

Expect Growth

Forecasts express anticipation of four solid years of economic improvement

Upcoming MBMA Energy Webinars

Many municipalities in the United States have adopted an energy code or standard.

MBMA has developed a comprehensive webinar that will educate you on how to navigate and utilize today's energy codes and standards as they apply to metal building systems, while incorporating portions of the MBMA "Energy Design Guide for Metal Building Systems." This webinar will also help you understand how to design and specify metal buildings to be energy efficient from the perspective of the metal building specifier, contractor or builder. Every registered participant will receive a copy of MBMA's "Energy Design Guide for Metal Building Systems" as part of the course fee.

Some of the topics covered:

- Energy design responsibilities
- How metal building systems fit into the energy codes
- How to navigate and apply energy code requirements
- Common ways to insulate a metal building system
- Recent updates to energy codes and standards, such as the IECC and ASHRAE 90.1, and how they apply to metal building systems

Dates: April 30, June 4, July 2, August 6, September 3, October 1

Details: www.mbma.com/bookstore

Upcoming MBMA Fire Webinars

Fire resistance requirements for building construction continue to become more complicated with each new edition of the code. New materials, such as foam plastics and higher levels of insulation, will change the way buildings are designed, and will change the fire resistance requirements in the codes.

MBMA's Fire Code Compliance for Metal Building Systems webinars give attendees knowledge of the building code requirements for fire protecting buildings and an advanced understanding of how to do so. The webinars cover the International Building Code (IBC) requirements for fire rated construction, focusing on specific examples for metal building systems. MBMA's UL rated assemblies are reviewed in detail, in addition to incorporating portions of the "MBMA Fire Resistance Design Guide for Metal Building Systems".

New webinar dates are coming for 2013. Check www.mbma.com/bookstore for details.

The metal building systems industry, like the majority of America's business sectors, will experience slow growth for rest of this year; but there are reasons to be optimistic.

There is a general consensus among economists that the U.S. economy will see hearty growth from 2014 through 2017. Due to pent-up building demand, we anticipate that there will be increasing pressures on the non-residential building market to produce buildings—and build them fast. With pent-up demand, caused from years of recession, businesses will need their new and expanded buildings "yesterday."

This need will arise because the U.S. has faced such a long season of slow recovery.

Many of the companies that have resisted capital spending on hard core construction projects will be forced to do so as the economy accelerates. A lot of times, when you go into a recession, you come out like a hockey stick. This hasn't happened because of the broad and deep recession, so recovery has been decidedly slow. Many companies have needed increased space, but have been creative in finding ways to continue to function without spending scarce finances on buildings. With most forecasts showing more aggressive growth, there will be a lot of pressure for American companies to produce—and fast.

The Metal Building Manufacturers Association (MBMA) building systems manufacturers are prepared to deliver. We understand the need to build quickly. We have the capacity from the engineering, detailing and production sides to support very aggressive schedules. We are an industry of design-build contractors, so fast tracking is something that we do very well. This gives us tremendous marketplace advantage to meet the growing needs. Even through this difficult economy, the industry has increased its market share with building projects ranging from shopping centers, manufacturing facilities, and schools to hospitals, office buildings and warehouses.

The Challenge

Our industry has proven through past economic cycles that we are very able to respond quickly to help companies add the capacity they have put off during the decline. Our industry challenge will be to make sure that we have the human resources to aggressively handle the needs. We will need to make sure that we are adequately staffed in all areas—from marketing to engineering and produc-


tion to administration. We must be staffed to work efficiently and accurately while maintaining safety to keep pace with the significant coming demand.

The Preparation

I am pleased to report that the MBMA has continued, despite the economy, to faithfully invest in research and industry enhancements that will be critical to our industry as the economy expands. MBMA is working hard to create new tools and long-term solutions that will impact construction in the coming decade. These investments will bear fruit with game-changing deliverables. For example, MBMA is completing work on life cycle assessment and sustainability tools that will have a tremendous impact on the market position of the metal building systems industry.

These tools will be highly valuable in determining environmental impacts and will clearly help member companies win more work. We anticipate having these tools available before the end of 2013.

MBMA now offers contractors one- and two-hour fire rated wall assemblies that were successfully tested at Underwriters Laboratory (UL Listing W404 and 413). Groundbreaking seismic research, shear strength of tapered members and flange brace research is ongoing. This research, performed by MBMA, is dependent upon the commitment of member firms. Members have invested significant time to make these research efforts viable—even in these past few years of financial constraints and market pressures. This commitment of our members to dedicate their senior staff and technical experts to assist MBMA is the glue that keeps the association able to explore and solve critical industry issues. Their involvement and continued passionate commitment have made our industry what it is today.

I am proud to say that throughout this long, arduous era of downturn, MBMA has never stopped investing in significant research to make the industry stronger and protect its long-term vitality. The association has a history of defining forward-thinking solutions that impact construction for future decades. MBMA's current focus on energy research, for example, will definitely support industry solutions for today and tomorrow. 

Jeff Carmean is chairman of the Metal Building Manufacturers Association, Cleveland. To learn more about MBMA, visit www.mbma.com.