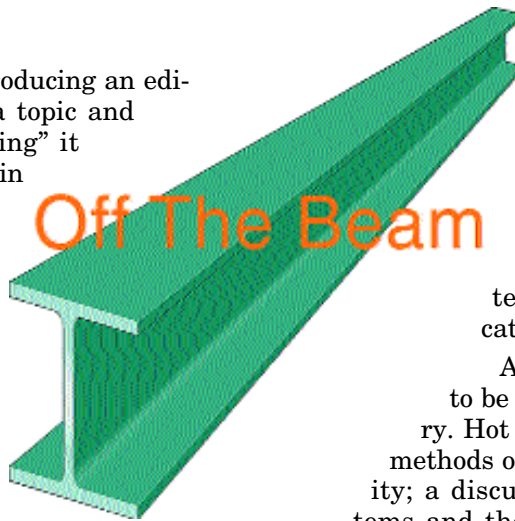


Each month, the process of producing an editorial begins with deciding on a topic and then spending some time “writing” it in my head before sitting down in front of my keyboard. This month, I was pretty sure I was going to tackle the task of reminding people about the upcoming National Steel Construction Conference in May. I was going to kick off the editorial by mentioning that 35 states either now have or are considering adding requirements for continuing education as a prerequisite to retaining a P.E. license. And I was going to remind everyone that attending the NSCC is a good way to obtain an entire year’s worth of CEUs.

But last night, as I sat at home bouncing my new baby daughter on my knees, I decided that was a bad approach. In many ways, it reminds me of the—in my opinion, at least—mistake that AISC made in 1986 when they introduced LRFD. At that time, and for many years more, AISC tried selling LRFD as a cost saving method. And yes, in some building types LRFD does save on the framing system. However, cost saving is not the true advantage of LRFD; an improved design methodology with greater reliability is the whole point.

Likewise, while attending the NSCC will indeed provide you with a nice chunk of continuing education units, that shouldn’t be the main reason for attending. Rather, the main reason for attending the conference is to become a better professional. The conference offers more than 20 sessions designed to provide information that you can use on a near-daily basis back in the office. The NSCC



is not aimed at the pure academics who might be interested in highly esoteric topics. The conference is directed at practicing professionals who need information on current state-of-the-art techniques for designing, fabricating and constructing buildings.

And this year’s conference looks to be one of the best in recent memory. Hot sessions include: a look at new methods of analysis and design for stability; a discussion of various cladding systems and their effects on steel frames; an examination of moment connections for both seismic and non-seismic areas; a case-study on two large-scale erection projects; an in-depth look at changes in the 1996 Structural Welding Code; a discussion on what engineers should know about welding procedures; and a full-day short-course covering the new AISC Manual on HSS Connections.

In addition, attendees have a wonderful opportunity to network with their peers and to visit an extensive product exhibition hall. The conference this year is in Chicago, which means plenty of extracurricular activities—from museums to ballparks. And, of course, don’t forget that the conference is an excellent place to get those CEUs.

For more information on the conference, point your favorite web browser to <http://www.aiscweb.com> or use our fax-back service by calling 800/787-0052 ext. 110.

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