

Chapter Corner



SNAPSHOTS ON FIRE PERFORMANCE ISSUES: The topic regarding the fire performance of trusses continues to be an issue with fire service professionals. In the Chicago market, two jurisdictions - Hinsdale and Lombard - have banned the use of trusses. The state of Illinois has implemented a truss labeling law that has been in place for about one year that we just recently found out about. The city of Chicago is now considering labeling legislation as well with an application fee of \$75 and a \$500 per day fine on all buildings not in compliance.

The state of New York is considering labeling legislation again as well.

It is because of situations like this that WTCA members need to stay abreast of issues in their local markets. We also need to get information to the influential people in the decision making process. We hope developing local relationships will be one of the key activities of our chapters.

FLORIDA DEMANDS WTCA'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS: Jim Thomas of the Central Florida Chapter and Kirk Grundahl, WTCA executive director, attended the Building Officials Association of Florida (BOAF) meeting in early June. The two were schedule to provide a brief program on WTCA's Truss Technology Workshops, educational programs, and touch on truss design responsibilities.

Brief turned into one hour, with good questions asked regarding the truss industry. After the meeting we were completely overwhelmed with building officials wanting our business cards. It became eminently clear that we have fertile ground for providing good, solid technical information to these groups, due to the strong desire to learn more about our product.

Florida is the last place one would expect this to be is the case because every house uses trusses. Given the demand in Florida, one can only imagine what the demand could be in the rest of the country.

Based on a request we also provided all of our approved Florida CEU educational program outlines to the executive director of BOAF, and asked how we can work together to provide sessions throughout the state of Florida. So far, all of the Florida programs we have given have been warmly received.

Note: WTCA is an approved educational provider for the American Institute of Architects (AIA).

All of our Truss Technology Workshops are registered with the AIA. In order for architects to receive credit for a course, we need to comply with the AIA's filing requirements, so any time a WTCA course is given to architects, we will need to coordinate the program.

WTCA NORTHEAST EXECUTIVE BOARD HOLDS BUILDING OFFICIAL ROUND TABLE WITH TWO REPRESENTATIVES FROM MASSACHUSETTS: Stan Sias, president of WTCA-NE, stated that at the first roundtable, "We met with the key New England Building Official Representatives and the conversation went great. The contacts we were able to obtain were excellent. The small sessions seem to allow for the group to stay focused and accomplished the goals of the meeting." This is just the beginning for WTCA-NE. It has set forth a goal of holding sessions like this throughout New England to continue to develop relationships with these important industry groups and deal positively and proactively with their concerns about truss construction.

WTCA CHAPTER CHALLENGE: It is clear from the Florida and New England experience that there is a great demand for us to teach trusses. The challenge for each chapter is to set up small meetings like WTCA-NE or attend a local building official meeting and promote the WTCA Truss Technology Workshop.

ALABAMA: The Alabama chapter gave a successful presentation to the Home Builders Association of Marshall County. Currently, the two objectives for the chapter include working with DOT regulations on escorting and splitting loads, and education. The chapter is working on setting up educational programs across the state for fire officials, as well as architects and builders.

CAPITOL AREA: The Capitol Area Chapter will be sponsoring a Truss Technology Workshop in Fairfax, Va. in the fall, and a Truss Technician Training program is scheduled from November 18-21.

GREATER CHICAGO AREA: The chapter sponsored the first in a series of educational programs for fire officials in the Chicago area. Fire issues are dominating the Chicago agenda with bans and labeling ordinances. Education is the key to overcoming these problems.

MICHIGAN: The group is unifying efforts, and collectively decided to include the following materials with every job: the "WTCA Job-site Warning Poster," the "Partition Separation Brochure," engineered drawings, a truss layout plan, and hanger information, if applicable.

The group strongly urged that there be some guidelines for large-span truss orders (over 60-foot span) and will ask for WTCA input. It has also approached WTCA about forming a cooperative buying group, and WTCA is working out the details of administering such an arrangement.

NORTHEAST: Several Massachusetts building officials attended the last meeting and offered the chapter an opportunity to insert useful information in its newsletter, as well as being willing to provide us with access to key contacts and audiences for presentations. The group will do the same with other NE States. WTCA-National will assist with mailings and articles.

NORTHWEST: The Northwest Chapter will have a Risk Management Seminar on September 24. It has scheduled a golf tournament for August 14.

SOUTH FLORIDA: The South Florida Chapter met on June 18, and the speaker was Al Hopkins of Georgia-Pacific Corp. Several educational programs have been scheduled in South Florida this year. Upcoming programs include a Truss Technology Workshop in Delray Beach on August 21 and a Truss Technology Workshop in Broward County in early November.

TEXAS: The Texas chapter distributed a questionnaire to all of its members to determine which WTCA program is the highest priority for the chapter. About 30 members responded to the survey, and the results show that the group is most interested in Risk Management and Truss Technician Training. It will plan to set up a Risk Management Seminar this fall, and a Truss Technician Training program in early 1999. Its next general membership meeting will be in late August.

WISCONSIN: The last membership meeting was May 14. This year, the chapter has given several educational programs for building inspectors and tech schools. It will be sending a letter to prospective members in the state with a WTCA member-ship package. Its goal is to have a personal contact with each company in the state that is not a member of WTCA.