



Scott L. Melnick

**D**oes 10 plus 10 always equal 20? My son Joshua is fascinated with chemistry. So being relatively irresponsible, I purchased a basic chemistry set, and every so often I haul out the test tubes and the elaborate lesson book to run through a few experiments—ranging from demonstrating an endothermic reaction to changing the pH level of water. One of the experiments had us combine 10 ml of alcohol with 10 ml of water. And lo and behold, we only ended up with 18 ml of liquid. While it was a great chemistry experiment, I'm worried about the first time a teacher asks Josh what 10 plus 10 is and he says, "It depends."

Of course, AISC's Engineering and Research Department is a little more absolute in their thinking than my 5-year-old son. So when AISC started working on the next steel manual, the edition number seemed obvious. Because the new manual combines both ASD and LRFD methodologies, and since there have been nine ASD manuals and three LRFD manuals, then the next edition is obviously the 13th (though since for most engineers the new manual is really the logical extension of their 9th edition, my son and I voted for this to be the 10th edition, but we were outvoted).

The new *Steel Construction Manual*, 13th Edition, is generating a lot of excitement, and everyone seems to have their favorite parts. My buddy Charlie Carter seems particularly enamored by the user notes that AISC included with the new specification (already available as a free download at [www.aisc.org/specification](http://www.aisc.org/specification) or for purchase in hard-copy form at a nominal fee of \$20 from 800.644.2400).

I like the way AISC has decided to handle design examples. Because the new manual includes so much more than any previous edition AISC pulled all of the design examples out of the book. Instead, an expanded design example publication will be provided on an accompanying CD (free with the purchase of the new manual).

I also like some of the promotional tools AISC has developed to make sure everyone knows the new manual is coming out. For real steel fanatics, AISC is planning on having the first manual that comes off the printing press autographed by the entire Committee on Specifications and

auctioned on eBay with proceeds going to the AISC Education Foundation. My favorite promotion, however, is a design example competition. AISC will post three problems on its web site in mid-November. Everyone who submits the correct answers will be entered into a drawing for a \$5,000 cash prize.

While the changes from the 3rd edition LRFD manual are fairly incremental, the changes from the 9th edition ASD manual are far greater—after all, the update to the 9th edition was 16 years in coming, and a lot of advances in design have occurred during this period. To ease the transition, AISC will offer a full-day seminar in more than 60 cities, beginning with San Antonio on February 11. Why San Antonio? The first seminar will be held on the Saturday following the North American Steel Construction Conference, and discounted registration will be available to those who attend the conference as well as the seminar. More details on the steel conference will be available shortly at [www.aisc.org/nascc](http://www.aisc.org/nascc).

Hope to see you in San Antonio!

P.S.—One final thought: If you're not already an AISC member, now is a good time to join. Membership for a single individual is \$135 and the rate drops dramatically if more than one individual from your firm joins (a total of \$160 for two to six members, just \$200 for seven to 19 members from the same firm). Membership gives you access to more than 10,000 pages of technical information online (ranging from all issues of *Engineering Journal* to the complete set of AISC design guides to selected conference papers). It provides discounts to seminars and conference registration. Most importantly, it allows you to purchase printed publications for 50% less than non-members can—a critical feature with the new manual, which is priced at \$175 for members and \$350 for non-members. Attendees at the seminar can purchase a copy for a discounted price. So maybe Joshua is right after all and 10 plus 10 doesn't always equal 20.

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