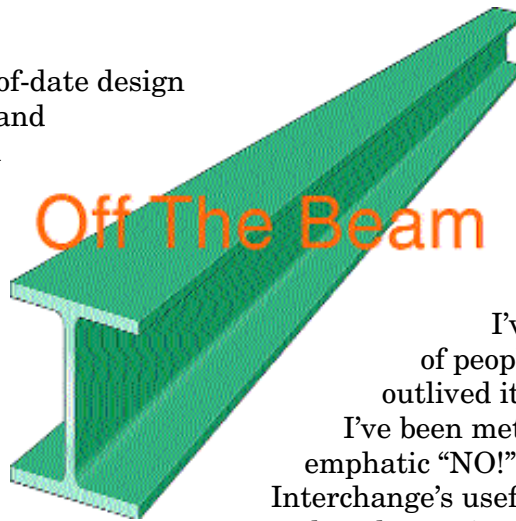


Where can you get the out-of-date design specifications and properties and dimensions of structural steel shapes that are not currently being produced? How do you decide when to use doubler plates and when to increase the size of a column? Are washers required in connections with slotted holes because of strength requirements, or are there additional reasons? What fatigue category is a full penetration weld between a tube column and a base plate? How can you take into account blast effects in the design of steel structures? What are deflection limits for crane runway systems?

These are just a few of the more than 200 questions that have been asked—and answered—since the Steel Interchange column began in March 1992 (if you want to see a complete index of all questions, check out AISC's home page at <http://aiscweb.com> — and in the future you'll see all of the past answers, too).

In numerous conversations with readers, I was not surprised to discover that Steel Interchange is clearly the most popular section of this magazine. In fact, the section's popularity was immediately apparent—when we first started we regularly received 10 ques-



tions and 30 answers in a single month. Unfortunately, while the section's popularity remains, the flow of questions and answers has diminished.

I've recently asked a number of people if Steel Interchange has outlived its usefulness and each time I've been met with a resounding and emphatic "NO!". Apparently, it's not Steel Interchange's usefulness that has declined; rather the section has lost its novelty. The questions and answers are still out there, readers have simply become blase about sending them in.

So just a reminder: If you have any questions about steel design, fabrication, construction, erection or detailing, or about bolting, welding, metal decking, steel joists, hollow structural sections or computer software, or if you have any questions about any AISC program or activity, send them to: Steel Interchange, c/o AISC, One East Wacker Dr., Suite 3100, Chicago, IL 60601-2001; email: aiscpmn@interaccess.com; fax: 312/670-5403.

In the meantime, be sure to check out this month's Steel Interchange on pages 9-10.

Scott Melnick
Editor & Publisher

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