

MBMA Webinars Gain ICC Continuing Ed Credits



By Jeff Carmean

Manufacturers offer builder attendance vouchers

Several years ago, the Metal Building Manufacturers Association (MBMA) began offering educational webinars. These 1 1/4-hour sessions have been quite successful in drawing in a broad range of attendees—from builders to manufacturers, to Department of Energy officials and architects. MBMA recognizes that today's busy, multi-tasking design and construction professionals need programs that offer new and specific information in a quick format than can be accessed through a tablet or computer.

Now, two of MBMA's webinar programs have been approved by the International Code Council to provide continuing education units for ICC members. MBMA continues to be the leading educator for building systems research and the primary source for industry knowledge."

MBMA's Fire Code Compliance for Metal Building Systems Webinar provides attendees with knowledge of current building code requirements for fire protecting buildings and offers an advanced understanding of how to meet those codes. The presentation covers the International Building Code (IBC) requirements for fire-rated construction, focusing on specific examples for metal building systems.

Why would a steel building need to be fire rated?

You may wonder why a steel building would need to be fire rated. Building codes commonly don't require single-story metal buildings to have fire ratings because they are non-combustible. However, situations arise where buildings or portions of them may require ratings because they have non-combustible status. As the applications

for metal building systems expand to educational, health care, retail and office structures (along with the more common manufacturing and warehouse applications) the fire resistance requirements increase significantly. Situations arise where portions are required to be protected regardless of non-combustible status. MBMA has conducted considerable fire testing at Underwriters Laboratory utilizing metal building assemblies for many of these constructions.

Fire resistance requirements for building construction continue to become more complicated with each new edition of the code. Recent changes to the energy codes have introduced materials such as foam plastics (rigid insulation) and the requirements for higher levels of insulation are changing the way buildings are designed in terms of fire resistance requirements in the codes. This is one reason why the fire code webinars are of such value.

The webinar covers many topics that builders need to understand when constructing metal building systems. Thermal barriers and fire resistance ratings, as well as active and passive fire resistance systems, are typical of the topics of importance to builders, architects, developers and others involved in building systems design and construction. Builders also appreciate learning about cost-competitive fire resistance systems for metal building.

Energy Webinar is Tops with Builders

Energy Code Compliance for Metal Building Systems is MBMA's most popular webinar. The majority of municipalities in the United States have adopted an energy code or standard, and this webinar focuses on energy efficiency from the perspective of the metal building specifier, contractor or builder. The program explains critical topics, such as how metal building systems fit into the energy codes, common ways to insulate a metal building system, and recent updates to energy codes and

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standards such as the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) and ASHRAE 90.1.

"MBMA's energy webinar is the best that I've seen," comments Wes Brooker, a member of the MBMA Energy Committee. "You don't know what you don't know until you get in there and hear what's being said."

When the program was first developed, it was critiqued by a group of detailers, estimators and engineers who provided specific input into the program to assure that the material was timely, meaningful, engaging and a good use of each person's time. "You will pick up new information and can ask questions and interact with the experts leading the webinar. It's very effective," Brooker says.

Educational Voucher Program Open to Builders

Many MBMA manufacturing firms have opted to invest in vouchers to provide their builders with complimentary attendance in the MBMA webinars. This is an important and valuable concept. Those of us in manufacturing are excited to offer such great opportunities for education and inspiration for our builders. You'll get new ideas, techniques and expand your opportunity for new work based upon your knowledge. If you are a builder, I encourage you to contact your metal building system manufacturer and request a voucher. Not only does it provide a unique educational opportunity, it saves you the entire cost of the program and you also receive a printed energy or fire design guide, both premier and exclusive MBMA publications. 

Jeff Carmean is chairman of the Metal Building Manufacturers Association based in Cleveland. You can learn more about all of MBMA's educational materials and programs at www.mbma.com.