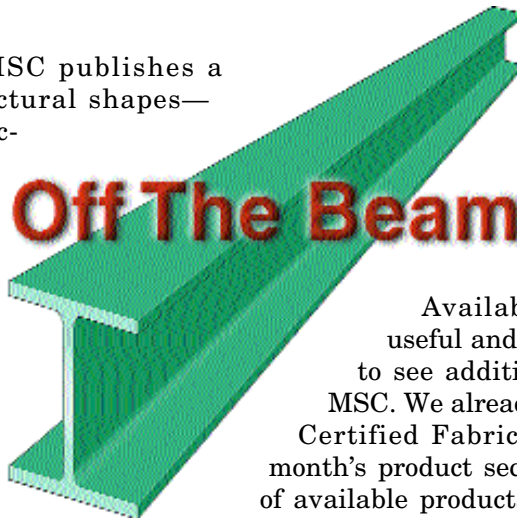


Each January and July, MSC publishes a detailed list of available structural shapes—including hollow structural sections. Over the years, the list has proven invaluable to engineers designing buildings. However, it quickly became a running joke around the office that the reason it was done twice yearly was it was eight fewer pages for the editorial staff to write. Well, this year, the joke's on us. There were more changes in this month's listing than in any since the first year we published the list.

Why so many changes? The most obvious changes occurred with Bethlehem's withdrawal from the structural shapes marketplace and with the closing of Northwestern Steel and Wire Co.'s Houston mill, which produced most of that mill's larger shapes. In addition, Sonco and Standard Tube have joined to become Copperweld Canada, which altered the landscape for hollow structural sections—though all of the shapes they produced as separate entities are still being formed by the combined company.

And in the future, more changes are due. As many of you are aware, there has been a noticeable increase in steel mill shipping lead times during the past quarter. The mills are actively working to bring lead times back to their historic levels (see article on page 25) and also are working to add more capacity. When Nucor brings its new mill on



line next year, it's possible that their listing will expand. Likewise, both Chaparral and Steel Dynamics expect new mills in a few years.

Lists such as the Shapes Availability database have proven useful and popular, so don't be surprised to see additional lists in future issues of MSC. We already run the list of AISC Quality Certified Fabricators each December. Each month's product section is essentially a database of available products and suppliers (for example, this month's product section lists most of the structural engineering software programs on the market today). Next month we're adding a list of Steel Detailers (though not yet exhaustive, we still expect it to have more than 200 detailers in the U.S. and Canada included). And in the near future, once the AISC Erector Certification Program is up and running, we'll be printing a list of Certified Erectors.

If there are other lists you'd like to see compiled and published, or if you have suggestions on how we can improve our lists, let us know.

Scott Melnick
Editor & Publisher

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