistant Materials"
- Treated by **HOOVER** with **Cop-Guard™** (CuNap) in low odor mineral spirits for above ground and ground contact
- Environmentally safe and easy to work with
- Perfect for deck beams and columns, raised floor construction, coastal construction using piling/column or pier and beam foundations
- Backed by a 25 Year Warranty as strong as our products
- Resistant to fungal decay and wood-destroying insect attacks



Tomorrow's Engineered Wood - Today™



NOTHING COMPARES

Manitou Truck Mounted Forklifts

Now offering exceptional flexibility and productivity with the **NEW Manitou bi-directional!**

Doubling as a truck-mounted forklift and a yard truck, this 5,500 lb. capacity forklift is equipped with a long boom for unloading from one side and 2 way driving modes for access into tight spots.

For further information, please contact:
Manitou North America
800-433-3304 www.manitou-na.com



Over 250,000 Units Sold Worldwide

For reader service, go to www.sbcmag.info/manitou.htm

STRUCTURAL BUILDING **COMPONENTS**TM

THE FUTURE OF FRAMING

www.sbcmag.info

Dear Reader:

Copyright © 2008 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 affiliated association (WTCA) .



6300 Enterprise Lane • Suite 200 • Madison, WI 53719
608/310-6706 phone • 608/271-7006 fax
www.sbcmag.info • admgr@sbcmag.info