

**VIRTUAL TRADE SHOW: An In-Depth Look at Select Materials**

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NOVEMBER 2020 • Volume 32, Issue 5





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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE //

By Gary Reichert, Publisher

# Your Safety Is Our Top Priority!

In response to other shows cancelling in 2020, we thought it appropriate to stress the steps we are taking to keep our Construction Rollforming Show exhibitors and attendees safe in this interesting world.

There are essentially three moving parts: the Netherland Plaza Hotel, the Duke Energy Convention Center (DECC), and the show itself. Both the Netherland Plaza and the DECC have taken extraordinary steps to guarantee the safety of their guests. The DECC is a Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC) Star facility. If you would like to learn more about the GBAC Star program, visit <http://bit.ly/BioRisk>. The Netherland Plaza is a Hilton hotel. Hilton has adopted a Clean Stay Program, instituting aggressive cleaning programs, including thorough disinfecting of the rooms. I stayed there a few weeks ago to prepare for the show and even the TV remote was sanitized and wrapped in plastic between stays.

With the hotel and venue taking additional steps, the logical next question is what are we doing? What we've done so far:

- Cancel the Introduction to Rollforming intensive class to allow for social distancing.
- Move attendee registration to the common area outside the hall to facilitate social distancing while in line.
- Hand sanitizing stations placed throughout the hall/common areas.



- Personal hand sanitizer available.
- Allow a maximum of 20% of permitted capacity for Exhibit Hall A (should not inhibit attendee traffic).
- Operate banquet halls at 25% of traditional occupancy.
- Require masks in accordance with state regulations.
- Provide masks sufficient for each attendee and exhibitor to have a new, clean mask each day.
- Conduct voluntary temperature scans during exhibit hall hours. People scanned will receive a "Roofing Elements is COOL" hat commemorating the launch of our new addition, *Roofing Elements Magazine*.

We urge everyone to be safe. But, be at the Construction Rollforming Show. Registration is now open! Visit [https://](https://bit.ly/CRShow2020)

[bit.ly/CRShow2020](https://bit.ly/CRShow2020). If you would like info on exhibiting, sponsoring masks and hand sanitizer, or anything else Construction Rollforming Show-related, contact me at [gary@shieldwallmedia.com](mailto:gary@shieldwallmedia.com) or 715.252.6360. **FN**


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**FRAMEBUILDING** NEWS



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# Strange Times Indeed

An elephant visitor and trade show alternatives

**J**ust when you think things couldn't get any weirder and we are surely destined for some form of "normalcy" by now, someone pulls up to your office with an 11' tall elephant—and I'm not exaggerating. Our entire staff was quietly working on upcoming magazine deadlines when we heard a knock at the front office door. A gentleman asked if we'd seen his "elephant in the parking lot," causing one collective exclamation of, "What did he just say?!"

We filed outside and, sure enough, a life-size elephant came into view, constructed entirely of salvaged metal. Upon

closer examination, we spotted flatware, pipe, oil drums, hand tools, automotive parts, and much, much more. Its owner and creator, write-in presidential candidate Kasey Wells, explained that he designed the massive metal project as a low-cost conversation starter for his campaign trail, while also representing the "elephant in the room."

By the time you have this issue in-hand, the winner of the 2020 presidential campaign will have likely been announced. While I'm not going to speculate on Mr. Wells' chances for presidency, one thing I will predict is that, given my findings while researching for this issue, things are

sure to turn around at some point, hopefully soon.



Write-in presidential candidate Kasey Wells

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With COVID-19 and social distancing added into our common household vocabulary, it's no surprise that many of this year's trade shows were cancelled or transitioned to virtual events. We're still moving forward on our December Construction Rollforming Show while working with the convention center and hotel to implement all necessary safety precautions. See the Publisher's Note on page 3 for additional information.

We've heard from several readers that you miss attending shows and learning about the newest products in the industry, so we created our own Virtual Trade Show! Flip to page 13 to see a portion of the exhibitors in print, then head to our extensive online site at [www.constructionmagnet.com/2020-virtual\\_ts-home-page](http://www.constructionmagnet.com/2020-virtual_ts-home-page) to see all of the sponsors, complete with their own videos. You might not be able to visit their real, live booth this year, but this is the next best thing!

Jessica Franchuk, Managing Editor  
[jessica@shieldwallmedia.com](mailto:jessica@shieldwallmedia.com) **FN**



# Introducing the Shield Wall Media Building Progress Award Program



**W**e wish to recognize those individuals who have made significant impacts on the growth or development of the construction trade. The Metal Roofing Hall of Fame and the Rural Builder Hall of Fame programs ran for many years, but after much discussion, we revised the awards into a single program, now called the Shield Wall Media Building Progress Award. The process is briefly outlined here, with more information to come:

- One award will be given per year.
- Those in the construction industry

can nominate individual candidates.

- Individuals previously inducted into the Metal Roofing or Rural Builder Halls of Fame are eligible.
- Once a nominee has been vetted as qualified, a professional profile will be published online and in all Shield Wall Media titles (time permitting).
- The Nomination Period closes on October 31, 2021, when voting will commence. Ballots will be published in each of our magazines, distributed via email, and available online.
- Voting will continue through the final day of the 2021 Construction Roll-

forming Show. Voting is limited to one vote per person.

- The nominee with the most votes will be announced at the 2022 Garage, Carport & Shed Builder Show and will be bestowed the honor of the very first Shield Wall Media Building Progress Award.
- Additionally, Shield Wall Media will donate \$1,000 to the charity of the recipient's choice (subject to approval; must be a 501(c)(3)).
- Non-winning nominations will be rolled over and included on the next year's ballot. **FN**



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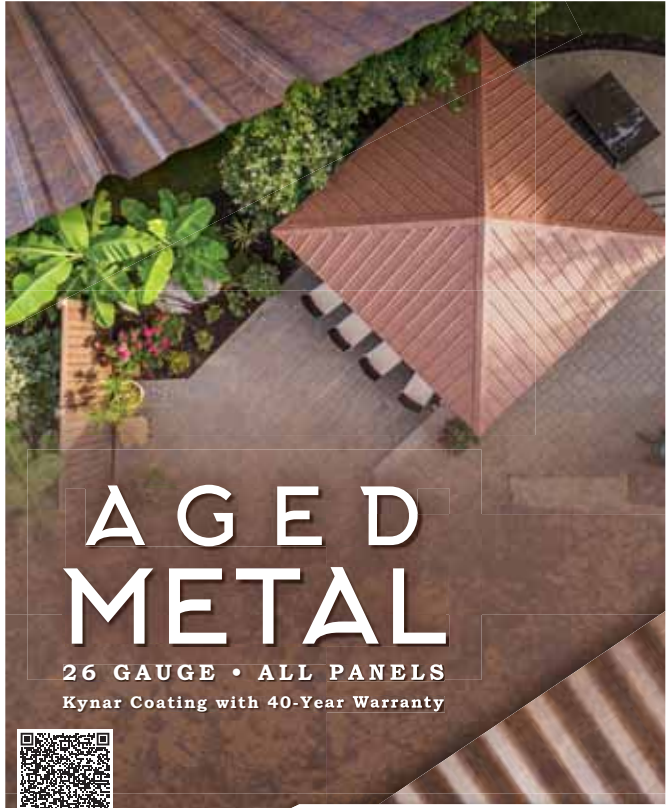
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## EVENTS CALENDAR //

**NOTE:** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many events have been rescheduled or cancelled. We recommend that you contact the show coordinator for information before scheduling travel.

### November 2020

**4-6. Adhesive & Sealant Council Convention and Expo (Virtual).**  
www.ascouncil.org.

**10-12. Greenbuild Virtual International Conference & Expo.**  
www.greenbuildexpo.com.

**16-18. Remodeling Show (Virtual).**  
www.remodelingshow.com.

### December 2020

**10-11. 2nd Annual Construction Rollforming Show.** Duke Energy Convention Center. Cincinnati, Ohio.

www.constructionmagnet.com/  
construction-rollforming-registration.

### January 2021

**12. CANCELLED. Wisconsin Lumber Dealers Leadership Conference.** Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin.  
www.nlassn.org.

**13-15. Construction Safety & Health Conference.** Glendale, Arizona.  
safety.agc.org.

**19-22. World of Concrete.** Las Vegas, Nevada. www.worldofconcrete.com.

**23-27. ASHRAE Winter Conference & AHR Expo.** Chicago, Illinois.  
www.ashrae.org.

**26-28. The International Surface Event.** Las Vegas, Nevada.  
www.intlsurfaceevent.com.

### February 2021

**4-5. 1st Annual Garage, Carport & Shed Builder Show.** Century Center. South Bend, Indiana.  
www.constructionmag.net.com/  
garage-carport-shed-builder-show-home-page.

**9-11. TRANSITIONED TO VIRTUAL. International Builders Show.**  
www.buildersshow.com.

### March 2021

**3-5. Frame Building Expo.** Nashville, Tennessee. www.nfba.org.

### April 2021

**14-16. NEW DATES. International Roofing Expo.** Las Vegas, Nevada.  
www.theroofingexpo.com.  
**FN**

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# Shield Wall Media Recruits Marketing Strategist

**W**e are proud to announce the addition of Robert Carnick to the Shield Wall Media team, effective immediately. His primary responsibility initially will be advertising sales with an expanding role as Shield Wall Media launches new titles and begins to actively pursue industry data and research in our segment of the construction industry. As the Marketing Strategist, Carnick will bring a consultative approach to support our customers' marketing programs.



**Robert Carnick, Marketing Strategist for Shield Wall Media**

Carnick has extensive building products experience in market-

ing from research, product development, trade show management, advertising, sales management, and trade association participation. He received his BS and MBA from Michigan and has been granted two patents.

Please welcome Robert Carnick to his new role! He can be reached directly via email at [robert@shieldwallmedia.com](mailto:robert@shieldwallmedia.com) or phone at 419.202.8850.

## About Shield Wall Media

Shield Wall Media publishes B2B magazines serving the construction industry, which are free to construction tradespeople. Our titles include *Rural Builder*; *Metal Roofing Magazine*; *Rollforming Magazine*; *Frame Building News*; and *Garage, Carport & Shed Builder*. *Roofing Elements Magazine* is rolling out soon, which will address the physical environment and how "elements" like heat, moisture, wind, and sun affect roofing. Additionally, the company produces The Construction Rollforming Show and the Garage, Carport & Shed Builder Show. **FN**



## WANTED!

**Contractors and construction professionals cite locating skilled trades people as one of the major challenges to running their businesses.**

Readers of *Rural Builder*, *Metal Roofing Magazine*, *Frame Building News*, *Rollforming Magazine*, *Garage, Carport & Shed Builder* and *Roofing Elements Magazine* use our publications to stay current in industry developments and best practices.

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# The 2020 Lumber Shortage

The causes, the outlook,  
and what you can do  
in the meantime



**TOP:** LP® SolidStart® LVL surpasses traditional lumber for dimensional consistency and load-carrying capacity.

PHOTO BY LP BUILDING SOLUTIONS

**BOTTOM:** As long as they are installed correctly and maintained, there is no reason a tension fabric cover can't last 15+ years.

PHOTO BY PROTEC ENGINEERED BUILDINGS

■ By Jessica Franchuk

I'd first heard rumblings of a wood shortage earlier this spring, but it wasn't until mid-summer that I saw it firsthand. A trip to our local lumberyard revealed bare shelves that were normally overflowing with product—a mere handful of treated 2 x 4s remained in the many slots delegated to this popular size.

A quick internet search for “lumber shortage 2020,” will yield mostly articles and news briefings about how this shortage is affecting the residential market (which has been booming). According to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), since mid-April 2020, the composite price of lumber “has soared more than 170%. This surge is adding approximately \$16,000 to the price of a new single-family home and more than \$6,000 to the average new apartment.” Of course, there are many other areas of construction that rely on wood as a primary resource, such as the post-frame industry.



Small town newspapers have even reported this issue in their front page headlines, including on the July 9 cover of a Mississippi community paper called the *South Reporter*. There, you'll find the dramatic story of a Chicago-based contractor who was forced to travel more than 500 miles to procure a large purchase of treated lumber. It's now three months later and the supply hasn't recovered.

### What Caused the Shortage?

Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, there were already tariffs on wood between Canada and the U.S. (a hefty 20% on treated lumber) that were causing price and availability issues. Introduce a global health crisis to the mix, and a shortage was inevitable. As states sought to slow the spread of the virus, they implemented statewide restrictions, resulting in the shutdown of many industries including wood treatment facilities. As plants were slowly reopened, new restrictions are in place to allow for social distancing among workers, making it difficult for the supply to "catch up" with a surprisingly increasing demand.

The demand has been steadily growing as a huge portion of the U.S. population continues to work from home, which allows them time to start their "some-day" projects like decks, fences, sheds, and barns. At first, this seemed like great news for the construction industry. Budgeted vacation and entertainment dollars were being poured back into home projects.

In fact, many contractors and manufacturers we've recently talked with are having an incredibly busy and successful year, despite initial concerns after the pandemic first hit. But, with bustling contractor wait lists comes the need for more materials, so now you don't just have the DIY crowd scrambling for those last few 2 x 4s on the shelf—contractors have been forced to search out supplies at every neighboring lumberyard.

### Alternative Materials

A recent poll conducted in one of our weekly e-newsletters revealed that 75% of contractors are interested in or are already pursuing alternative materials as this shortage continues. Where do you stand?

One alternative is to explore the world of metal framing, even if only until the wood supply returns. David Ruth, President of Freedom Machinery, has seen a dramatic increase in sales of cold-formed steel tubing machines. According to Ruth, contractors are tired of standing in line waiting for every wood shipment, so they are buying machines to produce their own materials. To get started with this method (including doing the necessary market research and cost analysis), Ruth suggests the following must-have list:

- A large enough building to house the equipment and the products (you will be producing 10' to 20'-long steel tubing, and the tube mill itself can be 100' to 150' long)
- A source for steel and the money to buy it
- Employees to train (Freedom does offer training)

Another option to look at is tension fabric buildings, especially for agricultural

ers are more than sufficient for many of our tension fabric buildings. With proper planning, these buildings go together as easily as an Erector Set." To make it even easier, they offer training resources to those who make the switch.

Still other builders are seeking options in the engineered lumber market. According to Craig Miles, Director, National Sales and Marketing OSB for LP Building Solutions, "We engineer value and multiple benefits into our products. And for builders, products that minimize corrections on the job and drive quality construction are huge advantages." They offer one of the industry's strongest, stiffest sub-floors, which also features more strands, resin, and wax to provide exceptional moisture resistance—important for post-frame builds.

If you plan on sticking with wood and continuing to hunt for materials, the NAHB suggests adding an escalation clause to your contracts. This enables you to charge the building owner for up to a predetermined percentage of material cost increase—something that could protect you today.

### A Positive Outlook

Many large manufacturers and even smaller suppliers see a return to "normal" on the horizon. Miles shared, "Where we did see builder sentiment, home sales, and demand for LP's products drop at the beginning of the pandemic, these have rebounded sharply and continued to climb, and we have returned to full production."

To give you the best chance of getting the lumber you need when you need it, try these techniques: buy it when you can, not when you need it; ask if they allow preorders; inquire about bulk orders, even if its more than you need right now; ask if paying ahead or paying with different terms will get you to the front of the wait list; and ask if the lumberyard has any sister stores or other supply options, such as transferring materials between them with preorders.

As we hear more from industry experts, we'll share every bit of information with our readers. **FN**



 **ProTec can supply large, clear-span buildings for the agricultural sector.**  
PHOTO BY PROTEC ENGINEERED BUILDINGS

customers. Jon Gustad, Building Sales Manager for ProTec Engineered Buildings, shared how easy this transition is for post-frame builders: "When 'wood guys' think anything steel frame-related, they tend to assume that welders and cutting torches will be involved. In reality, the existing skills and tools of most wood build-

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  - Safety; material handling/storage,
  - Effects of ice/cold on roof anchoring systems; temperature effects on components
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# 2020 FALL VIRTUAL TRADE SHOW *Program*

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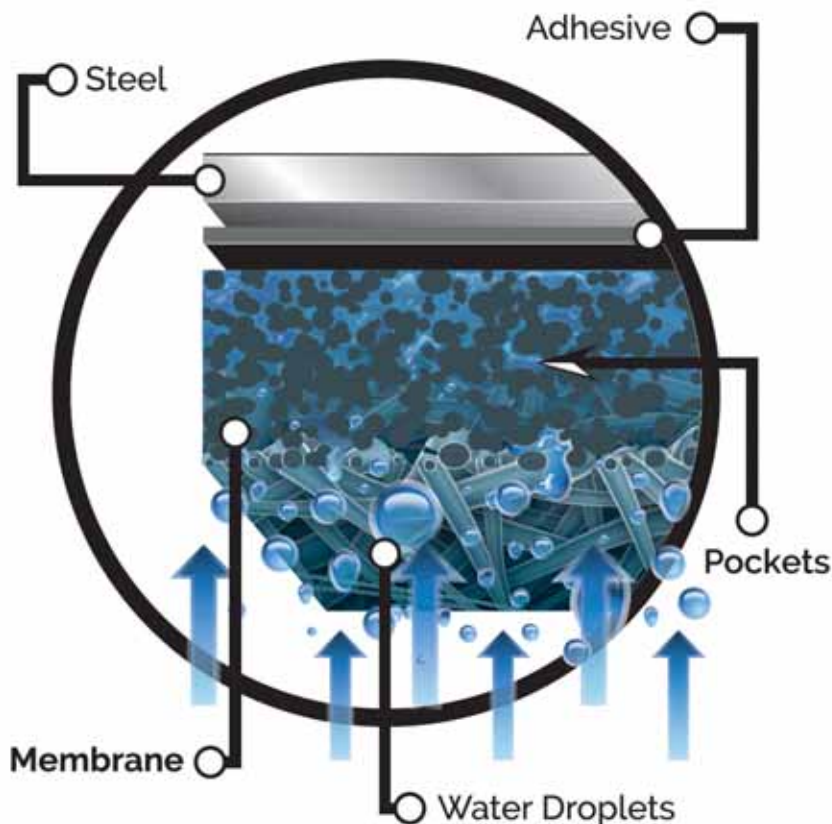
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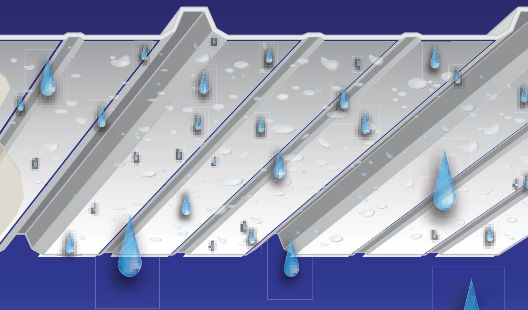
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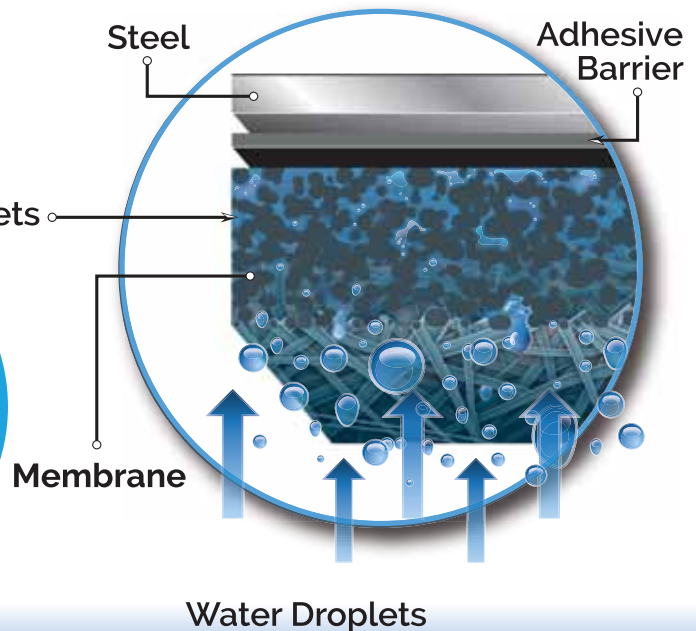
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- 11) Fencing

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In December 2019, Ventco relaunched its website at [www.ProfileVent.com](http://www.ProfileVent.com), with a fresh, uncluttered design, improved navigation, and greater accessibility. Visitors to the new site see products better showcased with features and advantages highlighted in new ways. Content is now being freshened regularly to keep browsers updated on the latest happenings at Ventco.

"We recognize our website is the easiest way for people to find us," owner Marty Rotter says. "We have invested over \$8 million in facilities and equipment at our 118-acre facility," he adds, with more than 70 domestic and international patents and patents pending. "Those roofers that haven't tried ProfileVent should give us a try. We believe they'll be pleasantly surprised with how well it works and how easy it is to work with.

"ProfileVent is simple to install, and saves time and labor," Rotter continues. "It fits under any ridge cap and with any pitch, ranging from 2:12 to 20:12. It won't crack, dent, or rust during shipping or installation and, best of all, it can be rolled out and installed by one person." **FN**

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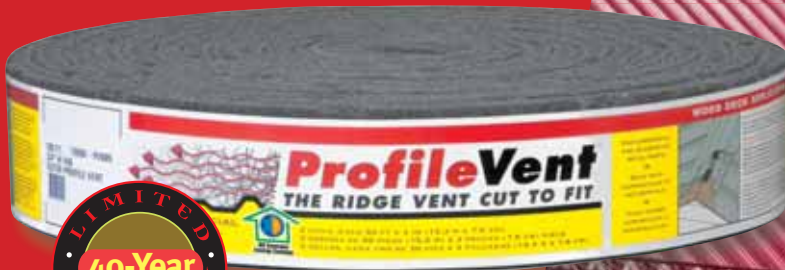
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# DYNAMIC FASTENER



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### DYNAMIC FASTENER

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**A**t MWI Components we offer specialized metal products for customers in the post-frame building industry. Our top priorities consist of quick delivery, excellent service, and producing innovative products that make building on the job site easier.

Since 1985, we have manufactured cupolas, and we provide a variety of sizes ranging from 24" x 24" to 66" x 66" square cupolas, as well as 48" and 84" octagon cupolas. Another one of our original products, the Ridg-Vent®, comes in six different styles, with wider flange options available, and our soffit is available in steel or aluminum with four different trim profiles. We provide pre-painted steel products in over 100 colors, and we can match almost any metal building color available. This variety of rooftop products is designed to help our customers deliver the exact buildings their clients envision.

As a leading manufacturer of equine accessories, we help builders achieve the perfect balance between aesthetics and functionality. Between our Dutch Doors, Sliding Doors, and an in-house powder coat paint line offering 54 unique colors, customers can find the exact combinations to fit their needs. We have also recently added the Vault Latch™. With a

simple grill bar pull system, this horse stall latch is sleeker than ever and minimizes horse play.

We take pride in manufacturing a complete line of round and square track hardware for all industrial, post-frame, farm, and commercial buildings. In late 2006, MWI purchased the slide door track and hardware division of Lawrence Hardware, the original creator of the square track slide door systems. This enables us to offer a complete selection of American-made round and square track hardware.

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Last but not least, we are excited to announce our newest manufactured product—INFINITY SHIELD™. This NEW, cost-efficient foil insulation is offered in Single Bubble Foil/Foil,

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info@mwicomponents.com

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MWI is a leading manufacturer/supplier of post frame products. With 100+ steel colors, almost 30 aluminum colors, and 50+ powder coat colors, the combinations are endless. Create beautiful buildings with MWI's cupolas, ridge-vents, soffit, trim, round/square track & accessories, and stall systems & complete your building's aesthetic with Dutch or Sliding Doors. They also supply Uni-Vent®, sealants & retrofit products, and polycarbonate/PVC panels. Plus, MWI recently began manufacturing their own foil insulation, Infinity Shield™!

Double Bubble Foil/Foil, Single Bubble White/Foil, and Double Bubble White/Foil and is conveniently rolled with NO SEAM on 6' and 8' rolls. Fall in love with our ultra-white bubble's more opaque finish—a result of additives throughout all layers. Plus, our 2" crushed edge tab is extremely useful.

We appreciate our customers' support, and we look forward to serving our clients' needs as they grow. **FN**



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Infinity Shield™ is offered in standard rolls of 4' x 125' Single Bubble Foil/Foil, Double Bubble Foil/Foil, Single Bubble White/Foil and Double Bubble White/Foil. We also conveniently manufacture a no seam 6' x 125' and 8' x 125' roll version of all the available SKUs. Infinity Shield™ is not only extremely cost efficient, but it is also incredibly hassle-free. Additionally, our standard crushed edge tab [2-inch] will result in simplified overlapping. With Infinity Shield™, you won't need to worry about the foil compressing, collapsing or disintegrating, and our ultra-white bubble - a result of additives throughout all layers of our bubble - will provide an impressive opaque finish. Plus, with MWI, you have the ability to place blanket orders, so you can get your foil with shorter lead times!



**NOTE: 2-INCH CRUSHED EDGE TAB PROVIDES  
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# SMARTBUILD SYSTEMS



## COMPANY PROFILE



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SmartBuild Systems is the pole barn industry's only complete design system for post frame structures. Simple enough for anyone to use, this web-based software quickly generates 3D models, material lists, pricing, proposals, and construction documents for almost any post frame building. On average, SmartBuild reduces the time it takes to create bids from 3 hours to about 20 minutes.

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# PLYCO

## CORPORATION

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- **Editorial Feature:** Post Frame Directory, Product Profiles
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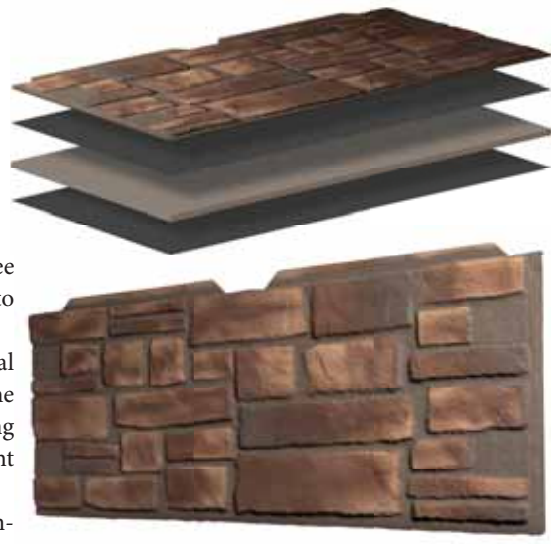
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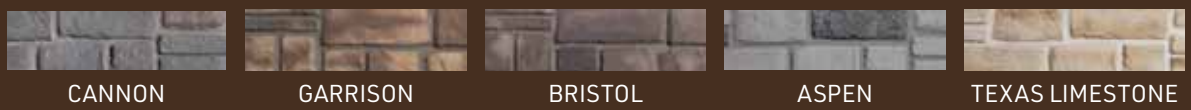
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# The Plane Truth

Best practices for handling trusses on the job site

■ By Sean Shields, With Contributions by Jim Vogt, P.E.

If you've installed long-span wood roof trusses long enough, you've likely experienced the "spaghetti" effect, where the truss members bend or buckle out of plane and make the truss very difficult to handle. It's one thing if it happens while you're hoisting a single truss into place. It's quite another when a group of trusses are already installed and they all start to flex out of plane together!

Why does it happen? Is it because they were designed wrong? Is it because they were manufactured incorrectly? Is it because they're "cheap" or made with inferior raw materials? These are common questions and accusations, but they aren't accurate. This article, and the series it kicks off, will look at how trusses are designed to function in the structural framework of a building, and why it's so essential to handle these structural components correctly on the job site to avoid the "spaghetti" effect and other issues.

## How Trusses Work

Since their invention in 1952, metal plate-connected wood roof trusses have proven themselves to be the most economical and material-efficient structural framing solution for many of today's buildings. Their superior performance is due to the triangulation of the chords and webs, and their subsequent ability to efficiently transfer loads applied to



the top or bottom chords of a truss to its bearing locations.

Further, the ability of the metal connector plates to efficiently connect the chord and web members together, and transfer the member forces across the joints, are what has driven the market to replace traditional stick-framing methods with trusses in almost 80% of all wood roof structures in North America.



**Metal plate-connected wood roof trusses have been in use for nearly 70 years.**

It's important to note, however, that trusses are designed to only support loads applied within a specific, typically vertical, plane. Trusses are narrow in relation to their depth and span and thus require lateral support. Without this lateral sup-

**During manufacture, individual trusses are assembled on large tables, then stacked and bundled.**







port, the truss, or a portion of its members, will buckle out-of-plane (i.e. lateral bending) under far less load than the truss is designed to resist when applied in an unintended manner. This lateral bending increases as the truss span lengthens, which explains why it is more difficult to keep longer span trusses in plane throughout the installation process. Once a truss is subject to loads (even gravity loads) outside of those planes it is specifically designed to support, you have potential to experience the “spaghetti” effect.

### How Trusses Are Made

From a manufacturing standpoint, the most efficient way to produce a roof truss is in the horizontal position. If you haven’t been inside a truss manufacturing facility before, touring one would be well worth your time. You’ll witness how the individual wood members are cut and assembled on large tables, the plates are then tacked in place, and then a large press embeds the plates evenly. After the truss is assembled, it’s typically put on a conveyor that takes it out into the yard where each truss is

stacked and bundled with trusses of the same or similar size for a particular job. These bundles are then picked up by forklift and placed on the trailer of a truck to be transported to the job site.

All of this is to emphasize that while the trusses are typically manufactured in a horizontal orientation, they are minimally handled as individual trusses in this orientation. Why? Again, because metal plate-connected wood trusses have significantly reduced strength while oriented flatwise and lateral bending can easily cause dam-



**One of the best ways to minimize lateral bending is to limit the amount each truss is handled.**

age. Banding the trusses together provides greater rigidity to the bundle of trusses and minimizes out-of-plane bending.

### Handling Trusses on the Job Site

The effects of banding groups of trusses is beneficial for the manufacturer, but it doesn’t help the installer who is tasked with handling individual trusses during installation. What can be done to minimize lateral bending on individual trusses in the field? Here are three best practices:

First, talk with whomever is delivering the trusses to the job site. The next article in this series will address site preparation and best practices for placement and storage, but it’s important to note that one of the best ways to minimize lateral bending is to limit the amount each truss is handled. Ensuring the trusses are delivered on the job site and off-loaded to a location optimal for installation requires planning and good communication. Ideally, this

## Best Handling Practices During Truss Installation

- 1 Communicate delivery details ahead of time.
- 2 Ensure adequate capacity for truss handling equipment.
- 3 Adequately brace the first truss to the ground.



**The lifting capacity of the equipment you're using should far exceed the weight of the trusses you are installing.**

happens before the truck shows up on site.

Second, make sure the equipment you are using to lift the trusses into place is adequate for the job. An upcoming article will specifically cover best practices for different kinds of equipment. In this context, the key element is ensuring that the lifting capacity and reach of the equipment far exceeds the weight of the trusses you are installing and distance the machinery extends to place each truss.

When picking up individual trusses, maneuver them in the vertical, or in-plane, position as much as possible, taking special care to minimize lateral bending. When lifting a truss off the ground, it's best to have more than one pick point so the weight is distributed between two or more points, as opposed to being concentrated in one point at or near the peak. Longer span trusses require multiple pick

points as well as strongbacking of adequate length and stiffness to keep the truss from deflecting out of plane.

Third, adequately brace the first truss installed to ground bracing and all subsequent trusses to it and each other to ensure the trusses remain in-plane throughout the installation process.

### **Consequences of Lateral Bending**

The primary purpose of roof trusses are to provide structural resistance to anticipated loads over the life of the structure. This may seem basic, but it's vital to understand the implications of that statement. Again, all of the loads a truss is designed to resist are within the plane of the truss. The truss is not designed to resist or withstand deflection out-of-plane. When this occurs, significant damage can occur to one or more joints in a truss.

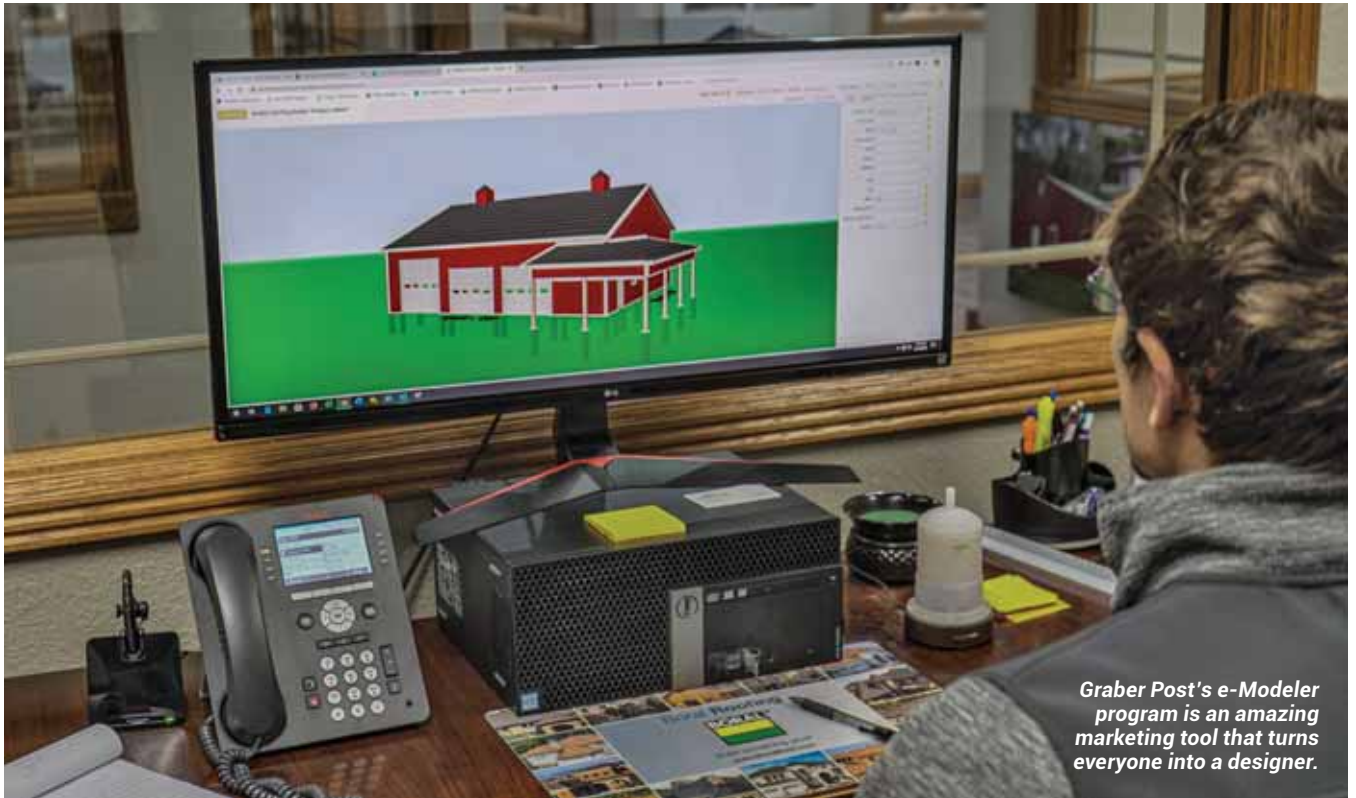
Sometimes the damage is evident during installation. A web member or chord may crack or break. A metal connector plate may begin to pull out of the wood or even come off. Installers can spot this

kind of damage without great difficulty and an appropriate repair can be provided and implemented in the field. In some cases, however, the damage caused by lateral bending may not be immediately evident. This can lead to unexpected performance issues later on in the life of the building. At that point, repairs or replacement can cause serious headaches for the building owner.

### **The Bottom Line**

To the greatest extent possible, avoid lateral bending of trusses during the installation process. This can cause significant damage to a truss, sometimes in ways that are not readily apparent. To minimize the potential for lateral bending, make sure the trusses are delivered to a location on the job site that reduces necessary handling, only use equipment that allows you to move individual trusses in a plumb and upright position and enable multiple pick points, and adequately brace trusses during installation to ensure they remain in-plane. **FN**





*Graber Post's e-Modeler program is an amazing marketing tool that turns everyone into a designer.*

# Success Automated, By Design

Utilizing software to design and bid post-frame jobs

■ By Alli Gordon

**S**elling building supplies to post-frame contractors is a complex process. Since bids take hours to complete, builders often ask distributors for help. Even on jobs where the contractor does the final takeoff, suppliers still waste tons of time entering data and translating it into internal part numbers. And because manual data entry has an inherently high error rate, incorrect shipments and expensive hotshot deliveries are almost always sure to follow. But for

builders working with Graber Post Buildings Inc., success is automated, by design.

Contractor customers using Graber Post's proprietary version of SmartBuild Systems swap time doing bids with live-design client sessions and automated, push-button ordering. Using the pole barn industry's only complete design system for post-frame structures generates more business and higher sales for them both.

Started by Glen Graber in Montgomery, Indiana, in 1973, Graber Post is the post-frame industry's acknowledged leader in

manufacturing and material supply. Graber Post prides itself on seamlessly selling materials to a growing legion of loyal contractors who credit the company with freeing up their time to close more business.

"We have dreamed of this kind of automation forever and now it is a reality," said Graber Post General Manager Chad Wilson. "We worked with the SmartBuild people to make sure SmartBuild does what we know our contractors need. SmartBuild dramatically changes the way our contractors do business and how we do business with our contractors."

## Post-Frame Providers

Graber Post is known for its extensive product line, pole barn kits, hardware store, and delivery and installation services. The company has its own custom truss plant and specializes in the design and manufacture of pre-engineered wood truss systems. When requested, they draw truss designs from customer blueprints and build to spec. More recently, Graber Post began manufacturing laminated columns that won't split, warp, or twist, allowing for easier framing and finishing.

Harkening back to their beginnings as a three-man Amish building crew just trying to support their families, Graber Post still prioritizes manufacturing and distributing all the components neces-

sary for post-frame projects—a large and complicated undertaking when working with both the retail and wholesale markets. In fact, before SmartBuild, Graber Post was so dissatisfied with the software programs available for post-frame design and the direct distribution of materials to contractors, they considered writing their own software.

## Courting Contractors

The standard operating procedure for post-frame contractors is laborious and inefficient. They get a lead and interview the client over the phone, trying to gather all the specs using a checklist created in Excel. After the interview, they spend two hours doing a material takeoff, manually adding quantities and pricing to the

spreadsheet to generate a bid. They hope to get the bid to the client within 48 hours, but it's always closer to a week. Builders know the best practice is to drop off the bid to the client in person but, making up for lost time, often send it via email. This process wins contractors roughly 1 out of every 7 bids—a mere 15% close rate.

When they do close a deal, contractors typically review the bid, ensuring they submit the exact materials (but often lean on the supplier to build the final material takeoff). Looking to help contractors increase their close rates—while alleviating its own frustration with the tedious back-and-forth of assisting with bids—Graber Post tried numerous post-frame design systems throughout the years. All of the programs left them disappointed, as none facilitated live design, integrated with the Paradigm accounting program, and automated the takeoff and bid processes.

## Design and Distribute

When SmartBuild Systems' CEO, Keith Dietzen, approached Wilson, it was evident that both companies had a lot to gain. SmartBuild needed an established, knowledgeable supplier to test the system and provide meaningful input. Graber Post was searching for a materials supplier sales tool that automated the core functions of post frame and made them more attractive to contractor customers. An industry-changing association was born.

According to Dietzen, "Graber Post enjoys an unparalleled reputation that is well deserved. We have been working with them and have gained an appreciation for the depth of their knowledge and the care they exercise on behalf of their customers. Graber Post has helped mold SmartBuild into the system that gives the industry what it has always needed."

SmartBuild Systems is web-based software that's simple enough for anyone to use. Guided by a menu-driven set of prompts, SmartBuild automatically:

- Designs a 3D model and framing
- Updates changes in real-time
- Compiles a bid and order using a custom database
- Builds a cut list for all sheathing

## Are You Ready for SmartBuild Systems? Check These 5 Signs:

**1** You have a serious case of whiplash from the tedious back-and-forth process of helping contractors with bids. Without SmartBuild, contractors are taking specs from buyers over the phone, then spending hours manually adding quantities and pricing to spreadsheets. They try submitting the exact materials but lean on you to build the final material takeoff.

**2** Your fingers and your finances are taking a hit from the man-hours needed to fulfill the order. Even on jobs where the contractors do the final takeoff, you or your staff are spending 200 hours per year manually entering data into your system and translating it into internal part numbers.

**3** You're constantly getting high fives from hotshot delivery drivers because your error rate is so huge. Because contractors manually enter data into spreadsheets, they have a high error rate. As such, these errors often result in the delivery of wrong window sizes or incorrect color schemes. So, as a precaution—you routinely throw an additional \$400-\$500 worth of product on the quote, as it's cheaper than sending missing items via hotshot delivery.

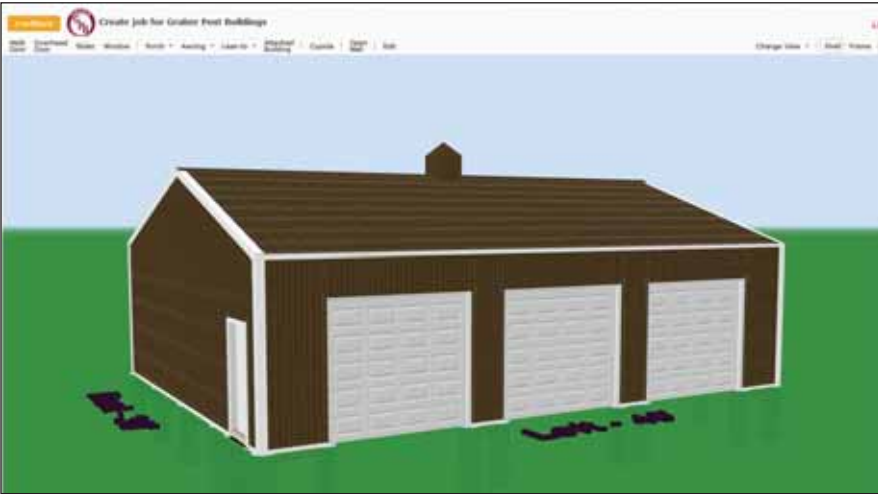


**4** You'd like to add more contractors, but they spend most of their time chasing deals they never close. Without SmartBuild, it can take contractors up to a week to get bids to prospective clients. Plus, in an effort to make up for lost time, they often email the bid rather than the preferred practice of delivering it in person. This inefficient and impersonal way of doing business costs contractors 85% of the jobs they bid.

**5** You wish you could increase your annual sales with the push of a button. Now you can!

If you're experiencing these common distributor disturbances—then all signs point to it being time for SmartBuild—the complete design system for post-frame structures!





**Contractor customers using Graber Post's proprietary version of SmartBuild Systems swap time doing bids with live-design client sessions and automated, push-button ordering.**

and trim

- Generates construction drawings
- Calculates price, including materials, labor, and sales tax
- Creates a thorough description of the building
- Populates the sales contract
- Emails and prints a copy for the buyer on the spot

After partnering with SmartBuild, work began on Graber Post's proprietary setup. The team at SmartBuild helped Wilson and his crew download the entire in-house inventory database, price quotes, and color schemes into the Graber Post version of the program. SmartBuild also created an entire part-number system, as well as standard sales contracts and bid form templates. Once complete, Graber Post set up contractors on its custom platform, showing them how easy it is to use the data established in the master account. It took little effort for the contractors to get up and running.

According to Royden Wagler, Graber Post's Technical Lead, "With Smart-

Build, we can get new contractors set up in less than a week and all of their comments are positive." Continuing, he said, "We've added 29 new builder accounts just because they heard we have the SmartBuild system that cuts the bid time to 16 minutes."

Impressed with the functionality of SmartBuild and the positive feedback from current customers, Graber Post recently demonstrated the SmartBuild program at a trade show. When they effortlessly offered the software to contractors in return for buyer commitments, it was clear that relicensing the software is also a powerful sales tool.

Wagler, explaining why contractors love SmartBuild, said, "It makes designing and bidding easier because they can draw up every door and window in a live session. And they can get more quotes and takeoffs done, so they save time and satisfy more customers."

### **"E" Stands for "Everyone"**

Though originally developed to au-

tomate the core functions of post frame between the builder and supplier, Graber Post envisioned more. Together with SmartBuild, Graber embedded the same design technology on its customer-facing website. Dubbed the e-Modeler, the program is an amazing marketing tool that turns everyone into a designer, including the DIY crowd, building buyers, and farmers. Almost immediately—through word of mouth alone—daily leads began pouring into the Graber Post website. As new users were added, many large companies turned into customers.

But what about the smaller builders who can't afford a software seat? In today's uncertain financial climate, access to SmartBuild Systems could literally be what keeps them in business. Fortunately, the Graber Post/SmartBuild partnership continues growing for the good of the industry. The new "Pay as You Go" license structure allows builders to use the SmartBuild system—with the proprietary Graber Post database—and only pay by the job. Now, even the smallest contractor can increase their sales, expand their customer base, and operate as a 21st century tech-led company.

Summing up the effect of complete design software on everyone in the post-frame industry, Chad Wilson said, "This is great for them and great for us. SmartBuild is truly a game changer." **FN**

*For more information about Graber Post, visit [www.graberpost.com](http://www.graberpost.com).*

# Job Site Waste Management

How to reduce, handle, and dispose of post-job debris

By Jessica Franchuk

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 569 million tons of construction and demolition (C&D) debris were generated in the United States in 2017. This massive quantity of waste was more than twice the amount of municipal solid waste that was generated in the same year. Now, they go on to clarify that demolition represents more than 90% of the total C&D debris generation, with construction representing less than 10%. Still, that leaves us with an astounding 56.9 million tons of debris from construction alone.

As members of the construction industry, what can post-frame builders do to help? Read on for ways to do your part.

## Get Ahead of It

One of the easiest and most cost-effective methods to deal with waste is to work to reduce it before you're even on the job site. Today's software programs are able to plan projects down to the exact cuts and the precise amount of fasteners needed, reducing the waste and excess generated once the build has begun. Head to page 31 of this issue for more information on how one software system, SmartBuild, has been working with Graber Post to increase bid efficiency and decrease job site waste.

Taking the proper care to be precise in planning as well as on-site measuring/cutting could mean the difference between a small bin of debris and an entire dumpster full. If you have any inexperienced



*Know you'll have more than a truck bed worth of job site waste? It may be more economical (and easier) to order a rental roll-off dumpster to be brought to the job site prior to starting the build.*

members on the crew, take the time to properly train them to avoid mistakes that can result in not just lost money and time, but unnecessary trash in the already over-filled landfills.

## Handling Waste On-Site

Once you're on the job site, the most important thing is to make a plan before you start and try to remain organized (as well as enforcing the waste management plan/strategy with all workers). Determine ahead of time which items can be reused or repurposed, what can be sold as scrap, items that can be recycled, and those that are destined for the dump. It's a lot easier to have several designated piles through-

out the build than try to sort through a huge heap at the end.

If you know you'll have a significant amount of actual "garbage," one option is to rent a roll-off dumpster. You may have local options, and Waste Management has several sizes available and services most of the continental U.S. Be sure to avoid using a small, residential waste bin, as there are strict limitations on what materials can and cannot go into them (not to mention most C&D debris is too heavy). Standard items to keep out of them include: concrete, construction lumber, asphalt, shingles, drywall, metals, bricks, doors, windows, plumbing, and stumps/wood from clearing the site.





and drop-off of all waste material. Haultail utilizes their proprietary database of all local landfills, weigh stations, and donation centers, ensuring that any and all waste is disposed of properly. Anything that can still be used will be donated accordingly by the company.

For additional insight into ways to reuse or recycle post-job waste, visit the EPA's web page at [www.epa.gov/smm/sustainable-management-construction-and-demolition-materials](http://www.epa.gov/smm/sustainable-management-construction-and-demolition-materials). **FN**

◀◀ **In 2016, Waste Management vowed to recycle 20 million tons of waste annually by the year 2020.** PHOTO COURTESY OF WASTE MANAGEMENT

◀◀ **In 2017, construction and demolition debris accounted for more than twice the municipal solid waste.** PHOTO COURTESY OF WASTE MANAGEMENT



◀◀ **Sturdy and reusable up to five times, contractor bags are great for smaller jobs.** PHOTO COURTESY OF HAULTAIL

### Post-Job Disposal

Now that the job is done, what do you do with the leftover debris and waste? Anything that can be recycled, resold, or reused is easy to manage. Everything else can be easy to handle, too.

One simple option is the aforementioned roll-off rental dumpster. Order it prior to the job start, fill 'er up, then give them a call to have it picked up and hauled away. Don't need anything quite so large? For smaller jobs, remodels, and building add-ons, try looking at Haultail. This on-demand delivery service was built to pick up and deliver items of any size, as well as haul junk and debris from construc-

tion sites. Their tear-resistant, woven construction bags can each hold up to 110 pounds, be used up to five times, and are easily recyclable at the end of their useful life. Their durability and patented poly-woven plastic fiber construction make them rugged enough to stand up to many C&D uses. The bags are easy to find in over 10,000 national home improvement retailers. The idea of Haultail started with the woven bags, which were created for contractors who were in need of heavy-duty options for debris disposal. The on-demand delivery service became a natural extension of the business, offering seamless pickup



# Snow & Rain Management

Industry experts share their top tips and tricks



[www.aceclamp.com](http://www.aceclamp.com)

- If your project is in snow country and you plan on installing rooftop solar arrays, it would be advantageous to consider the placement of your snow retention system in advance. Often, snow rails are an afterthought. It's essential to plan the PV array orientation in concert with the snow retention system to ensure there is enough room for the snow guard placement. Plan both simultaneously so that local

building codes are met and both systems function correctly.

- It's important to understand the design load and torque values for the clamps that anchor the snow retention system to the roof. The design load resistance of the system is based on real-life test results conducted on the type of roof that is on your project. Overtighten, and the roof can become damaged, or the fasteners can strip out. Undertighten and a moderate snow load may tear the snow rails from the roof, resulting in roof damage and leaks into the interior.
- Read and understand the manufacturer's installation instructions. If there's

something that you don't understand, call the manufacturer for clarification—don't guess.

- Never underestimate the weight and power of snow, especially when wet. Serious injuries have been recorded for years when systems are not properly specified or installed. Only trained or certified roofing specialists should install new snow guard systems.



[www.chemlink.com](http://www.chemlink.com)

- One important consideration when



planning snow management for a post-frame structure is the building's geographical location. Will a snowshoe work? Or does it need an engineered system based on the average annual snowfall/temperature/elevation?

- Just as important is the roof pitch and snowshoe placement.
- When installing chemically adhered snow guards, keep an eye on the day's temperature. Application temperatures should be above 40 degrees.
- Apply adhesive snow guards to a clean, dry surface for the best adhesion (clean with 91% isopropyl rubbing alcohol prior to application).



[www.doorbrim.com](http://www.doorbrim.com)

- Plan for sufficient overhangs to prevent leaks around doors and windows.
- Ensure the roof runoff is directed away from all door and window openings.
- Install rain diverters above first floor doors on two-story structures or elevations with high gable ends.
- Rain diverters are a great option to prevent leaks on in-swing doors.

## **DYNAMIC FASTENER**

[www.dynamicfastener.com](http://www.dynamicfastener.com)

- When planning a snow/rain management system, make sure you know the substrate type (whether its 2X material, plywood, etc.). Knowing the substrate and choosing the proper fasteners for the particular substrate helps ensure you will attain the strongest possible system.
- Check for engineering. Buying your snow guards from a manufacturer that

tested their products in the specific substrate being used on your job will facilitate the best performing system.

- When installing mounting brackets, it is ideal to fill all the mounting holes with fasteners. If filling all holes is not possible, the upslope holes must be filled.
- Also, when installing mounts, fastening to the roof panel alone is not recommended. These mounts must be attached with mechanical fasteners to the roof substrate.



Roofing Ventilation & Accessories

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- Care needs to be taken with snow retention on post-frame buildings. The safety of people and property is the biggest concern. Where applicable, snow retention should be used where a snow or ice "slide" can occur, resulting in injury or damage.
- Factors such as where the building is located, which way it is oriented, whether it is windswept, and the direction of the prevailing wind should all be taken into consideration.
- For rain management, always use 7" commercial gutters with downspouts and slash guards to move the water away from the structure.
- When installing snow retention devices, make sure they are spaced properly and according to the manufacturer's recommendations.



[www.s-5.com](http://www.s-5.com)

- One of the most important things to

consider when planning for a snow management system is the vendor's proof of engineering. Snow guard systems are science-based, so manufacturers should be able to provide the data behind their products.

- Proof of testing is also essential for the same reason as stated above.
- A tip for choosing the right snow guards for each specific roof is to make sure the product is compatible with the roof in terms of longevity, method of attachment, and weatherability. A metal roof typically has a 40- to 80-year service life. The snow management system should, too.
- Ask to see the warranty before you buy and read the fine print!



[www.snoblox-snojax.com](http://www.snoblox-snojax.com)

- Consulting with a reputable snow guard manufacturer to determine the best system options prevents numerous pitfalls down the road.
- Once a decision has been made regarding the style of snow guards to be used, always have the manufacturer provide a project-specific layout. This ensures that the load is properly distributed and the system can effectively manage the snow load for the life of the roof.
- Log the local ground snow load, roof pitch, run, and width of each roof area. This information must be accurate in order to determine the correct layout for the project.
- A discussion about snow retention on metal roofs should be done early in the construction planning of the metal roof. Many customers with new metal roof systems are completely unaware of the dangers of sliding snow and ice until after they have suffered gutter and vent pipe damage. **FN**



# Function Meets Design

**M**ultipurpose builds are popping up around the country; you'll see why after taking a peek at this beauty. Kansas-based Quality Structures worked with the owner to marry horse stalls with storage in an overall footprint that is just shy of 3,000 square feet—plenty of space for both function and comfort.

A plethora of doors—four overhead, three walk, four Dutch, and two bale—make it easy to move equipment, feed, and the family's prized horses in and out, while seven windows provide ample natural light. The horses themselves enjoy three roomy 12' x 12' stalls plus a handy 12' x 12' wash bay.

To keep the building safe from the hazards of moisture and microbes in the soil, 22" Plasti-Sleeves were used for all foundation posts. This will allow the barn to stand for many years to come.

Protecting from above is a 29-gauge exposed-fastener metal roof in Burnished Slate with a color-coordinated gutter system. A vented 3' cupola adds a classic touch while also allowing for critical air movement. The roofline is visually accented with symmetrical 4' dormers flanking each side and roof extensions at the peak. Matching eyebrow overhangs dress up the walk doors and tie it all together. **FN**







## PROJECT DETAILS

**Builder:** Quality Structures

**Location:** Rural Kansas City, Missouri

**Primary Use:** Equine shelter plus storage

**Project Size:** 36' x 48' x 12' center structure with 12' x 48' x 12' open lean-to and 14' x 48' x 12' enclosed lean-to

**Primary Supplier:** Quality Structures

**Roofing & Cladding:** Quality Structures 29-Gauge Panels in Burnished Slate and Taupe

**Overhead Doors:** C.H.I. Overhead Doors

**Walk Doors:** Masonite

**Windows:** Simonton

**Insulation:** Solex

**Foundation Products:** Plasti-Sleeve

**Fasteners:** Atlas Building Products

**Stalls:** Saratoga Stalls

**Cupola:** Cannonball



For additional information, visit [www.qualitystructures.com](http://www.qualitystructures.com).

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Known bondholders, mortgages, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities: None. 12. Tax status: Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months. 13. Publisher title: Frame Building News. 14. Issue date for circulation data below: August 2020. 15. The extent and nature of circulation: A. Total number of copies printed (Net press run). Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 19,000. Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 19,098. B. Paid/requested circulation. 1. Mailed outside-county paid subscriptions/requested. Average number of copies each issue during the preceding 12 months: 19,000. Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 19,000. 2. Mailed in-county paid subscriptions/requested. Average number of copies each issue during the preceding 12 months: 50. 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