

STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE (FORMERLY WOODWORDS)

September/October 1999

Engineering Review Update

The Engineering Review Committee (ERC) monitors, provides advice and offers direction concerning technical matters involving industry standards, technical policy, code enforcement procedures, etc., affecting the metal plate connected wood truss industry and the manufacture and use of trusses. The ERC closely cooperates with and participates in efforts by the Truss Plate Institute and its Technical Advisory Committee, as well as any other code-writing or standards-setting organizations.

TRUSS PLACEMENT PLAN ISSUES

The Engineering Review Committee continues its work on several issues relating to truss placement plans. The ERC is currently engaged in a dialogue with the North Carolina Department of Insurance (NCDOI) regarding whether or not a truss placement plan should be considered an "engineered drawing." The NCDOI's primary concern seems to be with truss placement plans that do not completely match the framing plans prepared by the building designer. The NCDOI's position is that unless the placement plans are identical to the structural framing plan, including truss nomenclature, an engineer's seal is required on the placement plan.

The ERC's position, based on WTCA 1-1995, Standard Responsibilities in the Design Process Involving Metal Plate Connected Wood Trusses, is that the placement plan is not an engineering document, as it is prepared by the truss manufacturer, based on his/her interpretation of the construction documents, with the objective of assisting the contractor in correctly locating the trusses on the building. The truss placement plan is not intended to take the place of the structural framing plan provided by the building designer. The truss submittals, including the design drawings and truss placement plan, must be reviewed and approved by the building designer. We are concerned that the position currently taken by the NCDOI diminishes the important role of the building designer in the design and construction process. We believe WTCA's position with respect to this issue is sound and has been incorporated into policy statements on placement plan review procedures written by code enforcement officials in Fairfax County, Virginia, and the San Diego, California area.

Both of these policy statements have been provided to the NCDOI with a copy of WTCA 1-1995, the Commentary to WTCA 1-1995, WTCA's Recommended Policy of Review of Placement Plans. We are hopeful that the NCDOI will adopt a similar policy. WTCA staff and the North Carolina Chapter have offered to work with the NCDOI in developing its policy.

Refer questions about the ERC to WTCA at 608/274-4849.

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