

editor's note



AS MANY HOME BUYERS MUST, MY WIFE AND I NEEDED TO REPLACE MOST OF OUR APPLIANCES WHEN WE MOVED INTO OUR HOUSE NEARLY 20 YEARS AGO. AS A RESULT, IT SHOULDN'T BE SURPRISING THAT DURING THE PAST YEAR, WE'VE HAD TO REPLACE ALMOST ALL OF THEM AGAIN.

Up until now, I haven't spent much time looking at washing machines and refrigerators. But while the form has remained mostly the same, the bells and whistles have certainly improved. My washing machine has no agitator, uses much less water and detergent, and does a better job. The new refrigerator features French doors, a freezer on the bottom and an impressive array of controls for almost every compartment.

The steel industry has undergone a similar evolution. Today's wide flange looks pretty much the same as it did two decades ago, but a lot has changed. For starters, it's about 40% stronger (we've moved from a standard steel with a yield strength of 36 ksi to one with a yield strength of 50 ksi). But it's not just the material itself that's improved. It's also the machines and tools that process the material as well as the designs and systems that utilize this primarily domestically produced material.

This March, I encourage you to travel to San Antonio for the 2017 NASCC: The Steel Conference and see for yourself.

Stop by the booth of one of the steel producers and chat with them about what's new and better about their product. Visit a buckling-restrained brace manufacturer. Check out the latest machines that cut steel like butter and use computers to guide the process for unrivaled accuracy. Visit a structural engineering software provider to see how fast and easy it is to design with steel. With more than 200

exhibitors, it's easy to spend your day learning about a myriad of new systems and products.

But don't forget the more than 130 technical sessions. Into bridges? Check out one of the sessions on "Understanding and Reevaluating Fracture Critical." Concerned about business issues? Don't miss the session on "Case Studies in How to Use the Code of Standard Practice to Prevent and Resolve Disputes." Need a technical refresher? How about "Practical Advice for Reviewing Software Generated Connection Designs" or maybe "Secrets of the Manual to Get it Done."

And don't forget the opportunity to meet industry notables ranging from the nation's most prestigious structural engineering professors to our country's leading designers and fabricators. More than 4,500 attendees are expected and it's always a great opportunity to meet and discuss issues with your peers. And it's a great place to chat with AISC's new president, Charlie Carter.

Visit www.aisc.org/nascc and download the advance program. You'll want to register as soon as possible—registration fees increase \$10 every week. But as always, AISC members receive a substantial discount.

I hope to see you in San Antonio!


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