

letters

Unregulated Engineering

Matt Thomas (July 2009 MSC, p. 66) brings up a good point about the proper use of software in the engineering profession. The issue, however, is not so much that engineers are blindly relying on computers and software, but that sub sectors of the construction industry are relying on non-licensed technicians and sales people using proprietary software to provide engineering services. It is interesting that he mentions the Hartford Civic Center as a lesson. I would like to say lesson learned, but the L'Ambiance Plaza collapse in Bridgeport, Conn., and a lesser known prefabricated roof truss collapse show that lessons may be getting overlooked. Connecticut and other states as well need to clamp down on people "engineering" without a license. They also need to define more broadly what situations require the involvement of Professional Engineers.

Peter J. Cloudas, P.E.
Stamford, Conn.

More on the Connection Debate

I have been reading with great interest the articles about design connection responsibility. In the eight years that I've been practicing,

no one has been able to give me a clear explanation about this topic.

It's my personal opinion that the code should include only two options—one in which the engineer of record designs all the connections, and one in which the fabricator is responsible for the design, and the engineer of record merely checks them as part of shop drawing review. I see no reason for any gray area in between that makes it even more difficult to explain the available options to a client.

I also want to express my opinion from a design consultant's point of view regarding the letter by Peter Officer in the July 2009 issue of MSC (page 18). I completely agree that without a complete scope of work it is difficult to make an accurate bid, and that the cheapest bid may win if it is not carefully reviewed by all the parties involved, including the design professional of record. However, a similar observation can be made for the design professional. The client will be inclined to go to the one that gives faster results and whose fees are lower. Then the question is: how many extra hours would the design of all the connections on a project take? Including those hours may well make the design consultant less competitive.

The effort to educate clients on this matter has to be shared by design professionals and fabricators alike. In the end, the premium paid to the engineer or the fabricator for connection design should be similar, and the client needs to understand clearly the pros and cons of the two alternatives.

Truly Guzman, P.E.
New York

The Message is More Than Words

I was very disappointed to find a picture of a woman in a bikini, focusing on her breasts, stomach and thighs, as part of an ad campaign for American Galvanizers Association. The current trend in the construction industry is to promote, retain and encourage women in math, science and technology careers. Advertising of this type is inappropriate for a trade magazine. A disregard for a woman's negative reaction is a marginalization of her value to the industry. As a member of AISC, I would appreciate it if you could communicate to AGA that women are numbered among your valued readers and contributors and that they should choose advertising that is positive for women. Your consideration is appreciated.

Rachelle Clark

AWARDS

Engineering Creativity & Innovation Recognized

With structural engineering from Walter P Moore, Houston, Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art has won the "New Buildings Under \$30 Million" project category in the 2009 Structural Engineers Association of Kansas & Missouri (SEAKM) Awards Program. The program is sponsored by SEAKM to recognize creative achievement and innovation in structural engineering.

Located on the campus of Johnson County Community College, Overland Park, Kan., Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art is the largest contemporary art museum in the four-state region. The elegant, minimalist building opened to international acclaim for its architecture, art collection and exhibition programming.

