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by Kent Pagel



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The Solutions Guy

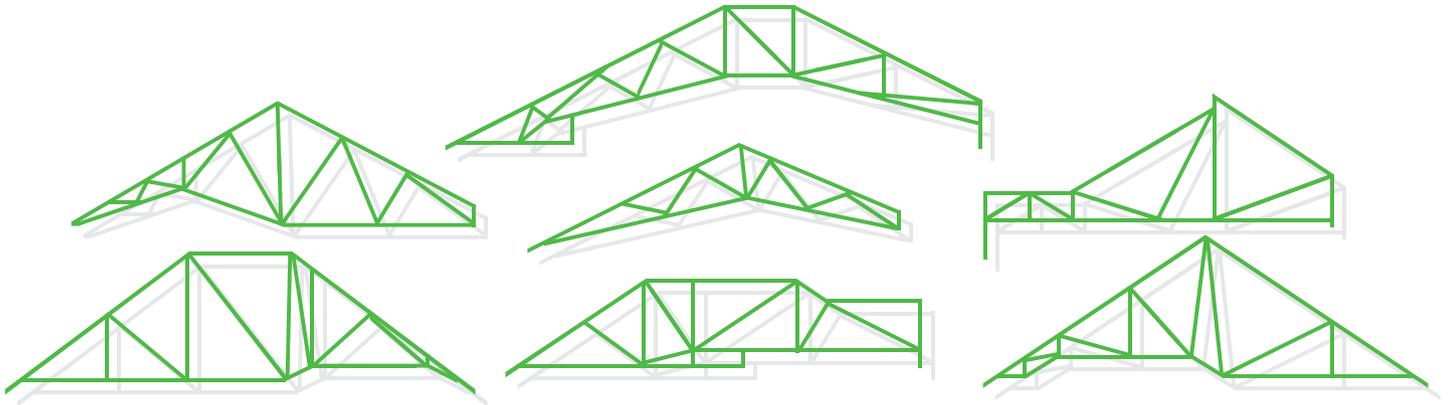
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by Sean D. Shields

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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 structural building components. Further, *SBC* strives to ensure growth, continuity and increased professionalism in our industry, and to be the information conduit by staying abreast of leading-edge issues. *SBC's* editorial focus is geared toward the entire structural building component industry, which includes the membership of the Structural Building Components Association (SBCA). The opinions expressed in *SBC* are those of the authors and those quoted, and are not necessarily the opinions of Truss Publications or SBCA.

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editor's message

by Scott Ward

Assistance for the "Street Lawyer"

With an increase in largely one-sided contracts, it is vital to our industry that we wake up and protect ourselves.

For much of my young adult life, I had a dream of becoming an attorney. I took debate in high school and several classes in college to prepare for that career. It was during those years that I realized it takes a very special person with a unique personality to actually be an attorney, and I am not that individual. I did, however, gain a great amount of respect for attorneys. So now, years later, I find myself reading customer contracts that are more complicated than my daughter's dating life. I have become a "street lawyer" so to speak. That is a very scary thought.

Unfortunately, a few months ago, our company learned the hard way that a poorly reviewed contract has the potential to cause severe harm to a business. Of course, most of you already know this, right? After all, we have talked about this topic for many years. The problem lies in the complacency of most component manufacturers when it comes to reviewing these very important documents. We really don't have the time to comb through a legal dictionary and decipher the terminology within a contract. So there may be times when we agree to certain terms and conditions that we really don't understand. If you have ever done this, don't feel bad. I can assure you there are more of us who have agreed to terms we didn't fully understand than those who haven't. I can see our SBCA legal counsel Kent Pagel shaking his head right now.

At our company, most contracts are first reviewed by a member of our upper management team. If that person doesn't understand a paragraph, the entire contract is sent to our legal team for review. In the case that got us into trouble, we excluded "Product A," which most CMs do not provide, from our original quote and sent the document over for legal review. It came back marked up and was returned to our customer, who then, unbelievably, signed it with few requested changes. What I did not pay attention to was in very tiny print mixed in with several paragraphs relating to products supplied. You guessed it. "Product A" was contracted to be provided. After many, many meetings, legal fees and hard feelings, our customer finally agreed to pay most of the costs associated with "Product A." This could have turned out much worse for us. We were saved by grace! However, this is not the way we prefer to do business.

How can we avoid situations like this? Having an attorney review contracts is a great way to stay out of trouble, but it can also be very costly. SBCA is another great source for help. The ORisk program was developed to help CMs in this very area and includes modules that focus on contracts. With the economy hurting over the last few years, ORisk has been put on the back burner for future development. At a recent board meeting, several members agreed that it was time to start working on this program again. Of course, it is already a great program, but Kent Pagel is far from done covering some very important topics. There will be more to come! In the meantime, see Kent's article on fleet safety and risk management (page 16) in this issue.

As our customers put more demands on us with largely one-sided contracts, it is vital to our industry that we wake up and protect ourselves. ORisk is a perfect place to start and money well spent. In addition, if you have the means to get legal assistance with contracts that are just too complicated, please do so. It could save your business from possible balance sheet disaster.

Continued on page 8

at a glance

- Ward shares an experience where a customer contract had the potential to severely damage a balance sheet.
- Don't be afraid to admit that you do not understand contract language; if you do not, seek out legal assistance.
- SBCA's ORisk program can help with contract fundamentals.

Editor's Message

Continued from page 7

Another word of advice is to save a copy of contracts that have been reviewed and marked up. Much of the wording is the same. It will save you time and money if you already have reviewed documents, especially with purchase orders, from repeat customers. But remember to not get complacent in your review. The contract that got us into trouble was from a repeat customer who decided to change the purchase order wording from contract to contract. Even after a legal review, take your time to go back over it. This could have saved us a lot of grief and relationship damage on both sides.

Finally, it's okay that you're not an attorney. Be honest with yourself and don't be afraid to say that you don't understand something in a contract, and if this is the case, get legal help. Of course, there will always be times when you will have to bend a little on certain terms and conditions just to get a job, but don't make deals that you cannot afford to live with. Your business, like ours, is much too valuable to throw away by rushing through a purchase order and committing to terms and conditions that just aren't fair! **SBC**

SBC Magazine encourages the participation of its readers in developing content for future issues. Do you have an article idea for a future issue or a topic that you would like to see covered? Email your thoughts and ideas to editor@sbcmag.info.

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Field Splices

Understand the best way
to design a field splice to save
time and money.

Field splices provide a means of connecting two truss sections together at the jobsite to create a single larger and/or deeper component. The goal of field splicing is to allow truss manufacturing, shipping and installation greater flexibility in serving customer needs. To successfully use field splices on a project, however, there are a number of issues to consider during the design and installation phase.

Question

Why are field splices required in the first place?

Answer

There are several reasons why it may be necessary to design a field splice. For starters, a truss may simply be too large to manufacture as a single component. High pitch scissors trusses are a typical example, which can be difficult to fit on a truck and to handle. A retrofit may also require a field splice due to a change in the truss profile (such as adding a vault to a truss with a flat ceiling), a change in loading, or other modifications discovered after the truss is built and/or installed.



Photo 1. Example of field-spliced scissors trusses.

Common Materials Used for Field Splices

If connection forces and deflections are low, plywood or oriented strand board (OSB) gussets provide a flexible and cost-effective field splice option. One advantage of using plywood or OSB is that the material can easily be cut to the shape needed. For any field splice, make sure the splice material and its connection to the truss have adequate strength to resist the maximum forces that will transfer through the splice.

Lumber scabs used as field splice material provide an easy option if it is possible to make the splice at a suitable location. Lumber scabs can often be used with high pitch scissors trusses if the splice location can be shifted away from the peak. In these instances, the truss is spliced by applying lumber scabs across the

splice joint parallel to the top and bottom chord. The long available lengths and ease of installation make lumber scabs a very effective choice.

Metal plate connected wood scab trusses provide an excellent alternative as field splice material, especially when the forces to be transferred through the splice are very large. Scab trusses are designed to transfer the forces across the splice and should match the profile and configuration of the trusses being connected. Attaching the scab truss(es) to the spliced trusses through the aligning members provides a strong and stable splice connection.

Field splices using steel plates with bolted connections are another possibility, although they are far less common due to the relatively high cost of ordering custom plates. Benefits of using steel plates include the ability to withstand and transfer very high forces and relatively easy installation.

at a glance

- Field splices provide a means of connecting two truss sections together creatively at the jobsite, to allow manufacturing, shipping and installation greater flexibility in serving customer needs.
- A field-spliced truss should be designed as one component so that the proper load transfers at the splice.
- Correct installation is important to avoid increased deflection of the field-spliced truss and potential long-term serviceability problems.

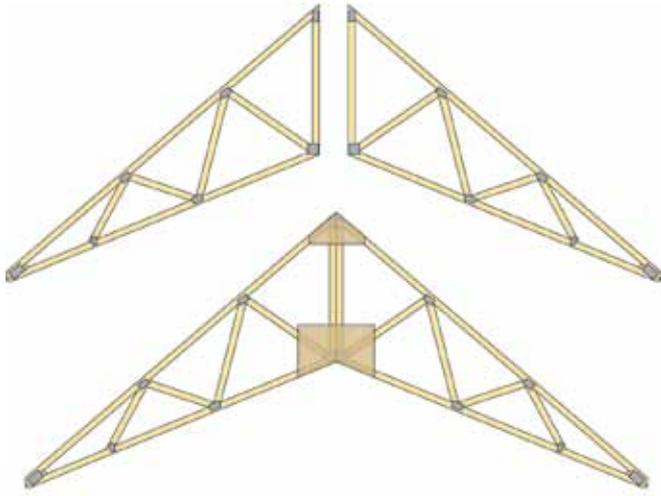


Figure 1. Example of a steeply pitched scissors truss requiring a specially designed field splice at the top and bottom peak joints.

Common Errors with Field Splices: Design Department

A common error when designing trusses that will be spliced in the field is designing each part as an individual truss instead of as a single truss covering the entire span. Designing the trusses as individual parts typically results in truss members and connector plates that are undersized for the loads and forces that will be resisted by the completed field-spliced truss.

Some of the available truss design software allows the designer to assign different part numbers when designing a field-spliced truss. For example, setting the members on the left side of the splice location as “part 1” and the members on the right side as “part 2” will design each part as members of the full-length truss, but direct the program not to design a plated connection between the two sections.

Field splices for multi-ply trusses are more difficult to design and require more attention to detail. Since multi-ply trusses are wider than single-ply trusses, field splices are required on both sides of the truss to minimize eccentricity and transfer the forces on both sides of the truss. Field splices for trusses greater than two plies typically will require a greater depth and/or a higher grade of lumber than the material in the trusses themselves because the forces at the splice must be transferred through fewer pieces. The connection between the field splice and truss is also critical and must ensure that all of the plies are adequately connected to the field splice. This is a complicated splice condition and will require good communication between the truss designer and the customer installing the truss scab splice.

Common Errors with Field Splices: Jobsite

BCSI-B2 provides guidelines and industry best practices for installing field-spliced trusses:



Photo 2. Example of a field-spliced scissors truss being lifted into place.

Trusses that are too long or too tall for delivery to the jobsite in one piece are designed to be delivered in two or more parts, and then field spliced together on the jobsite. Splicing can be performed on the ground before installation or the Truss sections can be supported by temporary shoring after being hoisted into place and the splices installed from a safe working surface. Temporary Lateral Restraint and Diagonal Bracing must be installed per the recommendations provided in this document and PBSB (Permanent Building Stability Bracing) per the Construction Documents as the Trusses are installed.

Installers must ensure that everything is connected tightly. Failure to do so can result in increased deflection of the field-spliced truss and potential serviceability problems long after the building has been completed. When using OSB or plywood, make sure the sheets are not overcut. Use a rounded edge along the bottom chord at a scissors connection to help reduce the stress concentrations at this location and the risk of cracks developing.

If using bolted steel plates for the field splice, make sure the connections are tight and all of the holes are properly sized in accordance with the requirements specified in the National Design Specification® (NDS®) for Wood Construction. Failure to do so can lead to an uneven distribution of the load between the bolts, resulting in a few of the bolts carrying a disproportionately large amount of load, which can potentially lead to a failure of the connection. **SBC**

Special thanks to Mr. David B. Brakeman, P.E., S.E. of ITW Building Components Group and Mr. Scott Miller, P.E. of MiTek USA, Inc. for their assistance with this article.

For more on field-spliced trusses, see the BCSI book (sbcindustry.com/bcsi) and B2 Summary Sheet (sbcindustry.com/b2).

To pose a question for this column, call the SBCA technical department at 608-274-4849 or email technicalqa@sbcmag.info.



safety scene

by Sean D. Shields &
Molly E. Butz

Don't Be Lulled Into a False Sense of Safety

Internal safety audits and third-party reviews can be healthy, sometimes eye-opening, examinations of what's really happening in your facility.

SBCA developed the Operation Safety program with the help of several component manufacturer members back in 2003. Since that time, it's become the cornerstone at more than 40 certified truss manufacturing facilities across the country that send their safety data to SBCA on a quarterly basis and undergo a third-party audit every year.

Internal safety audits and third-party reviews can be healthy, sometimes eye-opening, examinations of what's really happening in your facility. "A third-party inspection is really about bringing in an objective eye on your operations to provide

targeted feedback," explained Mike Cassidy, Executive Director of the Truss Plate Institute (TPI), which provides third-party safety and QC inspections for the component manufacturing industry. "That information can be very valuable for management to evaluate where they are doing well and where they can focus resources to improve the safety and quality of their operations."

SBCA staff has made some observations about overall safety trends in the industry that bring into focus opportunities for the entire industry as we head into a (hopefully) robust home-building season. Maintaining a work environment where everyone is safety conscious and feels responsible for their safety and that of those around them requires effort, but it doesn't need to be a daunting task. Here are the top three observations, along with suggestions on what you can do to ensure your company continues to build a solid safety culture.



Observation #1:

Safety training should never fall by the wayside, particularly when production picks up.

Operation Safety data and third-party audit reports make it clear that this is especially true after there's been a seasonal or prolonged lull in production. There are several reasons why this may be the case. One, a lull typically results in layoffs, meaning the company is short-handed initially when production increases. While the employees who are left are typically your most experienced and skilled, being in a situation where they are trying to do more with less can make concentrating on safety a challenge.

Two, after a lull, employers may hire temporary and/or inexperienced workers, who are not necessarily familiar with the component manufacturing environment. These new employees may be inadvertently more prone to accidents and minor injuries while they acclimate to a new work environment. Making safety a focal point of your new-hire or refresher training can protect your new and seasoned employees.

"Our employees are our greatest asset; we cannot be successful if we lose them to accidents," said Sara Marsh, Safety Coordinator at Clackamas Components, a division of ProBuild. "It is important our crews work as a team to ensure everyone is practicing safe work habits and to help each other avoid potential injuries."

at a glance

- Safety training should never fall by the wayside, particularly when production picks up.
- It's important to make an effort to maintain good housekeeping practices, even when you think you're too busy to do so.
- Keeping your safety documentation up-to-date ensures you're catching even the smallest concerns in your facility, and it helps you safeguard against serious safety issues.

Observation #2:

It's important to make an effort to maintain good housekeeping practices, even when you think you're too busy to do so.

The top priority is getting a high-quality product to your customer when they want it. Unfortunately, when your company is focused on increasing production, it's easy to let other aspects of the production process fall to the wayside. "Quality and safety go hand-in-hand," said Cassidy. "In our third-party safety inspections, we evaluate various aspects of a plant's operation and manufacturing process, including employee safety training and protocols, because all of those things contribute to safety and the quality of the final product."

Tidying up work areas of scraps and miscellaneous production tools and debris might seem like difficult tasks while keeping production moving. Unfortunately, lax housekeeping can lead to trip hazards and other injuries that, ultimately, take time away from component manufacturing. Marsh adds this perspective: "We want our employees to protect everything we have invested in to run our operations, not only physical assets such as equipment, but more importantly, our human resources."

Observation #3:

Keeping your safety documentation up to date ensures you're catching even the smallest concerns in your facility, and it helps you safeguard against serious safety issues.

Staying current on your weekly walk-throughs, quarterly checklists and in-plant audits go hand-in-hand with a decrease in your recordable injuries, high scores on inspections, and the overall well-being of your crews. It only takes a little time to make a big difference in your manufacturing facility. "We have found that documentation holds us accountable to fix problems as they arise," said Marsh. "If we document the changes needed during regular safety inspections of the plant, we are more likely to make those changes than if we didn't put it in writing. Documentation also helps us measure our progress and ensure problem areas are eradicated."

Recommendations

Given these observations, here are some suggestions on what you as a company can do to avoid or mitigate these trends.

- Make sure someone is "in charge" of managing, updating and implementing your safety culture. Having a point-person who takes ownership and helps establish your safety policies gives everyone someone to consult with on safety topics or concerns.
- This individual can also act as a leader for all new hires and temporary employees to ensure they have the right personal protective equipment (PPE) and training to minimize their risk of injury or accidents.
- Think about safety as an hourly and daily encounter. Promoting an overall environment of safety in the production area is much



more manageable if it's tackled in bite-sized pieces.

- Consider taking the first five minutes of each shift to have a safety huddle with your production employees. Those initial five minutes will do more to put your employees in the right frame of mind than almost anything else you could do.
- Talking about safety doesn't need to be limited to the beginning of the day either. Identify small tasks (lifting, swinging a hammer, using a chop saw, etc.) and hold a 15-minute talk during the lunch break once a week to go over proper techniques to avoid injuries.
- Adequately training your employees to be safe does not mean you need to take them away from their work. In most cases, on-the-job training and real-world examples are the most effective learning tools.
- Extending regularly scheduled breaks by three to five minutes to concentrate on picking up refuse and other potential trip hazards, as well as re-organizing work areas, can have a significant impact on avoiding common injuries.
- Make documentation a priority. Documentation serves two key roles when it comes to your overall productivity and, ultimately, profitability. It forces your workforce to focus on the areas it is documenting, whether it's proper housekeeping, machinery maintenance or condition and use of PPEs. Documentation also can help you argue for lower insurance rates with your provider and avoid costly fines when an OSHA inspector unexpectedly shows up at your door.

Over time, building and maintaining a strong culture of safety in your company will come naturally. Just make sure you're committed to working on safety every day. As pointed out earlier, this can feel like a challenge as you ramp up production and the focus feels like it's shifting, but that is the time when safety is most important because it's when accidents and injuries are most likely to occur.

Fortunately, you don't have to feel lost on where to start. Contact SBCA staff today and learn more about Operation Safety, wtcatko.com/safety, and the many best practices and tools that have been put together in one place to help you promote a safe working environment. Safety first! **SBC**



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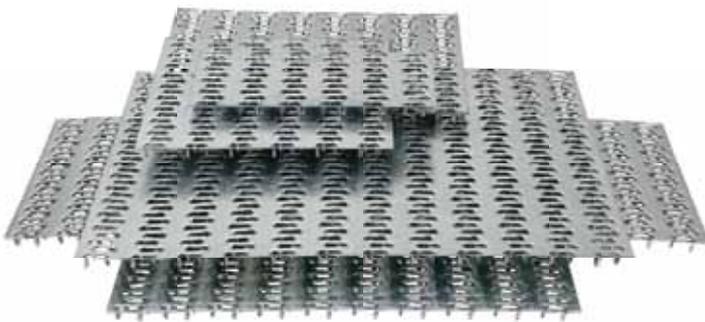
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No Risk? Know Risk.

A Fleet Safety Risk Management Primer



Take a few minutes to learn more about how to minimize one of your greatest risks as a manufacturer: truck liability exposure.

by Kent Pagel

During my commute to the office the other day, I passed two trucks, both heavily loaded, one with roof trusses and the other with stacked pallets. Neither truck listed the manufacturer of the materials, which led me to conclude that a third party had been hired to transport both these loads. Looking at these cargoes also got me thinking about the intricate loading processes involved, as well as the necessity that the driver truly understand and be prepared for the risks that exist as these loads travel at 65 mph. Accident potential, in terms of frequency, and accident loss, in terms of severity, was all I could think of. So much for how we lawyers think!

One of the greatest risks facing component manufacturers and lumber and building material dealers (and pallet manufacturers, for that matter) is their automobile and, particularly, their truck liability exposure. This includes managers and salespeople in pickup trucks and passenger vehicles, but especially applies to truck drivers who transport trusses, lumber or building materials. Truck accidents are prevalent. Furthermore, the jury awards in truck accident cases can be extremely high. The Bureau of Labor Statistics, for example, reported in 2006 that 25 percent of all construction industry deaths were transportation related. While motor vehicle loss increases with the number of vehicles operated, there is a potential for a serious loss even when only one vehicle is used in the course of your business.

If your company owns automobiles, pickup trucks or tractor-trailer rigs, or if your employees use their personal vehicles on company-related business, you should have fleet safety and risk management controls in place. Similarly, if you use independent

truck operators or carriers, you may be liable if they are inadequately insured, and you may face other unknown risks, which I will discuss below. In either case, your company ought to have basic guidelines or best practices in place to ensure the safety of your fleet from injuries to drivers themselves, injuries to third parties, and the preservation of your company assets.

The SBCA TRUCK program is, of course, a good place for component manufacturers and lumber and material dealers to start when developing their fleet management best practices. In this article, I want to delve into some of these issues, starting with the considerations and risks of using independent truck operators and carriers and concluding with the elements to consider to improve your fleet safety program.

Considerations & Risks When Using Independent Truck Operators & Carriers

- Maintain valid and well-written contracts with all third-party carriers, shipping agents or brokers. Many component manufacturers and lumber and material dealers actively contract with third-party motor carriers, who in turn hire drivers and/or trucks to make the actual deliveries. It is also not uncommon for shippers to utilize shipping agents who actually work for one or more motor carriers to help arrange the placement of trucks for the shippers. A broker, on the other hand, is usually hired and paid by a shipper. That broker then places the freight order with a third-party driver or carrier, and the shipper pays the broker for the services provided.
- Whenever a motor carrier is utilized, directly or through a shipping agent, it is important a written contract exist that, among other terms, addresses delegation of responsibility (e.g., securing load and unloading responsibilities, if any), adequacy of insurance coverage, and soundness of financial position.
- If brokers are utilized, while additional risks exist, it is equally important to have a written contract in place setting out the process to follow in the selection of carriers or owner-operators, the insurance required of the broker and all carriers or owner-operators, and driver safety ratings. With brokers, where a component manufacturer pays the

broker for each load and the broker in turn pays the carrier or owner-operator, there exists the possibility of double payment liability. Case law, which applies in all 50 states, requires that if a carrier or owner-operator is not paid by the broker, regardless of the fact that the shipper paid the broker, the shipper may legally have to pay the carrier or owner-operator. In other words, the shipper may have to pay for the load twice.

- Many shippers also hire owner-operators, who may even own their own truck or who otherwise operate the trucks owned by the shipper. The shipper may claim the owner-operator is an independent contractor and not an employee, even preparing a written agreement that spells out an independent contractor status. Unfortunately, both state and federal government agencies, and plaintiff lawyers representing one or more the owner-operators, have sued in many of these types of situations on the basis of “independent contractor misclassification.”
 - The state and federal government’s interest is to increase tax revenues, which are more easily attainable when a company treats a driver as an employee and not an independent contractor.
 - Plaintiff lawyers, on the other hand, allege that companies that misclassify employees as independent contractors deprive such persons of various rights.
- When shippers choose to meet their freight handling with third-party carriers, brokers or owner-operators, it is also essential that the shipper is sure to have the right insurance coverage in place on their own corporate automobile insurance policies.

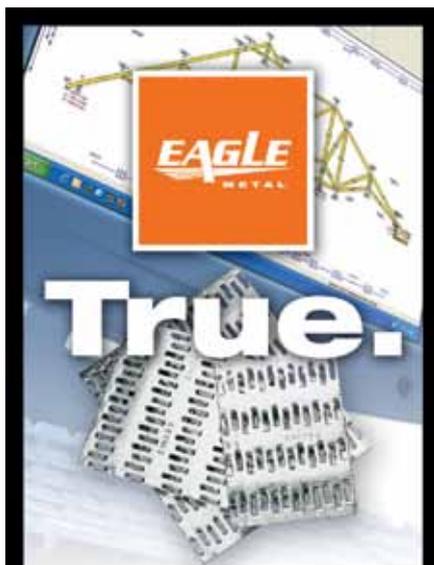
Considerations & Risks for a Solid Fleet Management & Safety Program

Certain minimal fleet management practices should be in place where a component manufacturer or lumber and building material dealer own their own vehicles, including trucks, and operate those vehicles with company employees.

- Prepare and follow a written standard that defines who is eligible to drive a company vehicle, including minimum

Continued on page 18





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No Risk? Know Risk • Continued from page 17

driver qualifications such as age, experience level and acceptable driving record.

- Develop written rules and policies for the use and maintenance of company vehicles or employee-owned vehicles that are used on company business.
- Verify that anyone driving a company-owned vehicle or personal vehicle on company business has a driver's license for the type of vehicle they are driving. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), fmcsa.dot.gov, establishes the conditions in which a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) is required. The individual states are required to make sure their existing testing and licensing programs are compatible with the FMCSA requirements.
- If a driver is required to possess a CDL to operate what FMCSA describes as a "Commercial Vehicle," that driver also falls under the drug and alcohol testing requirements, regardless of whether the driver crosses state lines or not.
- Driving records are a key to any effective fleet management program. A motor vehicle record (MVR) must be obtained, reviewed and assessed. The MVR will provide a record of the state of license and traffic violations, suspensions, or cancellations. Review the MVR within the first month of hire, and at least once or twice a year, especially for those drivers with spotty records. In terms of assessment, you may want to consider that more than two violations or preventable accidents render an acceptable driver to either a borderline or poor category. Serious offenses should be particularly evaluated. An alcohol- or drug-related offense in the past five years should probably preclude a particular driver. You may also want to determine that the following offenses in the past five years preclude a driver: careless driving, chemical test refused, driving on a suspended or revoked license, fleeing or eluding a police officer, leaving the scene of an accident, passing a stopped school bus, reckless driving, or speeding 20 mph over the limit.
- Many third-party motor carriers and companies that own and operate their own fleets conduct comprehensive background checks on prospective drivers, including citizenship, past employment, work history gaps, and criminal history. I recently came across an addendum to a general contractor customer contract form that spells out in detail that no suppliers will deliver materials to that general contractor's jobsite unless the supplier has performed criminal background checks on its drivers and rejects any driver "charged with or convicted of any felony offense, or any sex or sexually related offense, or who is listed as a sexual predator/sexual offender..."
- Not only should fleet management practices deal with the operation of trucks and



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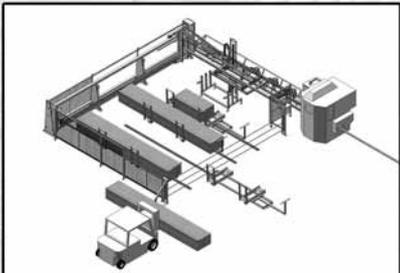
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faces of the industry

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NAME: Micah Green

COMPANY: Cascade Mfg. Co., Cascade, IA

POSITION: Project Manager/Estimator

YEARS IN THE INDUSTRY: 9

- | • **How did you get into the component manufacturing industry?** I grew up in Cascade, and knew of Cascade Manufacturing because they were a big employer in our community. My dad was a contractor, so while I was in college, I worked construction in the summer and during Christmas break. I also had a job at a lumber yard for one year of college. After I graduated from college, I worked for a year doing design work for a custom cut stone company, then I applied for a job with Cascade in 2004. It was a good fit with what I had done in the past and my skill set.
- | • **How would you describe your job responsibilities at Cascade?** Our sales staff identifies potential customers who are accepting bids on a construction project. I then take a look at the bid, do the take-off and estimate our price. I'm then responsible to track that bid through the process to find out who is awarded the bid. If we are awarded the contract, I also follow it through our company from design to delivery.
- | • **What is your favorite part about working in the components industry?** I appreciate our ability to see a building come together from initial plans through to the final product. Since our company specializes primarily in the roof system, we get to be part of the finishing touches on the building's framework. Our industry is very com-

petitive and making a sale doesn't always come easy. So closing on a job is very gratifying.

- | • **Are there any ways in which your work responsibilities may increase or decrease your company's exposure to risk?** There are many instances when structural engineers will contact me to see if a particular design will work on a building. They rely on us to provide accurate information that they can then use to design an aspect of the building, whether it's a roof or floor detail. Before I took the SBCA ORISK program, I didn't necessarily realize exactly what we may have been committing the company to when we did that work.
- | • **In your opinion, what did you think was the most valuable aspect of taking the ORISK course?** I think the most valuable thing I learned was how to identify language in our customer contracts that are "red flags," or language that obligates us to things that may not be in the best interest of our company. In the past, my manager reviewed most of the contracts, but now that I have completed this course, I feel I have the knowledge to begin to take on that responsibility more effectively.
- | • **Is there anything you learned through ORISK that you now apply to your work?** I now have a different perspective on the things that can potentially expose our company to greater risk, whether it's through our design work or the customer contracts we sign. We receive contracts on a regular basis, and ORISK helped me know what to look for and potentially avoid.
- | • **What do you like to do with your free time?** I have three kids, all under the age of six, so "free time" is sort of a rarity. However, when I have the chance, I like to be on the golf course. I thoroughly enjoy being a dad, particularly watching them learn new things so quickly. **SBC**

truck drivers, but companies who have their employees utilize their personal vehicles for company business should be on an approved driver list. Likewise, an MVR should be obtained, the driver should have minimum insurance coverage in place, and the personal vehicle being used should be inspected at least once a year by the company.

- A component manufacturer fleet management program also must include discussion and training with respect to the loading of trusses onto trailers, the securing of the trusses to the trailer, the unloading of trusses, and how to

effectively operate a vehicle loaded with trusses.

SBCA scoured federal transportation regulations and gathered best practices from around the industry to develop the TRUCK program. This driver training program is specific to the structural components industry and provides a strong foundation for both new and experienced drivers on everything from proper cargo loading and securement to safe cargo delivery and inspection at the jobsite. **SBC**

For more information, contact SBCA staff or visit wtcatko.com/truck.

The Solutions Guy

A Tribute to Bob Halteman

by Sean D. Shields

If you knew Bob Halteman, founder of Wood Truss Systems, or ever interacted with him, you knew he wasn't a salesman. Sure, his job (and the purpose of his company) was to sell fabrication equipment to the structural components industry, but he wasn't in sales. He was in solutions.

"My father always said his main objective was to be someone who, when you walked into a plant, the owner would look up from their desk and smile," said Jay Halteman, Bob's son and now President of Wood Truss Systems. "They would smile because they had questions, and he always tried to be the guy with the answers."

There's an old salesman adage, "don't sell products, sell solutions." Bob embraced this concept and embodied it in every interaction he had with his manufacturer customers. One such customer was Don Hershey of Imperial (see Don's memorial article in the March 2012 issue of *SBC Magazine*). "I remember

Bob coming in with several drawings of ways we could lay out our production lines and he walked me through the pros and cons of each one," said Keith Hershey, Don's son who held various senior management positions with the Imperial group of companies and is currently the Director of R&D and Industry Projects for the SBC Research Institute. "They were so well thought out; I carried those plans with me and used them at other truss plants I worked at later on."

It was clear his focus on solutions was much more than a simple sales ploy, but more out of a passion for the industry and compassion for the individual business owners.

"He was born in 1929, at the beginning of the Depression, into a long line of loggers and carpenters from rural Tennessee. During the Depression, his grandfather and father moved to the Midwest and had great success building homes," said Jay. "He started framing for his father at the age of 20 and built his first pin-connected truss on a jobsite in 1954."

When he decided to leave his father's business, Bob went on to work in sales for Scholtz Homes, an architecturally progressive company that sold packaged homes with innovative designs to builders throughout the Midwest. It was there that Bob met Dave Chambers, who eventually left Scholtz to start his own component manufacturing plant, Imperial Components.

Bob started his own home construction business in the 1970s, but went bankrupt in a housing downturn, and ended up joining his friend Dave, and worked alongside Don Hershey at Imperial. Throughout the 1970s and '80s, Bob worked with a number of the industry's pioneers, from Chambers and Hershey to Bill Black, Bill McAlpine, Bob LePoire, and the list goes on.

Most of his contemporaries characterized Bob as an enthusiastic guy who was constantly upbeat. "He always had a joke to tell," said Keith. "He also had a story for almost any situation. He was a great guy to be around."



Robert A. Halteman, 83, quietly passed away at his home in Fishers, IN, on October 14, 2012.



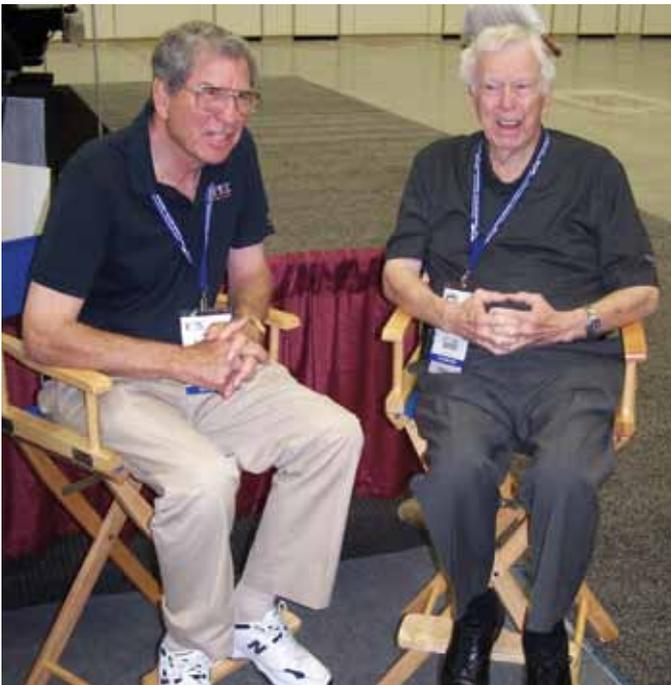
Halteman, in the mid-1970s, doing take-offs for Imperial Components.

One of the things he joked about was that he had “termite blood” in him as a way to explain why he had such a love and passion for wood structures and for the component industry that grew during his lifetime. His early experience as a homebuilder and carpenter likely played a significant role as well. His experience with a business failure also contributed to his unique approach of helping other business owners find ways to make their production operations more efficient and cost-effective.

“He truly wanted others in the industry to succeed,” said Jay. “As he focused on their success, the sales just naturally followed.” Beyond helping individual companies thrive, Bob was also instrumental in helping several Midwest SBCA chapters (MI, IN, OH, KY, and IL) re-form and become active again in the late 1990s. He helped put together slide shows and presentations for building official and fire service groups, and spent countless hours sharing his enthusiasm and understanding of the components industry with them.

Because, in the end, he saw components as **the** solution to how homes should be framed. **SBC**

Share your remembrances of Bob on our website at sbcimag.info.



Jerry Koskovich (left) and Halteman (right) at BCMC 2011 in Indianapolis.



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Share your stories and photos with us! Send submissions to partingshots@sbcmag.info.

Affecting more than 20 states, the scope of Hurricane Sandy, and the rebuilding efforts underway and yet to come, are difficult to imagine. Using geographic information system (GIS) mapping, technology companies Esri and Microsoft are providing a big-picture view of the hurricane impacts using National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) satellite imagery. A map available at local.msn.com/weathersandyaftermap compares before and after images of Hurricane Sandy.

The graphics below show an area near Breezy Point Reid Beach in New York. Even from quite a distance, the images show portions of homes and entire structures moved from their foundations.

For links to more images, many of which show great system performance, check out the online version of this story at sbcmag.info. **SBC**



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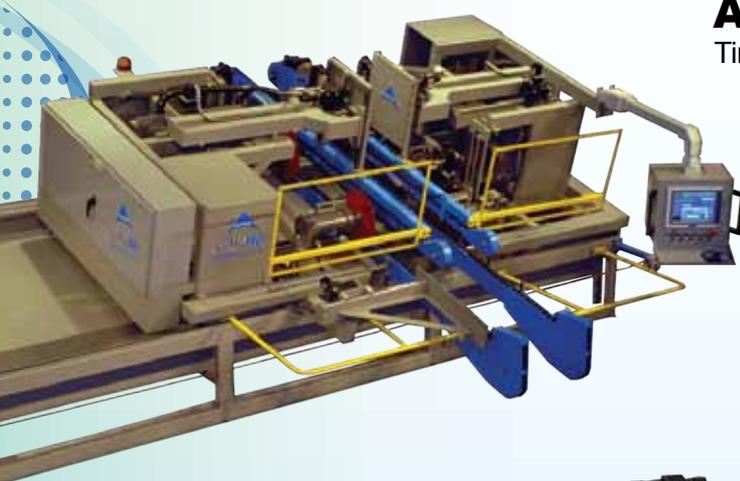


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