

WINTER 2007

# OFF THE WALL

An Industry Publication by the Wall-Ceiling & Carpentry Industries of New York, Inc.

## New York City Gets Tough On Scaffold Safety

— See page 12



**Christmas Party**  
**Photos...pages 6-11**

# CALENDAR

2007

MARCH	14 (WED.)	7:30 AM	BOARD MEETING	OFFICE
	23 (FRI.)	7:30 PM	DINNER/DANCE	TERRACE ON THE PARK
APRIL	11 (WED.)	7:30 AM	BOARD MEETING	OFFICE
	17 (TUES.)	6:00 PM	MEMBERSHIP MEETING	TBA/MANHATTAN
	17 (TUES.)		SEMINAR	TBA/MANHATTAN
MAY	9 (WED.)	7:30 AM	BOARD MEETING	OFFICE
	15 (TUES.)	6:00 PM	MEMBERSHIP MEETING	OFFICE
	23-27		WCC CONVENTION	BERMUDA
JUNE	13 (WED.)	7:30 AM	BOARD MEETING	OFFICE
	18 (MON.)		GOLF OUTING	NO. HEMPSTEAD CC
JULY	11 (WED.)	7:30 AM	BOARD MEETING	OFFICE
AUG	8 (WED.)	7:30 AM	BOARD MEETING	OFFICE
	21 (TUES.)		BARBECUE	WESTBURY MANOR

## OFF THE WALL

*Off the Wall* is published through the Promotional Fund by the Association of Wall-Ceiling & Carpentry Industries of New York for the benefit of the membership. It is distributed to members, associate members, union affiliates, and legislators. Editorial contributions, including pictures and story ideas, are welcome and should be forwarded to the WC&C office, 125 Jericho Tpke., Suite 301, Jericho, NY, 11753.

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*From the  
Executive Director  
Joseph Olivieri*

## The Work Is There But Worker Dynamics Are Changing — Be Ready!

**T**he construction industry is booming and at the same time employment dynamics are changing. With the economy continuing to grow at a rate of 3 percent per year, a projected lack of skilled workers to meet job demands is a growing concern for WC&C members. According to the Bureau of Labor statistics, one million skilled workers will be needed to fill construction jobs in 2012. Yet, by that year, 19 percent of workers will be at least 55 and thinking of retiring. Our industry needs to look to various groups to fill positions vacated by a retiring work force and positions created to meet an increased work demand.

As the population becomes more diversified, (immigration is expected to account for about two-thirds of population increases with Asian and Hispanic populations both growing by more than 30 percent by 2050) there is an increasing pool of potential labor for us to employ. As an industry, we have to reach out to educate, recruit, train and mentor this future work force.

On a national level, organizations like the National Association of Women in Construction and the Society for Marketing Professional Services are already working together to let the world know that construction is a viable career for everyone.

One important step our local labor/management team can take is to jointly produce a new educational video to be shown in high schools, directed toward graduating seniors and demonstrating the many opportunities and career enhancements available to them in union construction. Additionally, to further engage young adults, labor and management should define and prepare a practical college level curriculum leading to an Associate's degree.

Locally, an organization called NEW, (Nontraditional Employment for Women), is a nonprofit establishment that trains women for jobs in the building trades, helping qualified women access careers that provide economic independence to themselves and their families. NEW serves

employers by providing them with trained, job-ready workers.

It offers a variety of programs designed to meet the needs of both labor and industry and to provide unions and employers with highly motivated and job-ready women. Their graduates have an excellent record of completing their apprenticeships. The organization's longstanding relationships with local apprenticeship programs and employers provide a seamless network of training and job placement. If your company wants to learn more about NEW, visit their website at [www.new-nyc.org](http://www.new-nyc.org).

There are many sources of minority workers and our unions are pursuing this too. But remember this: It is manifestly important that the workers you hire are fully qualified. Know that your workers can do what they must do to fulfill their job. Know that the workers you hire are OSHA certified (and able to prove it). Know that your workers can meet the demands of unforeseen obstacles while on the job so that your work will continue its high quality reputation.

As the construction boom continues, it becomes more and more important to be conscious of safety issues, financial stability and prompt pay issues, and to have your OSHA approved safety programs in place. At the same time, be careful of the jobs you bid on. Don't over commit. More than one company has gone down during good times because they took on work they weren't capable of completing on time or of providing quality work.

Things are looking good. The construction market is opening up. It is fast-paced. Be ready. — **Joe Olivieri**



*From the  
PRESIDENT  
Michael Weber*

## Lots Of Things Are Happening!

**F**or those contractors who have expressed interest in cold-formed steel projects, we are working with AWC and the Steeling Framing Alliance to sponsor a STEELDoing It Right seminar in the New York Area. At the time of this writing we are hoping to have the program together for April, 2007. As planning becomes more concrete, we will get the word out to our members via our website.

STEELDoing It Right instruction covers the essential knowledge and techniques for the correct installation of cold-formed steel for most applications and projects. The content of the seminars is based on industry accepted standards and best practices and includes discussion of recent trends and the latest products. The program consists of three days of instruction, given in a format that promotes interaction between participants and the professional engineers who are the instructors. Estimators and project managers should attend.

You can download a brochure describing the seminar from the AWC website at [www.awci.org](http://www.awci.org).

The relatively mild winter we are experiencing has been good for our work crews. We have been able to get jobs started sooner and completed more quickly with lower down time because of the good weather. But it is important to remember that it is still winter; a season where more job-related accidents can occur. Keep safety first on the job.

With spring rapidly approaching we are once again looking forward to negotiating with the Empire State District Council of Carpenters Collective Bargaining Council and Patrick Morin, Regional Director and President of Region 2. In viewing the Empire

State Council's website, [www.empirestatecarpenters.org](http://www.empirestatecarpenters.org), I was impressed that there is a link on their home page titled *Increasing Market Share is our Goal* "the higher the market share, the higher the wage." This encourages me that our union counterparts are on the same track as we are and that our labor/management negotiations will result in our contractors being able to be more competitive in the bidding process.

As everyone in today's world knows, email has become the fastest and arguably, the most important means of communications available. This is especially true among businesses. For our association, as we continue to provide viable information and programs for our membership, email is very important. We are currently working to update the WC&C website, [www.wcc-ny.com](http://www.wcc-ny.com), to facilitate better and more interactive communications including email capabilities. We hope to have these improvements working soon.

Meanwhile, lien lists are being compiled and we expect to have this information available to our members on our website in the 2nd quarter.

Finally, we continue to work with the New York City District Council of Carpenters Labor Technical College on the Journey-Level Skills Advancement Program. Labor Technical College offers skill advancement training for mechanics through the Journey Level Training Schedule. Members interested in receiving a current schedule can call the school at 212.727.2224 and a copy will be mailed.

Stay warm. I look forward to seeing you at the WC&C Dinner Dance on March 23rd. — *Michael Weber*

# AWCI Opens New Headquarters

*WC&C President  
Mike Weber (left)  
with Board Member  
Lee Zaretsky at  
AWCI Headquarters  
Grand Opening  
Party in Falls  
Church, VA on  
January 15th.*



## Bush's Budget Plan: Boosts For Some Construction Programs, Cuts For Others

*By Tom Ichniowski, ENR*

President Bush's fiscal year 2008 budget proposal has welcome news for some federal construction programs but disappointing numbers for others.

Transmitted to Congress Feb. 5, the plan recommends increases for highways, mass transit, and other accounts, but also seeks to clamp down on growth in non-defense, non-homeland security areas. That means cuts in programs such as water infrastructure and airport grants.

The major policy news accompanying the columns of numbers is the administration's proposal to overhaul the aviation financing system. The overhaul would shift to a program based mostly on fuel taxes and user fees and eliminate current aviation excise taxes.

Bush said at a Feb. 5 cabinet meeting that his \$2.9-trillion budget plan "is realistic, it's achievable, and it's got good reforms in it."

But the release of the proposal is only the opening move in the lengthy contest over federal spending for the next fiscal year. The White House recommendations face a steep, uphill path on Capitol Hill, because both houses of Congress have Democratic majorities for the first time in the Bush presidency. In coming months, Democrats undoubtedly will scrutinize the budget and make changes in the numbers Bush has proposed.

Among the winning construction programs in Bush's 2008 bud-

get are surface transportation programs covered by the 2005 SAF-ETEA-LU measure. They include the federal-aid highway program, which would get a 1% hike, to \$39.6 billion, and the Federal Transit Administration, which would see funding climb 5%, to \$9.4 billion, compared with levels contained in the fiscal 2007 spending package pending in Congress.

But over all, the budget blueprint proposes holding non-security domestic discretionary spending to a 1% increase in 2008. To keep to that cap while booting some programs, the White House has proposed a bunch of cuts. They include slicing Environmental Protection Agency water infrastructure 15%, to \$2.7 billion, and trimming airport construction grants 21%, to \$2.8 billion.

Among federal buildings accounts, General Services Administration new construction would receive \$615 million, down 22% from the pending appropriations package. Dept. of Veterans Affairs major construction would jump 82%, to \$727 million.

Along with what the administration terms the "base budget," Bush also is asking Congress for two more large infusions of supplemental funds, mostly to continue the war in Iraq. He is seeking \$93.4 billion in additional 2007 appropriations plus \$141.7 billion in emergency supplemental spending for 2008 for defense and other programs for the administration's "Global War on Terror."



# WC&C Annual Christmas Party

North  
Hempstead  
Country Club

December 12, 2006













# Bloomberg Moves to Improve NYC Construction Worker Safety

## Mayor Announces Implementation Of Suspended Scaffold Worker Safety Task Force Recommendations

### City Aims to Protect Scaffold Workers by Enhancing Enforcement, Worker Outreach and Training

*\$6 Million Investment in Task Force Recommendations Includes Newly-Created Department of Buildings Scaffold Safety Unit*

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg has announced the first steps in the City's plan to better protect workers on suspended scaffolds based on the recommendations of the Suspended Scaffold Worker Safety Task Force convened in November. The Task Force was charged with the development of a strategic plan for enforcement, outreach and training to ensure safety for workers as well as the public. The plan includes new and proactive enforcement tactics, legislative reform, enhanced licensing and training requirements, increased inter-governmental coordination, and an expanded outreach program promoting best practices in multiple languages to the scaffold industry. The Mayor was joined today by Task Force Co-Chairs Deputy Mayors Carol Robles-Roman and Dan Doctoroff, Department of Buildings Commissioner Patricia J. Lancaster, Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs Commissioner Guillermo Linares, U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration Area Director Rich Mendelson, Building Trades Employers' Association President Louis Coletti and Project Hospitality/El Centro De Hospitalidad Executive Director Reverend Terry Troia.

"The unprecedented growth in our city is great news for our economy and for the tens of thousands of New Yorkers working in the building trades," said Mayor Bloomberg. "But as the number of construction and maintenance projects in the City has risen, tragically, so too has the number of scaffold accidents. That's why we brought together a team of experts to develop a comprehensive strategy to ensure the safety and well-being of those New Yorkers who work hard every day to build a stronger future for our City."

"Today's plan embraces a carefully coordinated and strategic approach by government, industry and community based organizations to ensure that effective enforcement and worker outreach and training mechanisms are in place," said Deputy Mayor Robles Roman. "By strengthening the communication and enforcement efforts between the various levels of government, this plan will

guard public and worker safety as the City experiences extraordinary growth and development."

"It is said that timing is everything and these recommendations couldn't come at a better time," said Deputy Mayor Doctoroff. "Right now, we are experiencing an unparalleled building boom with tens of thousands of workers in construction jobs building the residential and commercial structures we need. The Task Force set out to work quickly because this is so important, and I'm extremely proud that we were able to meet and submit these recommendations within six weeks. With the implementation of the Task Force recommendations, lives will be saved."

#### **Scaffold Safety Unit**

Over the next four years, the City will invest \$6 million to

implement the Task Force recommendations, with \$4 million dedicated to the creation of a Scaffold Safety Unit within the Department of Buildings to ensure greater accountability and oversight. Comprised of a team of inspectors, analysts and legal support, the Scaffold Safety unit will conduct proactive inspections throughout the five boroughs to ensure the safe and lawful use of scaffolding equipment and required safety and training regulations are being followed. In addition, the team will work with state and federal jurisdictions to compile scaffold-related accident data and issue quarterly updates on the progress of the plan.

“Last year, we saw an unprecedented number of fatalities on suspended scaffolds, the majority of which involved the use of an unregulated scaffold type,” said Commissioner Lancaster. “Thanks to the Mayor, Deputy Mayors, City Council, and Task Force, we can move to hold responsible parties accountable, which will in turn protect the workers who are maintaining our City.”

### **Legislation to Focus on Notification, Increased Fines and Inspections**

To address dangers presented by work on suspended scaffolds, the Mayor’s Office has worked with Council Speaker Christine Quinn’s Office, as well as City Councilman and Task Force member Erik Martin Dilan, to draft three bills which have been submitted to the Council. The bills would provide the Department of Buildings with enhanced enforcement tools and establish stiffer penalties for contractors and licensed riggers who violate scaffold training and safety procedures. The first bill would require notification to the Department of Buildings prior to the use or installation of suspended scaffolds hung from C-hooks, which were involved in over 57% of suspended scaffold fatalities in 2006. The bill would also authorize the Department of Buildings to stop work and revoke licenses where unsafe practices are found. To ensure greater public safety, the second bill would increase penalties for the violation of regulations governing licensed riggers and others who supervise suspended scaffolds. The final bill would require daily written inspections by a trained site supervisor rather than by the user of the suspended

scaffold as currently required. The new legislation focuses on minimizing risk to the public as well as those who work on suspended scaffolds.

“I am proud to have worked with the Department of Buildings and the many others that took part in the Suspended Scaffold Worker Safety Task Force,” said Councilman Dilan. “The safety of the workers in this industry is of great concern to the Council and the Administration and I look forward to the passage of this legislative package as soon as possible to facilitate making this line of work as safe as possible.”

### **Intergovernmental Coordination**

Implementation of the Task Force recommendations will require an intergovernmental approach. To establish uniform standards and enhance interagency coordination and data sharing, the Department of Buildings, the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the New York State Department of Labor will work together to compile comprehensive accident statistics for use in building enhanced enforcement mechanisms, and promote new, unified safety and training standards in languages spoken by workers in the scaffold industry.

The Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs will work with the three levels of government to ensure that all written educational materials are in easy-to-understand plain language and are translated into a number of the languages spoken by contractors and construction workers including Spanish, Chinese, Polish, Urdu and Russian. In addition, the agency will collaborate with ethnic media and faith- and community-based organizations serving immigrants to disseminate educational materials. In November, the Task Force launched a series of public service announcements in partnership with the radio station WADO 1280 AM, the City’s largest Spanish-language news talk radio station. The first PSA was recorded in Spanish by Mayor Bloomberg. Today, the second in the series, recorded by Immigrant Affairs Commissioner Guillermo Linares, began airing on WADO 1280.

“Through outreach and our grassroots campaign, the message is getting

out there: the City wants to ensure that every worker helping build this City has a safe work environment,” said Commissioner Linares. “We look forward to assisting government agencies and community groups with making training and educational materials easy to understand and providing greater language access for workers and supervisors. Keeping workers and the public out of harm’s way is the top priority of this Task Force.”

“OSHA is pleased to continue to strengthen its working relationship with the New York City Department of Buildings,” said OSHA Area Director Rich Mendelson. “It’s important that we use all available tools - both enforcement and compliance assistance - to keep workers safe on the job. The work of the Scaffold Worker Safety Task Force will help further that goal.”

The Suspended Scaffold Worker Safety Task Force was convened on November 2, 2006 to address the growing concerns of the safety of working on suspended scaffolds following an increased number of accidents and fatalities at worksites in the five boroughs. The Task Force, led by Department of Buildings Commissioner Lancaster, brought together New York City, State and Federal government officials and representatives from community-based organizations, construction trade organizations and CUNY to work aggressively and collaboratively to develop a set of recommendations to improve the system of accountability for enforcement, training, and outreach for those working on suspended scaffolds.

Over the next year, the Department of Buildings will convene quarterly meetings of the Task Force to analyze the effects of the implementation plan and develop additional methods to prevent scaffold-related injuries and fatalities. To view the full Suspended Scaffold Worker Safety Task Force report, “Steps to Safety”, go to [www.nyc.gov/buildings](http://www.nyc.gov/buildings). New Yorkers are encouraged to call 3-1-1 to report unsafe conditions at construction sites. •

**A tear out page “Tips on Scaffold Safety” appears on pages 29, 30 courtesy of the Bil-Jax website.**

# Communications Increases Construction Productivity

By Ivy Chang  
Construction Bulletin

*A common sight  
is construction  
equipment with  
global positioning  
systems*

CONTRACTORS USE A VARIETY OF COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS that help them produce more work in record time wherever the projects are located. Numerous communication devices in today's world provide more options in the way contractors communicate but also give us a technical headache.

There was a time when people shared telephone lines with other people, or subscribers, and had to wait for someone to hang up before they could use the telephone. People also had to wait for the operator to dial a long distance call, then call them back when the operator reached the distant party. The waiting was part of the communication process when devices were simpler but didn't have the technology to provide faster relays.

When more and more businesses were created and wanted a faster method of communications, devices were invented to provide that using the most advanced technology of the time.

Advances filtered to the construction industry and, today, construction of all sizes of projects has become easier and, perhaps, requires less time with the wide array of communication methods and products on the market.

Pieces of equipment are loaded with GPS systems that help contractors determine exact locations on a job site; two-way conventional and mobile radios, cell phones, text messaging devices, and broadband provide regional to national networks.

Less than 10 years ago, some of these communications systems did not exist. However, as technology expanded exponentially, it invaded every aspect of life from human interaction to commercial application, including construction.

A common sight in the new millennium is construction equipment with global positioning systems that guide the equipment with precision to grade or clear job sites for a commercial building. As the construction progresses, crews can communicate with cell phones, long-held mobile radios, BlackBerry® devices, and other wireless devices. As long as networks exist to accommodate the different equipment, communication, especially crucial messages, can be sent and received in a shorter time that makes the project easier to manage.

Veit Companies in Rogers, Minnesota, provide two-way radios, BlackBerry devices, and/or cell phones to about 100 employees on the job. Foremen, project managers and superintendent level employees carry Nextel two-way radios with telephone capabilities and a BlackBerry, said Kim Maher, executive assistant at Veit.

Communications between the employees has made a difference when field employees must communicate with their supervisors to obtain a decision, access records, get facts, and report the latest developments, said Maher. The combination radio and telephone is especially helpful in areas where either no cell towers exist, no telephone network exists or a lack of communication device prohibits any communications except to use pay telephones.

Veit subscribes to different networks providing these services just to accomplish a project, said Maher. Every month, “the network bills are about 2 inches thick with information on where individual radios and telephones have called,” she said.

Nextel was one of the leading providers of walkie-talkies that could be used to access another user across the country using its network and receive instant communications. Other companies now produce similar devices using the latest technology.

Two-way radios on a job site were common years ago in the construction industry and provide the instant communications needed to get the job done without having a meeting. After that came pagers; contractors and truckers would not be caught without one. A leader in the communication hardware and software field is Motorola, which manufactures cell phones, two-way radios, wireless devices, data devices, and mobile equipment. In addition, Motorola provides communication networks, such as cellular, cable broadband and wireless broadband to accommodate the different equipment it manufactures.

On equipment, contractors think GPS technology provided benefits they would not have thought were possible. A global positioning system guides contractors especially well when they work on surveying, site clearing and grading by providing a map of the area where they work. This map gives information that one person can decode and is a boon to surveyors and machine operators who must know the exact positions to set boundaries, clear sites and grade a construction area.

Site information can be downloaded, stored and sent to another office where changes may be made and sent back to the equipment’s computer for the operator to see any updates.

GPS receivers are now made in miniature sizes and have become more economical. In addition to construction equipment, the systems are installed in cars, boats, airplanes, movie-making gear, and farm machinery.

Trimble, a leading GPS manufacturer, is now taking this concept to the next stage where measurements are more accurate, pushing the system to correct various inaccuracies in the basic GPS system. With improved accuracy, GPS becomes more important than a measuring and location tool; it will be used universally as a

measuring system to position things on a very precise scale.

A new Trimble system has a multi-channel and multi-frequency receiver, antenna and data link radio combined in one compact unit and handles especially well for multiple surveying applications. In addition, Trimble provides software in one file data in addition to providing infrastructure solutions.

Caterpillar manufactures the AccuGrade GPS system that provides a fully integrated, sensor-independent system that automatically controls various parts of equipment so that the operator does not have to calculate and determine his position on a site. This action allows the machine operator on earthmoving equipment to grade faster and more accurately. AccuGrade claims that its product dramatically reduces grade staking and labor costs.

Simple, planar designs can be created on board Caterpillar’s equipment using its AccuGrade system, but more complex, 3-D designs must be created in an office by design engineers and loaded into the on-board computer with a compact flash card.

Trimble also developed the Geocache Navigator for GPS-enabled cell phones. The system uses GPS and wireless communication technologies to download the locations of hidden treasures, or geocaches, such as maps and records, on cell phones. Users can measure distance, time, speed, and calories, create a speed profile, store workouts on a log, view weekly statistics, and measure lap times. Advanced features on certain phones include capabilities to download map images to the cell phone, download custom activity types and programs, and see yourself in real time on a map.

Currently, four brands of cell phones carry this feature: Sprint PCS, Nextel, SoutherLINC, and Boost Mobile.

Competition among network providers and hardware providers continue to increase to accommodate the myriad communication systems that are manufactured today. Add the different systems used in different countries and the results are frustration and burnout among users who must travel internationally.

To add to these choices, one decision that all users and buyers of communication equipment must make is whether to buy analog or digital, including construction equipment with GPS and on-board computers. Digital technology, according to most technophiles, is more advanced than analog technology because it provides more accuracy and capacity. Analog technology, on the other hand, covers larger geographic areas but sacrifices clarity. The move is toward digital technology until something new comes along; analog users will have to replace their equipment as this technology lacks support.

With an array of communication devices to stay in business — two-way radios with telephone capability, pagers, computers, and cell phones with Internet — users must keep up with the latest method of communications and must read, or at least attempt to learn from, equipment user manuals that, many times, are not written for the average user. Manuals are often written in several languages to accommodate the same devices sold in other countries or to cater to immigrants in the United States. According to some retail establishments, many people don’t look at their user manuals. When a problem occurs with their equipment, they call the stores and ask customer service to help solve their technical problems.

However, technology also provided more user-friendly devices that require fewer written directions. With a variety of technology and communication equipment, contractors must look for appropriate equipment that serves them for a long time, or at least until the next new technology arrives. •



# It's The Law

By Erwin Popkin

Erwin Popkin is legal counsel to the Association of Wall-Ceiling & Carpentry Industries of New York, Inc. and maintains practice in Mineola, NY.

**GOV. ELIOT SPITZER, IN AN EFFORT TO PROVIDE RELIEF FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**, January 31, proposed a state budget that would amend the state's so-called Wicks Law by reducing the number of projects that would meet the law's threshold.

Spitzer proposed raising the threshold for public construction projects from the current minimum cost of \$50,000 to \$2 million for projects in New York City and to \$1 million for projects outside of the city.

The law requires that contracts for public construction projects above \$50,000 be bid as separate prime contracts for construction, heating ventilation and air conditioning, plumbing and electrical.

"All municipalities will benefit from lower construction costs resulting from a proposed increase in the Wicks Law thresholds," Spitzer said in his budget briefing book.

The threshold for projects would be adjusted for inflation annually and it is estimated the change in the law will save New York City about \$10 million and New York State \$1.6 million.

Reform of Wicks Law has long been a priority for building contractors and local governments, but it has been opposed by labor unions.

**PAYROLL CHEATING BY EMPLOYERS IN NEW YORK HAS CAUSED A REVENUE SHORTFALL**

of between \$500 million and \$1 billion to the state workers' compensation insurance fund, which raises compensation costs for honest employers, according to a study released Jan. 25 by the Fiscal Policy Institute.

They found that the "fragmented structure" for enforcement in New York has allowed employers to provide unemployment insurance but not workers' compensation insurance coverage for many workers. Stat payroll data for 2003 show that only 80 percent of workers covered by unemployment insurance also receive workers' comp coverage.

"This translates to between 500,000 to 1 million workers in the state, whose employers should be paying workers' comp insurance, and a revenue shortfall for the compensation system at between \$500,000 and \$1 billion," FPI found.

In some instances, employers intentionally misclassify employees to keep them out of both systems. In construction, FPI found that payroll employment in New York had a net decline of 5,100 for the 2000-2004 period while the number of "non-employers" in the industry increased by 13,350.

**NEW YORK STATE HAS ENACTED LEGISLATION TO REGULATE THE DISPOSAL OF PERSONAL DATA** known as "The Disposal of Personal Records Law", effective December 2006.

The new law requires businesses to properly dispose of records containing

individual's personal identifying information in order to insure that unauthorized persons are unable to access such information.

The list of "records" is covered by the statute. These records include, but are not limited to reports, statements, examinations, memoranda, opinions, folders, files, books, manuals, pamphlets, forms, papers, designs, drawings, maps, photos, letters, microfilms, and computer tapes/discs.

The law applies to "any natural person, or agent or employee of such person that is conducting business for profit". Under the statute, businesses may not dispose of a record containing personal identifying information unless it does one of the following: shreds the document, destroys the personal identifying information contained in the record, modifies the record to make the personal identifying information unreadable, or takes action consistent with commonly accepted industry practices to safeguard personal information.

**GOV. ELIOT SPITZER DELIVERED HIS FIRST STATE OF THE STATE SPEECH TO THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE JAN. 3**, proposing to reform the workers' compensation system.

In his speech, Spitzer said he has begun discussions with law-makers, business, and labor to lower workers' compensation premiums and increase benefits for the first time in 14 years. In addition, he said "the solution must also make it easier for workers to get the medical treatment they want and need so they can get back to work."

Spitzer said the changes in workers' compensation was needed for "reducing our cost structure so we can attract jobs and capital back to New York."

Spitzer also pledged in his speech to move forward with several large construction projects across the state, including replacement of the Peace Bridge between Buffalo and Canada and the Tappan Zee Bridge outside of New York City, construction of a Second Avenue subway line in Manhattan, and rebuilding at the former World Trade Center site, now called Ground Zero.

**NEW YORK CITY'S NEW SUPPORTED SCAFFOLD LAW - LOCAL LAW 52**. The new supported scaffold law, went into effect on November 19, 2006. To ensure safe and compliant construction throughout all five boroughs, all supported scaffolds 40 feet or higher will require a

permit. In addition, Local Law 52 of 2005 requires individuals who use, erect, maintain, dismantle, repair or modify a supported scaffold to be certified by completing a training program in scaffold safety.

•••

**NLRB TO HOLD ORAL ARGUMENT ON EMPLOYEE USE OF EMPLOYER'S E-MAIL SYSTEM.** The National Labor Relations Board will hear oral argument on Tuesday, March 27, 2007,

in The Guard Publishing Company, d/b/a The Register-Guard, Cases 36-CA-8743-1, et al. The issues presented in the case include whether employees have the right to use their employer's e-mail system (or other computer-based communication systems) to communicate with other employees about union or other concerted, protected matters.

•••

**MORE THAN \$5 MILLION IN BACK WAGES WAS COLLECTED IN**

**NEW YORK CITY PREVAILING WAGE CASES IN 2006**, by far the highest amount in any of the last five years and one of the highest annual amounts ever, city Comptroller William C. Thompson Jr. announced January 29. •

Thompson, who is the official responsible for enforcing state prevailing wage laws as they apply to work done under city contracts, reported that his office had assessed a record \$415,000 in prevailing wage penalties. •

## General Contractors Can Get Past The Negative Stereotypes

General contractors are the worst. They're sleazy, unresponsive, unreliable and dishonest. They refuse to be held accountable for anything, and when you need them the most, they're usually nowhere to be found.

How many times have you heard something like that? Probably quite a few if you're a business owner. That's pretty strong language in any context. It's also not true, at least not for the vast majority of commercial general contractors. But it is an unfortunate and unfair characterization of an industry which is constantly under the gun because of an incompetent few who help perpetuate the stereotype.

Maybe it's also because general contractors are responsible for the final step in what is usually a long and stressful process for any owner. Although a design and construction project is multilayered with a number of consultants and vendors each having a critical role, it is the contractor who takes on the most time-consuming and expensive component. And there's also an emotional factor for owners.

For better or worse, there is a sense of "finality" with what the contractor creates. Whether it's an office, school, warehouse or hospital, owners are left with the tangible evidence of the contractor's expertise, or lack thereof. It may be just what the owner envisioned on the drawing board, or it may be something much less. Either way, it's a powerful reminder that can't just be hidden away in a drawer like a set of plans.

Let's not pity the general contractor here. Most are reputable, hard-working and competent, and some are wildly successful. But it's just a fact that general contractors have responsibilities that other members of a project team do not. And in many cases, contractors can be their own worst enemy, and many of them will admit to that.

Even the most reputable and ethical general contractors can and do succumb to the perception that they are less than refined and even non-communicative when it comes to effectively conveying exactly what it is they do, or promise to deliver.

### Full disclosure is a good thing

Nothing makes an owner or an owner's rep crazier than having to chase down information that should always be forthcoming. This applies to any of the myriad consultants involved in a project. But contractors in particular seem to be lightning rods for this type of criticism, fairly or not.

The construction process should never be hidden in a "black box." That's the quickest way to engender distrust between the contractor and client, and among the other project team members.

Disclosure is perhaps the easiest way to build team harmony and client trust. It costs virtually nothing, and there is rarely a downside. And yet not a week goes by that I don't hear about some kind of battle raging between a contractor and owner because key construction details were not fully disclosed to the owner or other team members.

Perhaps a chief reason for this is the decentralized nature of the general contractor. Most of any given construction team is comprised of independent subcontractors who aren't always as communicative as they should be.

But general contractors know this going in and should be prepared for it. Documentation does not begin and end with construction drawings. Every meeting, every phone call and every conversation should be documented by the general contractor and disseminated to the appropriate parties.

Transparency is a critical component of the overall process and helps clarify the specific roles and responsibilities of each team member.

### Building the wrong expectations

One general contractor told me recently that unrealistic expectations derail more construction jobs than anything else. This can include overselling services, underestimating budgets and time frames, or botching procurement and installation schedules, just to name a few. Besides being detrimental to the entire process, unrealistic expectations force all participants to look out for themselves instead of staying focused on the project's key objectives. And

it usually starts with the owner and trickles down to every facet of the project.

There are plenty of contractors out there who will say anything to win a job, and deal with the consequences later. Major problems that occur during the home stretch of any given project most likely could have been avoided with better planning and realistic objectives at the front end.

A restaurant owner, for example, would probably not be pleased to learn that the delivery of his pizza oven is 10 weeks out when the restaurant is scheduled to open in six weeks. Not exactly good planning on the contractor's part. And yet this sort of thing happens all the time. Contractors who do not know their limitations can put the entire project in jeopardy before it really begins.

### Networking builds relationships

The most successful general contractors out there -- large and small -- take great pride in promoting themselves from the "human" angle. That means diligent networking, and taking extra care in getting to know the people they work with and work for.

People tend to feel more comfortable and less threatened when they know the other parties they're working with. That's just human nature, but it can pay significant dividends for general contractors who are very often in a defensive position before they even bid on a project. That's just an unfortunate reality that won't be changing any time soon.

Contractors can go a long way in fighting this stereotype by being as visible and accessible as possible. Participation in trade organizations is good. Regular one-on-one and team-on-team contact with other construction and design professionals is even better. That's just cheap insurance. And in the end, it's always better to have more allies than adversaries when disputes inevitably arise.

John Sattler is president, buildings division manager at Diversified Consulting Solutions Inc. Reach him at 303-818-7802 or [johnsattler@dcs-cm.com](mailto:johnsattler@dcs-cm.com). •

*By John Sattler, The Denver Business Journal*

## ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY CONSTRUCTION GAINS POPULARITY;

# THE MARKET FOR GREEN HOMES AND BUSINESSES HAS GROWN TENFOLD SINCE 2000.

The first indication that Mark MaGrann's home is no ordinary house is the carpet in the dining room. Any time MaGrann tells visitors it's spun from recycled plastic bottles, they drop to their knees and start caressing the beige-colored carpet in disbelief. "It's funny - everybody bends down and touches it," he said. It's easy to see why. The carpet is soft and cushiony, and the yarn looks and feels, well, real.

But while the plastic carpet is the perennial crowd-pleaser, the really cool stuff is what you can't feel or see. That's where the real story is - behind the walls and under the carpet and down in the basement.

Five years ago, MaGrann, president of MaGrann Associates, an engineering and energy consulting firm, constructed a 3,500-square-foot home in Medford, N.J., to showcase the latest in eco-friendly building technologies and inspire more homeowners, builders and architects to "go green."

Back then, it was all very novel - the liberal use of engineered lumber made from shredded wood; the front-porch deck made from recycled plastic; the siding and shingles made from recycled cement and shredded newspaper.

But with the sharp increase in oil and natural gas prices over the past couple of years, more builders and developers are preaching the gospel of "going green," designing and constructing homes that are more energy-efficient and less wasteful.

In years past, green construction accounted for only a fraction of new construction, experts say. Now, the green market is expanding into the mainstream as more developers and architects explore ways to boost sales while reducing the environmental impact of new construction.

The U.S. Green Building Council, an organization based in Washington, D.C., that promotes the adoption of green building practices and technologies, estimates the green market, both for residential and commercial construction, has grown to \$8 billion today, from \$800 million in 2000. It forecasts a \$20 billion market by 2010.

"I'm 55 years old and I was raised with the concept of disposable - you buy a can of Coke, you finish it and throw it away. A gallon of gas cost 29 cents," said Herb Hauser, a green technology consultant with Midtown Technologies in New York. "But \$3-a-gallon gas really shocked everybody.

"My prediction is over the next five years, you will see more and more green building technology and energy-efficient technology making its way into the real estate space."

To understand how building a new home can affect the environment, consider these numbers:

- *The residential housing sector accounts for one-fifth of all the energy consumed in the United States, according to the federal Environmental Protection Agency.*

- *A typical home can generate twice as much air pollution as the average car.*

- *The construction of an average 2,350-square-foot, single-family home generates between 7,000 and 12,000 pounds of construction waste, the National Association of Home Builders estimates.*

Going green can cost builders a little more up front - 3 percent to 8 percent more than a traditional home - but some say it can ultimately lead to higher property values and a better return on investment.

While a growing number of builders are responding to the public's hunger for all things green, the construction industry has for the most part been slow to answer the calling, experts said.

Jack Armstrong, speaking for BASF, which spearheaded a project in Paterson, N.J., to build one of the most energy-efficient homes in the country, said developers tend to be a conservative bunch who continue to rely on traditional building materials and technologies.

Part of the problem is cost. MaGrann's home, for example, cost about \$900,000 to build five years ago.

Pulte Homes and KB Homes, two of the nation's largest home builders, have been testing the viability of mass-producing large numbers of energy-efficient "green" homes in markets like Virginia and California.

Although the phrase "going green" may conjure images of a tree-hugging peacenik living in a tent, MaGrann's house looks as fancy and polished as any other custom-built house on his quiet, tree-lined street. But a quick peek under the hood reveals it is anything but.

MaGrann's airy, daylight-filled house uses 60 percent less energy and electricity than a standard home in New Jersey. "The neat thing about this house is it doesn't act or look differently than any other house in the

**FORECAST IS FOR A  
\$20 BILLION MARKET  
BY 2010.**

neighborhood,” he said.

Perhaps the most unusual feature in MaGrann’s house is the geothermal heating and air-conditioning system. The home has no oil-fired or gas-fired furnace and no electric air conditioning equipment.

Instead, he relies on an aquifer 300 feet underground to heat and cool his home. The water in the aquifer - about 55 degrees - supplies heat in the winter and serves as a heat sink in summer to cool the home.

It’s clean, efficient and - best of all - it saves him money on his util-

ity bill. MaGrann said it costs him only \$150 a month to heat, cool and supply hot water to his 3,500-square-foot home.

MaGrann’s company is one of 12 in the country selected by the U.S. Green Building Council to help develop and test a common standard of measurement for green residential construction and enable home builders anywhere in the country to obtain a special “green” rating on their homes. The program is called LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design).

*By Sam Ali Newhouse News Service  
The Post-Standard (Syracuse, New York)*

## Construction Field Finds Relief In Tablet

*By Elwin Green  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

PITTSBURGH—A casual comment three years ago launched Ray Steeb on a journey to develop a product that could dramatically reduce both the time and the cost of building construction.

Knowing of Steeb’s 20-plus years experience in the construction industry, most of it with Turner Construction, Jared L. Cohon, the president of Carnegie Mellon University, suggested that it would be great if Steeb could capture his experience in a way that would make it available to others.

That led Steeb, who founded his own construction firm, Steeb Crawford Construction, four years ago, to thinking about not how to capture all of his experience, but how to eliminate a pet peeve that had dogged his experience: the management of construction drawings.

Construction drawings are nothing like the architect’s renderings that appear in the newspaper when a developer announces plans to put up a new building. Rather than showing how the building will look, construction drawings show how it is to be built – the design and placement of electrical systems, heating and air conditioning systems, plumbing, wallboard, ceiling panels, and so forth, down to the most minute items, placed within a 16th of an inch.

Steeb’s peeve was that the complexity of a building requires the maintenance of several sets of drawings: one in the office of the architect, one in the trailer that serves as the general contractor’s on-site headquarters, one in the hands of the superintendent overseeing the work of plumbers, electricians, welders.

At any time, a change in one set of drawings might require that all sets be changed. Or worse, people working from other sets might never know about the change – or learn about it only when it becomes a problem.

The pursuit of a solution resulted in Fast-Cat – a tablet-style computer that contains portable construction documents.

In today’s computing world, the Fast-Cat’s hardware is not impressive – it is built upon a 1.1 GHz Pentium processor and comes with either 512 megabytes or one gigabyte of RAM, with a hard drive of either 40 or 80 gigabytes. Its real value lies in the software, which was developed at Carnegie Mellon University.

It allows field superintendents to navigate from one set of drawings to another, for instance from a electrical drawing to one that shows a



building’s plumbing. The superintendent can use a stylus to create mark up drawings on the Fast-Cat’s 9-inch screen. The device also sports a wireless card that allows workers to update drawings via e-mail, as well as to request information from other members of the project team.

Steeb’s development of the Fast-Cat was funded in part by the Pittsburgh Infrastructure Technology Alliance, a partnership between CMU and Lehigh University that provides seed funding for projects. The Alliance’s money was used for research “to determine which ways might be the most effective to support somebody working with drawings,” said James H. Garrett Jr., professor and head of civil and environmental engineering at CMU who helped to develop the software.

Given the device’s intended market, a typewriter keyboard-based interface was never an option. First, because construction workers are not noted for their clerical skills. Second, because on a construction site, a keyboard would invite dust and grime to lodge between the keys.

“We were looking at the possibility of speech interaction, but soon got dissuaded from that,” Garrett said,

The prototype for the Fast-Cat was completed in the spring of 2004, and Steeb began to present it to potential users, including a construction crew at Carnegie Mellon – a presentation that initially did not go well.

“This one guy was reading a newspaper while I was doing the presentation. Finally I just gave up and said, ‘Here,’ and gave it to him, to let him play with it,” Steeb said. “Five minutes later, he’s going from one drawing to the next and he’s marking things up, and he says, ‘How can I get one of these?’ That’s when I knew we had made it easy enough.”

Making it easy enough to use was key to the product’s development, because building construction is a more information-hungry process than most people realize, Steeb said.

“The average project has 800,000 lines of information,” he said. And it all has to be correct, because “a building is done once.”

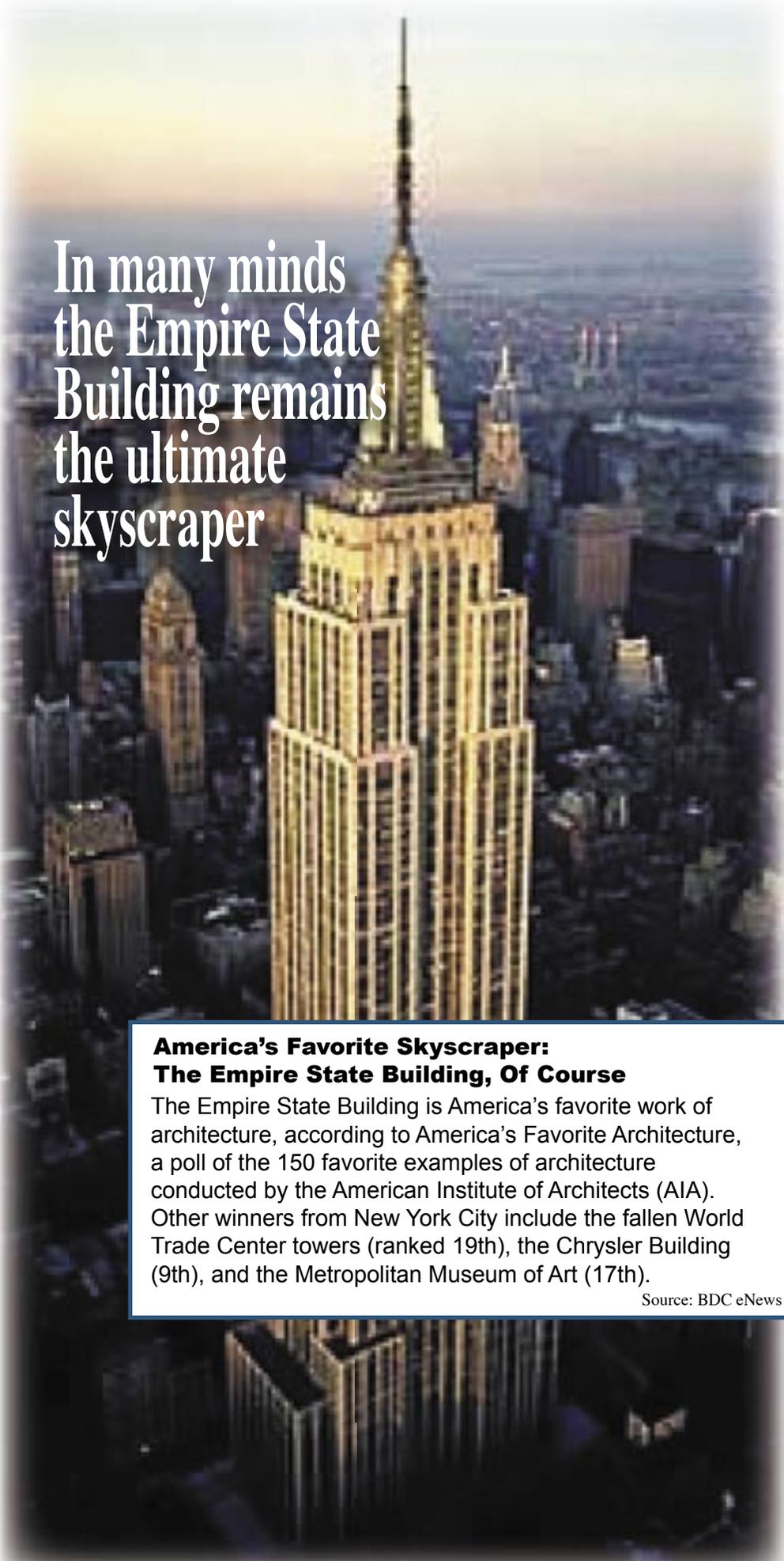
“You have 3,000 parts from 2,000 manufacturers, being used by a group of people that never worked together before and will never work together again.”

In such an environment, lost or inaccurate information becomes expensive quickly; for instance, when workers installing the heating and ventilation system discover that a wall is not where they expected it to be.

The Fast-Cat is just coming to market, so its effect on the industry remains to be seen. But Innovation Works, the regional consortium that makes investments of state funds in technology start-ups, recently expressed confidence by investing in Fast-Cat. Steeb said he couldn’t say how much, but added, “It was significant enough to make us really happy.” •

# World's Tallest Towers

By Forbes staff



In many minds  
the Empire State  
Building remains  
the ultimate  
skyscraper

## **America's Favorite Skyscraper: The Empire State Building, Of Course**

The Empire State Building is America's favorite work of architecture, according to America's Favorite Architecture, a poll of the 150 favorite examples of architecture conducted by the American Institute of Architects (AIA). Other winners from New York City include the fallen World Trade Center towers (ranked 19th), the Chrysler Building (9th), and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (17th).

Source: BDC eNews

Seventy-five years after it opened its doors, the Empire State Building looms large--and not just on the Manhattan skyline. In many minds, it remains the ultimate skyscraper, though it has been more than three decades since the Art Deco tower ceded its title of tallest in the world.

Today, the Empire State is the ninth-tallest building (not counting communications or observation towers) and soon will be bumped down even further by new projects. Financing extremely tall towers can be complicated--even transporting people up and down can be difficult. But construction technology doesn't limit the heights of our skyscrapers, according to experts. And since humans remain ambitious and nations ever-desirous of flaunting their wealth and know-how, buildings are getting loftier by the year.

"I think for a while we will keep building up and up and up," says architect Cesar Pelli, whose projects include the Petronas Towers in Malaysia, currently the second- and third-tallest towers in the world. "The desire is there."

**W**hen plans for the Moscow City Tower, which is expected to be completed in 2010, were unveiled in March, it was touted as “Europe’s tallest building.” At an estimated 2,000 feet high, it would actually be the tallest in the world if completed now. But other structures still on the drawing board, including the Freedom Tower in New York City and Burj Dubai in the U.A.E., are in an ongoing race for the sky.

For much of the 20th century, the U.S., the world’s economic powerhouse, dominated the skyscraper scene. Steel frames and elevators had made tall buildings achievable and urbanization made them necessary. Again and again, American buildings topped one another--the Chrysler Building was the tallest in 1930 but was overtaken by the Empire State a year later. That was surpassed when the World Trade Center arrived in 1973, but two years later, Chicago’s Sears Tower became the tallest at 1,454 feet.

The landscape looks very different in the 21st century, with other countries and continents dominating the top of the tallest list.

“We’re seeing a tremendous amount of activity overseas, whether it’s in Asia or the Middle East,” says Ron Klemencic, chairman of the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat and president of Seattle-based structural engineering firm Magnusson Klemencic Associates. “For countries that are emerging on the economic scene, very tall buildings are symbols of their economic strength.”

The tallest building in the world, Taipei 101, was completed in 2004. It is a national

symbol for Taiwan, as are the Petronas Towers for Malaysia. A government plan to bring Malaysia into the developed world by 2020, Klemencic points out, included a scheme to garner attention with very tall buildings.

Building technology is easily able to keep up with development demands, says Leslie Robertson, head of Leslie E. Robertson and Associates and the structural engineer for the World Trade Center. So



© AP Photo

**Taipei 101**  
**Taipei, Taiwan**  
**Height: 509**  
**meters/1,670 feet**  
**Year Completed:**  
**2004**  
 Taipei 101 is more than a national symbol for Taiwan and the tallest building on the continent; for now, at least, it is the tallest in the world. The tower’s design was inspired by traditional Chinese architecture. A tremendous steel ball is suspended in the upper floors of the building to help stabilize the structure.

where are the limits?

Pelli, for one, believes that they are going to come from human psychology and physiology--our willingness to ride elevators for extended periods and our ability to withstand pressure changes. “You may get the bends if you go up or down too fast,” Pelli says. “Around 150 stories, that may start happening. We don’t know yet. You could pressurize whole buildings, but I don’t think people want to live in a sealed building.”

Safety is also a factor, of course, especially in the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. But, surprisingly, architects and developers continue to push taller and taller towers. At the time of the attack, one of Pelli’s towers was under construction in Hong Kong; it took just 20 minutes for his clients to decide to proceed with the project, he says. And the Freedom Tower, which will be built on the World Trade Center site, is designed to be taller than the original complex.

**T**he economics of very tall buildings can be complicated. The higher you go, for example, the more elevators you need, says James Sanders, a New York-based architect and author of *Celluloid Skyline: New York and the Movies*. “They keep eating area out of the lower floors,” he says. “You get to a point where going taller is not gaining you square footage.”

In some places, such as China’s crowded cities, tall may still make good economic sense. That’s not necessarily the case in places like the Middle East, where populations are small and there is more space. Burj Dubai, however, is more than

a skyscraper. The residential and hotel tower, expected to top more than 2,000 feet, is part of a complex. “It’s the shopping center, golf course and the smaller towers that, in total, make it work economically,” Klemencic says. Where as the tall buildings of the 20th century were primarily office towers, many of today’s are mixed-use; part hotel, part condo, part retail space and part offices--all in amounts that the local market can absorb.

There is plenty of debate about what makes one building taller than another--should spires be counted or only occupied floors, for example? We used the rankings from Emporis, a real estate information company based in Darmstadt, Germany.

The list includes buildings that have reached their full height, even if they are unfinished. They are ranked by structural height, measured from the base to the “highest architectural or integral structural element of the building.” (Spires count, but not antennae.) But the list only includes buildings, not communications towers or other structures, which is why Toronto’s CN Tower doesn’t make the cut, galling as that may be to Canadians.

Perhaps height is less important than it once was--ask someone on the street what the tallest building in the world is, and they probably won’t know. They may well guess it is one of those memorable buildings, like the Chrysler or Empire State.

“How much are they able to capture your imagination and your heart?” Pelli says. “Being tall doesn’t necessarily do it.”

*You can see the world’s tallest towers at [www.forbes.com](http://www.forbes.com).* •

# Test of Wood-Frame House Shows Costly Damage

By Tom Nicholson, *enr.com*

Earthquake engineers at the State University of New York at Buffalo have released preliminary results of an unprecedented shake-table test that subjected a two-story, wood-frame townhouse to the force of a 2,500-year, 6.7-magnitude temblor.

Researchers seeking to establish performance-based design standards for wood-frame structures say that the 1,800-sq-ft house remained standing and may have adequately protected inhabitants, but costs to repair the damage in a real-world scenario would be astronomical.

“From a life-safety, code perspective, the house performed well because it did not collapse,” says Andre Filiatrault, a SUNY Buffalo professor of engineering who is leading the four-year, \$1.24-million Network for Earthquake Engineering Simulation study. “But economically, it would have been a disaster. Estimated repair costs would be about equal to the value of the house.”

Built to standards typical of wood-frame structures in seismic regions such as California, the simulation of the 1994 Northridge quake displaced the house’s first-floor walls by about 4 in., cracked

drywall throughout and severely damaged the sill plate and foundation, Filiatrault says. Further analysis of the house will continue through this summer, he says.

The Nov. 14 test was the most powerful in a series of tests performed last year on twin, 23-ft-sq shake platforms at the university’s Earthquake Simulation

## Two-story townhouse was hit with 6.7-magnitude temblor.



Laboratory.

Funded by the National Science Foundation and led by Colorado State University, NEES researchers in the next phase will partner with engineers in Japan for shake tests of a six-story wood-frame structure in Japan in 2009. •

the rate of inflation, according to a national economist.

Ken Simonson, chief economist for Associated General Contractors of America, is calling for price increases averaging 6 percent to 8 percent for most construction materials in 2007.

Tight supplies and growth worldwide will keep pressure on steel, cement, copper, gypsum and other basic building products, he said.

Contractors, he said, will see a few months of relief because of the dip in diesel fuel prices, which drives up the price for transporting materials. But by the second quarter, diesel fuel, too, will start to rise.

The price of construction materials is purely a matter of supply and demand, say economists and business owners.

That’s certainly the case with lumber, which has fallen since its high several year ago.

“You have a certain number of lumber mills and capacity, and when you have high, high demand, it will put a lot of pressure on those mills,” said Stan Longhofer, director of the Center for Real Estate at Wichita State University. “And as it cools, prices ease.”

Chris Goebel, president of Star Lumber, sells a package of lumber needed to build an 1,800-square-foot house. He sold that package for \$11,600 a year ago. Today, he is selling it for \$9,100, a 22 percent decline in price.

That doesn’t mean a dramatic fall in home prices, of course, because the cost of lumber is just one piece of the cost of a home, along with the lot, labor and nonlumber supplies.

But it does mean a lessening of cost pressure on home builders.

Quentin Moeder, owner of Moeder Construction, said he hasn’t lowered the prices he charges customers. The fall in lumber about offsets increased steel prices.

On the other hand, commercial construction is hot nationwide.

Steel rose 5 percent and concrete 6.5 percent during 2006, according to the materials cost index from Engineering News-Record, a trade publication.

That has a real effect on whether some projects can be built, said Curt McNay, a Wichita architect and developer.

“You take a \$3 million project and bump it 3 percent, you’re up \$90,000,” he said.

Building owners, in turn, try to pass the increase on to tenants in the form of higher rents, something not always possible in a highly competitive market with a lot of vacancies. •

## Lumber Costs Fall; Other Building Materials Rise

*National economist says 2007 will likely see a rise in materials costs that is twice the rate of inflation.*

By Dan Voorhis, *The Wichita Eagle*

The price of lumber is down about 10 percent from this time last year. That’s good news for the home construction industry.

The bad news is that almost all other key

materials for residential and nonresidential construction are flat or up from a year ago.

This year will likely see a rise in materials costs, other than lumber, that will be twice

# BUILDINGS WITH MINDS OF THEIR OWN

*Building Design & Construction*

WHAT if architects could build living systems rather than static buildings—dynamic structures that modify their internal and external forms in response to changes in their environment? This provocative idea is making waves in the field of architecture. Houses, for example, might shrink in the winter to reduce surface area and volume, thus cutting heating costs. They could

***“Responsive” buildings, capable of changing shape and responding to their users’ needs, are on the drawing board***

cover themselves to escape the heat of the summer sun or shake snow off the roof in winter. Skyscrapers could alter their aerodynamic profiles, swaying slightly to distribute

increased loads during hurricanes. Office buildings could reconfigure themselves to improve ventilation.

Such “responsive architecture” would depend on two sorts of technology: control systems capable of deciding what to do, and structural components able to change the building’s shape as required. Architects have been working to improve the control systems in buildings for many years, but shape-shifting technology is at a much earlier stage of development.

One approach being pursued by researchers is to imitate nature. Many natural constructions, including spiders’ webs and cell membranes, are “tensegrity systems”—robust structures made up of many interconnected elements which can be manipulated to change shape without losing their structural integrity. “These structures can bend and twist, but no element in the structure bends and twists,” says Robert Skelton of the Structural Systems and Control Laboratory at the University of California in San Diego. “It’s the archi-

ture of life.”

While Dr Skelton is working on solving the engineering equations associated with tensegrity systems, Tristan d’Estrée Sterk at the Office for Robotic Architectural Media & the Bureau for Responsive Architecture, an architectural practice based in Vancouver, Canada, has begun to construct prototypes of shape-changing “building envelopes” based on tensegrity structures. Lightweight skeletal frameworks, composed of rods and wires and controlled by pneumatic “muscles”, serve as the walls of a building; adjusting their configuration changes the building’s shape. Mr Sterk is also developing the “brain” needed to control such a building based on information from internal and external sensors.

Anders Nereim, chairman of the department of architecture and designed objects at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, is not convinced that a central brain is the best way to control a responsive building, however. He suggests that the building should instead resemble a decentralised ecological system and should

be made up of many independent sensors and actuators. Some of his prototypes include shadow-seeking lights that move around, and curtains made of flexible solar panels that use the energy they collect to open and close themselves. “Distributed systems can recover from damage,” says Mr Nereim.

Cars are already capable of monitoring their own performance and acting with a certain degree of autonomy, from cruise-control systems to airbag sensors. Such responsive behaviour is considered normal for a car; architects argue that the same sort of ideas should be incorporated into buildings, too. And just as the performance of a car can be simulated in advance to choose the best design for a range of driving conditions, the same should be done for buildings, argues Gian Carlo Magnoli, an architect and the co-director of the Kinetic Design Group at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is devising blueprints for responsive houses. “We need to evolve designs for the best performing responsive-building models,” he says.

So will we end up with cities of skyscrapers that wave in the breeze? It sounds crazy. But, says Mr Sterk, many ideas that were once considered crazy are now commonplace. “Electricity was a batty idea, but now it’s universal,” he says. The same was true of suspension bridges and elevators. Dynamic, intelligent, adaptable buildings are “the logical next step”, he claims. •



## Proposed Advancements in the NYC Construction Codes Model Code Program

The city’s Model Code Team has been hard at work preparing the completion bill for the submission of the New York City Construction Codes to the City Council. Visit the updated Model Code webpage to review drafts of specific chapters that have gone through both the technical and legal review processes. You may also view the new Model Code Report (903 kb-pdf), *“Proposing Advancements in Safety, Savings, and Innovation - The Evolution of New York City’s Building Code.”*

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LT300

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For further information got to [www.stanleytools.com](http://www.stanleytools.com).

## DeWALT Heavy-Duty 1.1 HP Continuous 4 Gal Electric Wheeled Dolly-Style Air Compressor with Panel

The DeWalt D55154 Features 4.0 CFM delivered at 90 PSI pump provides rapid recovery, an oil lubricated pump that improves durability and a cast iron cylinder that enhances

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pump life.

A 10" pneumatic wheel and handle kit enables ease of mobility and the top load panel with positioning holes allows unit to transport loads up to 100 lbs.

There is a high-flow regulator for increased performance.

Run multiple tools from dual uni-



versal quick couplers. Ball valve drain allows for quick and thorough tank draining. Convenient cord wrap for easy storage. Dual soft start valves assist in cold weather start up.

More details are available at [www.dewalt.com](http://www.dewalt.com).

## Bosch Introduces New Saw Blade Line

Bosch Power Tools and Accessories announces a Hacksaw Blade line complete with Frame and a new Portable Band Saw Blade line.



Three 10" and 12" Hacksaw Blades are offered. All are color-coded and labeled with their specified applica-

tion for quick and easy identification.

Bi-metal Flexible for Metal blades are ideal for cutting pipe, solid metals, wood, plastic and machineable metal. Professionals will use high carbon steel Metal blades for cutting mild steel, copper, brass, aluminum and similar materials.

Specialty Carbide Grit for Abrasive

Materials blades feature a uniform application of carbide grit for consistent clean cuts in fiberglass, asbestos, glass resins and other abrasive materials.

Bosch Portable Band Saw Blades are bi-metal for wood, plastic and common metals designed to fit most portable band saws.

Visit [www.boschtools.com](http://www.boschtools.com) for more information.

## Bosch Litheon 10.8V Pocket Driver Looks Small, Works Big

This Bosch Litheon 10.8V Model



PS20-2 Pocket Driver delivers 80

in.-lbs. of Torque and drives 100 3-inch screws per battery charge. Its small size is very handy and carries easily in a tool belt. It is almost half the size of a 12V compact drill/driver. It features a LED light for tight spaces and applications, has a forward/reverse button and a quick change chuck which prevents bit loss in drill or drive mode. The 10+1 clutch enables precision driving and eliminates over torque in soft base materials. Max mode allows pilot and other small bore holes. The variable speed trigger permits increased sensitivity and control.



Comes with a carrying case, two power drive bits, a 30-minute charger and 2 – 10.8V batteries.

Get more information at the Bosch website at [www.boschtools.com](http://www.boschtools.com).

## BASF Introduces PermaLath – A New & Innovative Stucco Lath

PermaLath is a patent pending, corrosion-free stucco lath that is a superior alternative to metal lath and stucco netting for 3/8" to 1/2" stucco base applications. As well as being

non-metallic, it is a 3-dimensional, and self-furring lath reinforcement. Easy



and safe to cut – use scissors – it cuts faster than other reinforcements and is easier on the hands. Lengths can be rolled and



cut to length in one easy pass with the utility knife. PermaLath is extremely light weight at 16 lbs per roll making it easy to carry, too.

For more information go to [www.basfwallsystems.com](http://www.basfwallsystems.com).

## Bil-Jax Introduces the 2622T Trailer Mounted Boom Lift



Bil-Jax, Inc., a leading manufacturer of scaffold and aerial lifts since 1947, has announced their new 2622T Telescopic Aerial Work Platform. The trailer-mounted boom lift provides 32' of working height and 22' of outreach and features an automatic, self-leveling hydraulic outrigger system that allows for set-up in 30 seconds when all four outriggers are deployed simultaneously.

The outriggers provide an industry leading leveling capability of 12.5 degrees and feature large, 10" diameter non-marking footpads for use on rough terrain job sites or sensitive flooring applications. The 2622T is the 5th model in the Bil-Jax Summit Series line of trailer mounted boom lifts.

This new 2622T Telescopic Aerial

*Continued on next page*

from previous page

Work Platform is available with either 24v DC battery power or an optional DC and Honda gas hybrid engine package. Other features include: a 2-person platform with a rated load capacity of 440 lbs.; 700-degree turntable rotation; outrigger interlocks; and a 110v GFI duplex outlet at the platform.



The 2622T can be operated from either the platform or ground control station. Both feature a display panel with control buttons that are logically positioned around a single machine image for easy identification of button functions.

The 2622T's boom design consists of one primary boom arm containing a telescopic section that is easier to operate than conventional articulating booms that frequently require multiple elevation changes of two boom arms in order to lift and position the platform.

The 2622T is easily towed behind vehicles with adequate towing capacity and a Class 3 hitch. A maximum tow speed rating of 65 mph is one of the highest in the industry, providing for faster transportation to and from job sites and equipment yards.

Several options make the 2622T even more versatile. These include a material lifting attachment that allows the machine to be easily converted into a light-duty crane by employing the platform quick disconnect system and the optional material lifting attachment. The material lifting attachment can be used for sign installation, setting trusses, and a variety of other material lifting and positioning applications.

For on-site powered maneuverability, a drive option lets users operate the outriggers and drive the machine from the platform when it's in the fully-lowered position. Other options include: an air line to the platform; spare tire; tool tray; and a combination hitch with an adjustable height coupler. A number of hitch couplers are available to meet individual towing preferences. Bil-Jax plans to introduce additional options and accessories in the future.

## Digital Takeoff Taking Hold With QuickMeasure On Screen by Tally Systems

Don't look now, but those paper blueprints in your hands may soon become obsolete—at least on a portion of your jobs.

Some architects and general contractors require jobs be bid based on digital drawings. On the flipside, others still rely heavily on physical blueprints, meaning a digitizer will remain a key piece of equipment in the estimating process.

This mix between using digital and traditional methods for estimating may have the biggest impact on subcontractors. These firms could find themselves investing more in takeoff and estimating technology simply to keep up with the divergence.

Addressing this need, Tally Systems Inc., [www.tallysystems.us](http://www.tallysystems.us), San Diego, Calif., recently announced the addition of QuickMeasure OnScreen, to its line of blueprint measuring software applications for construction estimators.

The QuickMeasure OnScreen application helps contractors resolve the growing dilemma of how to generate quantity takeoffs from blueprints that are downloaded from the Internet or distributed on CD. The software allows the estimator to measure directly from the digital image rather than having to reproduce the drawings on paper.

Estimators are able to instantly gain accurate count, length, and area totals via a few clicks of a mouse. Quantities and images of the takeoff can be transferred directly into a user's existing Microsoft Excel spreadsheet via the computer.

QuickMeasure OnScreen is the latest in digital takeoff technology hitting the market. Other vendors providing such solutions include Accubid Systems, [www.accubid.com](http://www.accubid.com), Concord, Ont., and On Center Software, [www.oncenter.com](http://www.oncenter.com), The Woodlands, Texas, among others.

There is little doubt architects and general contractors will continue to use a mixture of traditional and digital blueprints on jobs. The right technology can allow your company to be prepared for both instances.

## CertainTeed® Brand Now Includes Line of Interior and Exterior Building Products

CertainTeed Corporation announced the addition of gypsum wall board and ceiling tiles to its CertainTeed®-branded line of interior and exterior building products.

In December 2005, CertainTeed's parent company, Saint-Gobain, the world's largest building products manufacturer, acquired BPB PLC of the United Kingdom, the world's largest gypsum manufacturer and the third largest U.S. manufacturer of suspended ceilings.

BPB's North American gypsum wallboard and ceiling businesses join

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the 103-year old CertainTeed brand as CertainTeed Gypsum and CertainTeed Ceilings. In addition, Saint-Gobain's well-known Ecophon® and Decoustics ceilings product brands will become part of the CertainTeed Ceilings line.

For use in residential and commercial buildings, the expanded CertainTeed brand now includes these well known ceiling and wall products: Pro-Roc™ Gypsum Board, GlasRoc® High-Performance Sheathing, ProFin® Joint Compounds, Celotex® Mineral Ceiling Systems, Ecophon® Acoustic Ceilings, Decoustics Ceiling Systems, Capaul® High-Performance Ceilings & Wall Systems and Gyptone® Designer Gypsum Ceiling Systems. These products are manufactured at approximately 30 facilities throughout the United States and Canada.

## New Contractor's Guide To QuickBooks Pro 2007

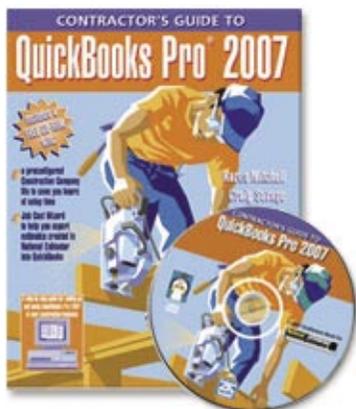
QuickBooks Pro can save you hours of time in keeping your books and keeping track of your finances. But setting up the new 2007 QuickBooks

Pro can be complex and time-consuming.

*Contractor's Guide to QuickBooks Pro 2007* can save hours of time in setting up

and putting to use all the new features that the 2007 edition offers. QuickBooks Pro isn't just for taxes. You can use it for payroll, keeping track of your vendors and subs -- even job costing (comparing your estimated costs to your actual costs and finding out where you're making and losing money.)

If you'd rather be building homes than burning the midnight oil trying to balance your books, you should have this new book. It includes a CD-ROM



with a template for a construction company to help speed your set up, an estimating program with a 5000-item database, a program that converts your estimates into QuickBooks forms so you can compare with your actual costs, and blank construction forms for your use.

For more information or to order go to [www.craftsman-books.com](http://www.craftsman-books.com).

## Fortifiber® Introduces WeatherTex™ The World's First Hybrid Weather-Resistive Barrier



Fortifiber Building Systems Group® introduces WeatherTex™, the industry's first hybrid housewrap and a high-tech solution that ends the paper vs. plastic debate. WeatherTex provides the best of both worlds by the innovative layering of Super JumboTex® 60 Minute building paper over WeatherSmart™, Fortifiber's award-winning "smart" polymeric housewrap solution.

By combining the formidable merits of two of its finest products, Fortifiber's WeatherTex offers an exceptional combination of strength, durability, breathability and moisture protection, with the added benefit of extraordinary versatility. WeatherTex hybrid weather-resistive barrier is perfect for use under stucco, and an excellent choice in any climate and behind any cladding. Now builders and architects can choose WeatherTex as a two-layer system without adding the considerable labor cost of wrapping the building twice; most building scientists agree that the additional drainage plane of this system offers enhanced drainage

performance.

## The Fusion of Two Superior Products

Super JumboTex 60-Minute building paper is part of the JumboTex line, which has set the benchmark for more than 50 years and helped invent the model for how WRBs should perform in a wall system. Manufactured from a base stock of kraft linerboard, JumboTex is far less brittle than felt, making it less likely to tear during installations around corners and in tight conditions. WeatherSmart is a nonwoven, non-perforated housewrap that employs advanced breathable polymer technology and delivers balanced moisture control in any weather condition.

## Backed by the Industry's Most Comprehensive Warranty

WeatherTex is part of a complete, scientifically engineered, Moisture Control System, which includes weather-resistive barriers, flexible flashings and sealant. The system combines the latest materials advances with sound building science principles to reliably manage external water related structural failures, such as mold and mildew. WeatherTex is backed by the FortiShield® 10-Year Warranty – the industry's most comprehensive 10-year warranty. When used as specified, as part of a complete system, WeatherTex provides added assurance that wall system installations will remain trouble-free for years to come.

For more information go to [www.fortifiber.com](http://www.fortifiber.com).

## New Three-In-One Meter From Delmhorst

Delmhorst's new TotalCheck three-in-one meter offers scan and pin moisture modes and a thermo-hygrometer that measures ambient Temperature and RH and calculates Dew point and GPP. Relative Humidity is a cru-



*Continued on following page*

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cial factor to consider when installing a floor over a concrete sub floor. The RH sensor of TotalCheck is removable and conforms to the ASTM F-2170 standard to determine if concrete floors have dried adequately before installing a floor covering.

Visit Delmhorst Instrument Systems at [www.delmhorst.com](http://www.delmhorst.com).

## New HUMITEK™ Gypsum Panels

New SHEETROCK® Brand HUMITEK™ Gypsum Panels have a non-combustible, moisture and mold-resistant gypsum core that is encased in a moisture resistant, 100 percent recycled blue face and brown back papers. The panels feature tapered long edges for easy finishing. The 5/8" panels are UL Classified for fire resistance (Type X).



Panels are for use in interior areas. Features and benefits include:

- Scores and snaps easily; no special handling or finishing required
- UL Classified for fire resistance, surface burning characteristics and noncombustibility
- Offers moisture, mold and mildew

For more information go to the CGC website at [www.cgcinc.com](http://www.cgcinc.com).

## Allied Releases Two New Products in the Lumber Category

Allied Building Products Corp. announces the addition of two new products to its growing list of nationally endorsed Lumber Category products.

**Restoration Millwork™** - CertainTeed Restoration Millwork Cellular PVC Trim is the answer to your exterior trim needs. It includes trimboards, beadboard, full-size sheets, one-piece corners, brick mould and drip cap of-

fering unparalleled beauty, uniformity and long-lasting durability. Made from solid PVC, Restoration Millwork is designed for use wherever you use wood for exterior trim needs. Plus, it complements virtually all siding materials: vinyl, wood, stucco, fiber cement and brick.



**CertainTeed WeatherBoards™ Fiber Cement Siding** - When looking for siding that captures the look and feel of wood in a natural but more durable material, consider CertainTeed

WeatherBoards™ Fiber Cement siding. CertainTeed WeatherBoards Siding features the most authentic wood grain in the industry, so you can enjoy the lasting features and handsome appearance of wood without all the upkeep. With a large number of lap, shapes and vertical profiles to choose from, the WeatherBoards Fiber Cement texture is a less porous surface that holds paint well. CertainTeed WeatherBoards™ Fiber Cement siding built to take on the elements and then some.

Contact your local Allied Building Products facility or visit the company's website at [www.alliedbuilding.com](http://www.alliedbuilding.com).

## Dryvit Marks 10th Anniversary of EIFS System

At the Feb. 7-10 International Builders' Show in Orlando, Dryvit Systems, Inc., the leading manufacturer of Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems (EIFS) showcased its Residential MD System. The exterior cladding system with moisture drainage is engineered specifically for residential applications, providing an extra level of moisture protection to Dryvit's premier EIFS technology.

This year's IBS marks the 10th anniversary of the release of the highly successful Residential MD system. In 1997, Dryvit was the first EIFS manufacturer to engineer a drainage-cavity EIF system specifically for residential construction.

"We have experienced significant growth in our residential business due to the success of our drainage system," said Tony Stall, vice president of marketing for Dryvit. "The Residential MD system has been proven in the marketplace for a decade now, with more than 11,000 homes in place, providing superior energy efficiency to owners year after year."

The system allows for drainage between the secondary weather barrier and insulation board. It can be either adhesively attached or mechanically fastened with Dryvit-approved fasteners over a code-approved weather barrier to the substrate, providing maximum strength and wind-load performance. After reinforced base coat and fiberglass mesh, the final touch is the application of a Dryvit acrylic finish, which can resemble brick, granite, stucco, limestone and more. The system is backed by a 10-year moisture drainage and materials warranty. However, homes are eligible for a 30-year warranty when builders use EIFSmart-certified applicators to install the Dryvit products and participate in a Dryvit pre-construction seminar.



# SCAFFOLDING SAFETY GUIDELINES

as Recommended by SCAFFOLDING, SHORING & FORMING INSTITUTE

It shall be the responsibility of all employers and employees to read and comply with the following common sense guidelines which are designed to promote safety in the erecting and dismantling of scaffolds. These guidelines do not purport to be all-inclusive nor to supplant or replace other additional safety and precautionary measures to cover usual or unusual conditions. Local, State or Federal statute or regulations shall supersede these guidelines if there is a conflict and it is the responsibility of each employee to comply.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

- I. **POST THESE SCAFFOLDING SAFETY GUIDELINES** in a conspicuous place and be sure that all persons who erect, dismantle or use scaffolding are aware of them.
- II. **FOLLOW ALL STATE, LOCAL AND FEDERAL CODES, ORDINANCES AND REGULATIONS** pertaining to scaffolding because they may be more restrictive. For example, height or width requirements may vary.
- III. **SURVEY THE JOB SITE**—A survey shall be made of the job site for hazards, such as untempered earth fills, ditches, debris, high tension wires, unguarded openings, and other hazardous conditions created by other trades. These conditions shall be corrected or avoided as noted in the following sections.
- IV. **INSPECT ALL EQUIPMENT BEFORE USING**—Never use any equipment that is damaged or defective in any way.
- V. **KEEP ALL EQUIPMENT IN GOOD REPAIR**—Avoid using corroded equipment—the strength of corroded equipment is not known.
- VI. **INSPECT ERECTED SCAFFOLDS DAILY**—or at the beginning of every shift to be sure that they are maintained in safe condition.
- VII. **NEVER USE EQUIPMENT FOR PURPOSES OR IN WAYS FOR WHICH IT WAS NOT INTENDED.**
- VIII. **REPORT ANY UNSAFE CONDITION. NEVER TAKE CHANCES**—Do not work on scaffolds if your physical condition is such that you feel dizzy or unsteady in any way.
- IX. **WORKING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL OR ILLEGAL DRUGS IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.**
- X. **CONSULT YOUR SCAFFOLDING SUPPLIER—NEVER TAKE CHANCES**—Consult manuals and instructions provided by the supplier; scaffolding is his business.

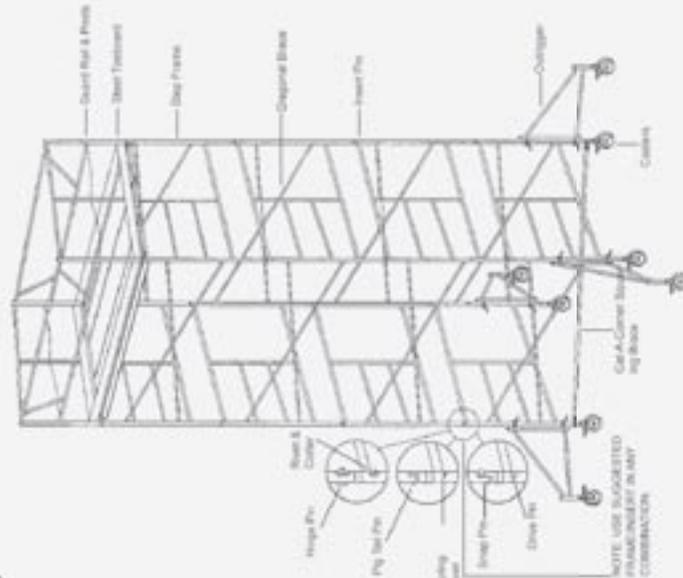
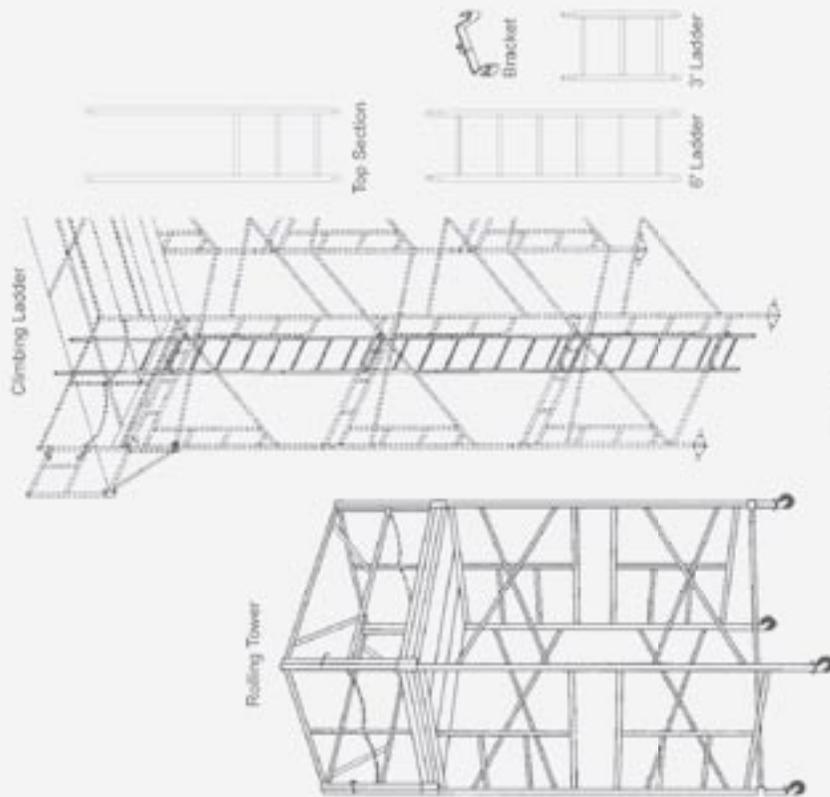
## GUIDELINES FOR ERECTION AND USE OF SCAFFOLDS

- A. PROVIDE ADEQUATE SKILLS for scaffold posts and use base plates.
- B. USE ADJUSTING SCREWS or other approved conditions.
- C. PLUMB AND LEVEL ALL SCAFFOLDS as the erection proceeds. Do not force braces to fit—level the scaffold until proper fit can be made easily.
- D. BRACING. Each frame or panel shall be braced by horizontal bracing, cross bracing, diagonal bracing or any combination thereof for securing vertical members together laterally. All brace connections shall be made secure, in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations.
- E. DO NOT CLIMB CROSS BRACES. Use only an access (climbing) ladder, access steps, frame designed to be climbed or equivalent safe access to scaffold.
- F. TIE RUNNING SCAFFOLD TO WALL or structure when the height exceeds four (4) times the minimum scaffold base dimension. The first vertical and longitudinal tie shall be placed at this point. Vertical ties shall be repeated at intervals not greater than 20 feet. Longitudinal ties shall be placed at each end and at intervals not greater than 30 feet. Ties must prevent the scaffold from tipping into or away from the wall or structure.
- G. WHEN SCAFFOLDS ARE TO BE PARTIALLY OR FULLY ENCLOSED, specific precautions must be taken to assure frequency and adequacy of ties attaching the scaffolding to the building due to increased load conditions resulting from effects of wind and weather. The scaffolding components to which the ties are attached must also be checked for additional loads.
- H. WHEN FREE STANDING SCAFFOLD TOWERS exceed four times their minimum base dimension vertically, they must be restrained from tipping.
- I. DO NOT ERECT SCAFFOLDS NEAR ELECTRICAL POWER LINES UNLESS PROPER PRECAUTIONS ARE TAKEN. Consult the power service company for advice.
- J. DO NOT USE ladders or makeshift devices on top of scaffold to increase the height.
- K. DO NOT EXCEED MANUFACTURERS' RECOMMENDED LOAD RATING.
- L. EQUIP AND MAINTAIN ALL PLATFORMS with proper guardrails, midrails, and toeboards along all open sides and ends of scaffold platforms.
- M. ALL BRACKETS shall be sealed correctly with side brackets parallel to the frames and end brackets at 90 degrees to the frames. Brackets shall not be bent or twisted from normal position. Brackets (except mobile brackets designed to carry materials) are to be used as work platforms only and shall not be used for storage of material or equipment. When brackets are used, the scaffold shall be tied to the structure or otherwise restrained to prevent tipping.
- N. ALL SCAFFOLDING ACCESSORIES shall be used and installed in accordance with the manufacturer's recommended procedure. Accessories shall not be altered in the field. Scaffolds, frames and their components of various manufacturers shall not be intermixed.
- O. FOR PLANKING, THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES APPLY.
  1. Use only lumber that is properly inspected and graded as scaffold plank.
  2. Planking that has at least 12 inches of overhang and extend 6 inches beyond center of support, or, be closed at both ends to prevent sliding of supports.
  3. Fabricated scaffold planks and platforms, unless created or restrained by hooks, shall extend over their end supports not less than 6 inches nor more than 12 inches.

\* EXCEPTIONS: Three times in California, Ohio, Oregon, Montana, Maine.

These safety guidelines set forth common sense procedures for safely erecting and dismantling scaffolding equipment. However, equipment and scaffolding systems differ, and accordingly, reference must always be made to the instructions and procedures of the supplier of the equipment. Since field conditions vary and are beyond the control of the Institute, safe and proper use of scaffolding is the responsibility of the user and not the Institute.

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ALL PHOTOS AND DRAWINGS ARE FOR ILLUSTRATION ONLY. FOLLOW ALL APPLICABLE ANS AND OSHA CODES AND REGULATIONS FOR USE OF THIS EQUIPMENT. DO NOT USE IN AREA WHERE USER CAN COME IN CONTACT WITH LIVE POWER.

## OSHA Unveils New Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for Influenza Pandemic

WASHINGTON -- The Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has unveiled new workplace safety and health guidance that will help employers prepare for an influenza pandemic.

Developed in coordination with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), *Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for an Influenza Pandemic* provides general guidance for all types of workplaces, describes the differences between seasonal, avian and pandemic influenza, and presents information on the nature of a potential pandemic, how the virus is likely to spread and how exposure is likely to occur.

Under the president's National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Implementation Plan, the Labor Department is responsible for promoting the health, safety and welfare of employees and providing guidance to assist employers in protecting the health and safety of employees during a pandemic flu.

To help employers determine appropriate workplace practices and precautions, the guidance divides workplaces and work operations into four risk zones, according to the likelihood of employees' occupational exposure to pandemic influenza. Recommendations for employee protection are presented for each of the four levels of anticipated risk and include engineering controls, work practices and use of personal protective equipment such as respirators and surgical masks and their relative value in protecting employees.

The Labor Department/HHS guidance also encourages employers to prepare a plan to deal with a depleted workforce during a pandemic. In addition, the guidance includes links to helpful Web sites with additional information and a list of technical articles and resources, including a history on flu pandemics, symptoms and outcomes of various strains of the influenza, and details on the transmission of the virus.

It is important to note that workplace safety and health guidance may evolve and change over time as new information becomes available. For instance, the characteristics of the specific strain of influenza virus ultimately responsible

for the pandemic may affect the way in which the disease is spread and therefore additional guidance would be tailored to that information. Up-to-date information and guidance is available to employers, employees and the general public through [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov), the federal government's Web site for information regarding pandemic flu. •

## New "It's The Law" Poster

OSHA has announced publication of its new "It's The Law" poster. Also known as the OSHA notice of employee rights, it is required to be displayed in every workplace in America. The current edition of the OSHA poster is still valid; employers are not required to replace their existing poster with the new version. The OSHA poster, which is free and available in both English and Spanish. It may be downloaded from OSHA's Web site at [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov). The poster may also be obtained from any OSHA regional or area office, or by writing to the OSHA Publications Office, room N3101, 200 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, D.C 20210, phone (202) 693-1888. •

## Employers Must Post Illness/Injury Summaries

WASHINGTON -- The Occupational Safety and Health Administration reminded employers that beginning Feb. 1, they must post a summary of the total number of job-related injuries and illnesses that occurred during 2006. Employers are only required to post OSHA Form 300A (summary), not the OSHA 300 log. The summary must be posted from Feb. 1 to April 30, 2007.

"This is an excellent time for employers to review their 300 logs and determine where injuries and illnesses are occurring and determine a strategy to reduce and hopefully eliminate these safety and health hazards," said OSHA Administrator Ed Foulke.

The summary must list the total number of job-related injuries and illnesses that occurred in 2006 and were logged on the OSHA 300 form. Information about the annual average number of employees and total hours worked during the calendar year is also required to assist in calculating incidence rates. Companies with no recordable injuries or illnesses in 2006 must post the form with zeroes on the total line. All summaries must be certified by a company executive.

The form is to be displayed in a common area wherever notices to employees are usually posted. A copy of the summary must be made available to employees who move from worksite to worksite, such as construction employees and employees who do not report to any fixed establishment on a regular basis.

Employers with ten or fewer employees and employers in certain industry groups are normally exempt from federal OSHA injury and illness recordkeeping and posting requirements. A complete list of exempt industries in the retail, services, finance and real estate sectors is posted on the OSHA Web site.

Exempted employers may still be selected by the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics to participate in an annual statistical survey. All employers covered by OSHA need to comply with safety and health standards and must report verbally within eight hours to the nearest OSHA office all accidents that result in one or more fatalities or in the hospitalization of three or more employees.

Copies of the OSHA Forms 300 and 300A are available on the OSHA Recordkeeping Web page in either Adobe PDF or Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet format. •



AWCI's  
**CONVENTION** + **INTEX** **EXPO 07**  
Interior Exterior | Commercial Construction

**AWCI's Annual Convention & INTEX Expo**  
April 1-5, 2007 ▲ Orlando, Florida

The Association of Wall-Ceiling & Carpentry  
Industries of New York, Inc.  
125 Jericho Tpke., Suite 301, Jericho, NY 11753

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED