

TOP STORIES

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COLD-FORMED STEEL ENGINEERS INSTITUTE – NEWS AND UPDATES

2013 CFSEI EXPO Headed West to San Francisco

Make plans now to attend the 2013 CFSEI Expo being held in the City by the Bay, San Francisco, California, May 6 and 7, 2013. [More](#)

Call for Entries for 2013 CFSEI Awards Program

The Cold-Formed Steel Engineers Institute (CFSEI) is now accepting entries for the 2013 CFSEI Awards Program, which recognizes outstanding performance in the categories of Design Excellence, Construction Innovation, and Distinguished Service. [More](#)

Register for This Week’s Webinar

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MARKETPLACE

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2011 Overall Steel Recycling Rate Hits All-Time High

Pittsburgh, PA -- In celebration of America Recycles Day, the **Steel Recycling Institute** (SRI) announced today that the recycling rate for the world’s most recycled material – steel – is at an all-time high of 92 percent. More than 85 million tons of steel scrap was consumed by steelmaking furnaces in 2011—an increase of nearly 10 million net tons versus 2010. [More](#)

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Apartment Market Expansion Continues as Growth Rate Moderates

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Apartment markets improved across all areas for the seventh quarter in a row, but the pace of improvement moderated according to the National Multi Housing Council's (NMHC) Quarterly Survey of Apartment Market Conditions. [More](#)

Apartment Boom Drives Housing Starts Up

Housing starts rose 3.6 percent in October to an 894,000 unit pace. Starts were revised slightly lower in September, but the report is generally good news. Housing is one area poised to do better during the coming year, even if the overall economy stumbles a bit.

[More](#)

Steel Stud Manufacturers Association Announces 2012 International Building Code (IBC) Version of Product Technical Guide

CHICAGO, IL – (November 16, 2012) – The Steel Stud Manufacturers Association (SSMA) has released the 2009/2012 International Building Code (IBC) version of their Product Technical Guide. SSMA is the first to make a technical guide available that complies with the 2012 IBC regulations. [More](#)

Steel Framing Industry Association Approves First Ever Certification Program for Cold-Formed Steel Connectors

FALLS CHURCH, VA – The first ever industry program to independently certify that cold-formed steel (CFS) connectors consistently meet certain minimum manufacturing quality standards has been approved by the Steel Framing Industry Association (SFIA).

[More](#)

US Construction Industry Adds 17,000 Jobs In October

The US construction industry gained 17,000 jobs in October, a 0.3% increase compared to September, according to government data released on Friday. [More](#)

Canadian Forestry Facing Labor Shortage

With a rebound in U.S. housing, continued demand from China, and billions of dollars in home and infrastructure rebuilds due to Hurricane Sandy, an increase in skilled laborers will be required. [More](#)

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During this past year, the green building/sustainability movement reached new heights with the introduction of the first green construction code. Developed by the International Code Council (ICC) and titled the *International green Construction Code* (IgCC), the document is the first of its kind written in mandatory language. Many in the construction industry wondered what impact this new code would have on the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system.

At the USGBC 2012 Greenbuild International Conference and Expo held November 14-16, several sessions covered the latest draft of LEED, v4. This version represents a change of focus from designing buildings that are “less bad” to buildings that have a positive effect on the environment. While many of the credits remain similar to what we have been accustomed to—such as providing bicycle racks and showers—the latest draft attempts to reach far beyond the code and other standards by addressing climate change, human health issues, and social issues. The Materials and Resources section of LEED has been completely reworked to target items such as whole building life cycle impact, Environmental Product Declarations, sourcing of raw materials, and material ingredients. It is a departure from recognizing single environmental attributes like recycled content to encompassing a broader range of criteria that disclose not simply where the constituent of products come from, but also the chemical ingredients of the products themselves. All in all, some 40 credits are up for this public review, which closes on December 10, 2012.

The Steel Framing Alliance and its industry partners continue to submit public comments objecting to the lack of clarity and the subjective nature of many of the newly drafted credits in LEED v.4. While it is unclear as to whether or not there will be another opportunity for public comment beyond this latest version, it is very clear that the new credits as proposed present a tremendous burden on manufacturers, designers and building owners without demonstrating any real benefits for the environment.

For more information, contact the Steel Framing Alliance (SFA) at 800-797-8335 or send an email to info@steel framing.org.

- Editor, Framework Online

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The initial Group A part of the process that addressed the International Building Code (IBC) came to a close with Final Action Hearings on October 22 – 28, 2012 in Portland, Oregon. The process included deliberations on several key issues of importance to the cold-formed steel (CFS) industry. According to Mark Nowak, manager of codes and standards for the Steel Framing Alliance (SFA): “The process yielded some mixed results for the industry on building height restrictions, cladding attachments, and special inspections.”

Proposals to remove loopholes from the IBC that allow combustible construction in mid-rise buildings were disapproved. These proposals attempted to restore or limit the heights of buildings built with wood or other combustible framing materials to the traditionally accepted limit of four stories.

The wood industry has successfully promoted the use of wood in taller buildings with a section of the IBC that addresses “horizontal separations” construction, which is achieved by building a one- or two-story concrete podium at ground level and then extending the four-story limit to five or six stories. However, this practice is contrary to the intent of the code to keep combustible products within reach of fire-fighting equipment and to maintain shorter excavation routes for occupants. Notably, some fire officials at the ICC hearings acknowledged their concerns about using wood in taller buildings and spoke publicly against this practice. SFA will continue to encourage concerned organizations and individuals to raise awareness of the dangers of using combustible materials in tall buildings.

In a positive development, SFA gained approval for a joint proposal with the Foam Sheathing Coalition to develop a prescriptive table for cladding attachment to CFS over thick layers of continuous insulation. This will equip the CFS industry with solutions to comply with the energy code requirements for exterior foam sheathing on walls. It should also ensure a competitive advantage over other materials that do not provide direct solutions in the IBC. A similar proposal for cladding attachment to wood framing was withdrawn because of opposition from the wood industry.

SFA and the Foam Sheathing Coalition are planning a similar submittal to the International Residential Code during the Group B part of the ICC process. The Group B hearings are scheduled to take place in 2013 and include modifications to the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC).

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Multiple items that addressed the expansion of special inspections for CFS framing were presented to the ICC during the Group A hearings. SFA supports special inspection requirements that are consistent with the scope statement in Chapter 17 of the IBC, which specifies that special inspections should be reserved only for unique methods or materials not otherwise covered in the code. SFA and its partners were successful in blocking several special inspections initiatives during this code cycle. Only one special inspection proposal was approved, but it addressed the inspection of cladding systems, not framing. Our industry will need to keep watch on how this particular code section is enforced because the language could be misinterpreted as applying to some framing projects.

Special inspection issues will continue to be deliberated at the state and local levels and in future ICC code change cycles, with more pressure exerted to expand the special inspection of CFS framing. In response, the American Iron and Steel Institute's Committee on Framing Standards has announced that it will be looking to develop Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) requirements for CFS framing. The committee's intent is to be proactive on this issue by developing a reference document with input from CFS industry members rather than having unnecessary requirements on CFS framing mandated through the code process.

What's next on the code front with the ICC? Currently, SFA is working with the Steel Stud Manufacturers Association (SSMA) and the Steel Framing Industry Association (SFIA) to develop proactive proposals for the Group B cycle. These proposals are due on January 3, 2013 and will focus on the IECC. The objective of these proposals is to eliminate or reduce requirements that only add costs to CFS systems without yielding significant benefits. Other proposals will target suggested modifications that add unnecessary flexibility in meeting the energy code through the performance compliance option to allow more cost-effective solutions, instead of the current inadequate prescriptive options in the code.

- Editor, Framework Online

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2013 CFSEI EXPO Headed West to San Francisco

Make plans now to attend the 2013 CFSEI Expo being held in the City by the Bay, San Francisco, California, May 6 and 7, 2013. Presented by the Cold-Formed Steel Engineers Institute and hosted by its West Chapter, the conference promises to be an exciting event packed with educational sessions for design professionals and others involved with the steel framing industry. Following in the tradition of past Expos—which included events held at Epcot's Innoventions in Orlando, a Chesapeake Bay Dinner Cruise in Annapolis, and a behind-the-scenes tour of Disneyland in Anaheim—attendees will experience an extraordinary offsite event as the main conference social activity. Look for an announcement in a future issue of *Framework Online*.

While registration information and other conference materials are being finalized, anyone interested in learning more may contact CFSEI at 1-800-79-STEEL.

- Editor, *Framework Online*

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Call for Entries for 2013 CFSEI Awards Program

The Cold-Formed Steel Engineers Institute (CFSEI) is now accepting entries for the 2013 CFSEI Awards Program, which recognizes outstanding performance in the categories of Design Excellence, Construction Innovation, and Distinguished Service. The program includes public recognition of achievement in creative design, technical innovation and best practices in the use of cold-formed steel. It also features an award for a deserving individual who has gone above and beyond to move the cold-formed steel industry forward. The awards program is open to all interested persons who work with cold-formed steel.

The 2013 CFSEI Awards Program deadline for submissions is March 15, 2013. Award winners will be notified by mid-April, and the awards will be presented at the 2013 CFSEI Expo being held in San Francisco in May.

Entry forms and instructions will be available online at www.cfsei.org.

- Editor, Framework Online

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Register for This Week's Webinar

It's not too late to register for the webinar on "**Cold-Formed Steel Framed Lateral Design Using AISI S213**" being conducted on December 6, 2012 at 3:00 PM EST. The webinar will describe lateral load determination for buildings and demonstrate how lateral loads are transferred to the resisting elements (such as shear walls) and to the supporting elements (such as hold-downs). It will also explore the different lateral load-resisting systems used for cold-formed steel construction with a focus on AISI S213, *North American Standard for Cold-Formed Steel Framing – Lateral Design, 2007 Edition*. Webinar attendees are eligible for 1.5 continuing education hours.

The presenter, Jeff Ellis, P.E., S.E., code report and branch engineering manager for Simpson Strong-Tie Company Inc., will include examples from the CFSEI "Cold-Formed Steel Framed Wood or Steel Sheathed Shear Wall Assemblies Design Guide." The webinar will also include an overview of current cold-formed steel lateral resisting systems research. The webinar is recommended for construction professionals who design cold-formed steel structures and who have or will have a cold-formed steel framing project that requires lateral bracing.

More information on the webinar and registration are available on the CFSEI website, http://www.cfsei.org/hottopics_webinar-12-06-2012.html.

The first webinar of the new year will be held on February 7, 2013 and delivered by John Lyons, P.E., S.E., of Structural Evolution, LLC. The title of the session is "Strengthening the Weakest Link – Designing Reliable Connections for Cold-Formed Steel Framing" and will cover important considerations for cold-formed steel connection design. Look for an update soon on www.cfsei.org.

- Editor, Framework Online

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MARKETPLACE

Construction Spending in U.S. Climbs to Highest Level Since 2009

Construction spending climbed in September to the highest level in almost three years, led by a rebound in homebuilding that is rippling through the U.S. economy.

The 0.6 percent rise brought outlays up to \$851.6 billion, the most since October 2009, and followed a revised 0.1 percent August drop that was smaller than previously estimated, the Commerce Department reported today in Washington. The median estimate of 48 economists surveyed by Bloomberg was for a 0.7 percent gain.

Demand for new homes is boosting residential construction as the real estate market sheds excess distressed properties and borrowing costs remain at record lows. At the same time, concerns about the looming “fiscal cliff” of tax increases and spending cuts set to take effect next year if Congress fails to act may be holding back non-residential projects, which make up about 70 percent of construction spending.

“Homebuilders are feeling a bit more optimistic about home sales going forward” and residential construction has been helped by low new home inventories, Ryan Wang, an economist at HSBC Securities USA Inc. in New York, said before the report. Still, “public construction is probably going to stay subdued” due to fiscal constraints.

Estimates in the Bloomberg survey ranged from a drop of 0.4 percent to a 1.3 percent gain. August was initially reported as a 0.6 percent decrease.

More Employment

Other reports today showed employment picked up in October, fewer Americans filed claims for unemployment insurance payments last week and worker productivity held up in the third quarter.

Companies added 158,000 workers last month, a private report based on payrolls showed. The increase in employment was higher than forecast, according to data from Roseland, New Jersey-based ADP Research Institute.

Applications for jobless benefits fell 9,000 to 363,000 in the week ended Oct. 27, the fewest in three weeks, the Labor Department reported. Economists forecast 370,000 claims, according to the median estimate in a Bloomberg survey.

Other Labor Department data showed employee output per hour climbed at a 1.9 percent annual rate, the same as in the prior three months. The median forecast in a Bloomberg survey of 60 economists called for a 1.8 percent rise. Costs per worker unexpectedly dropped at a 0.1 percent rate.

Construction spending increased 8.9 percent in the 12 months ended in September before adjustments for seasonal variations, today’s Commerce Department report showed.

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Private construction spending climbed 1.3 percent from the prior month.

Housing Rebound

Homebuilding outlays increased 2.8 percent to \$285.9 billion, the highest level since December 2008. Private non-residential projects decreased by 0.1 percent as builders broke ground on fewer healthcare facilities and commercial structures.

“The fiscal cliff certainly seems to have affected business capital spending of all kinds, including construction,” Bill Cheney, chief economist for John Hancock Financial Services Inc. in Boston, said before the report. “I assume we’re going to see a huge boost in construction spending as we start rebuilding,” probably in the second quarter of next year, he said.

Spending on public projects dropped 0.8 percent from the prior month to \$271.1 billion, the lowest level since December 2006. Federal construction decreased 6.2 percent, while state and local agency projects fell 0.3 percent from the prior month.

Home Sales

The housing market recovery has been strengthening. Purchases of new homes rose in September to the highest level in more than two years, the Commerce Department said last week. Home values are improving, with the S&P/Case-Shiller index of prices increasing in the year ended August by the most in two years, according to data released earlier this week.

Homebuilders like Weyerhaeuser Co. (WY) are showing tempered enthusiasm for the rebound in the housing industry.

“While today’s construction levels are still low by historic standards, all forecasts point to continued recovery in 2013, as we begin to return to long-term trend levels that are needed to house a growing number of U.S. households,” Daniel Fulton, the company’s president and chief executive officer, said on an Oct. 26 earnings call.

Source: Bloomberg, November 1, 2012

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2011 Overall Steel Recycling Rate Hits All-Time High

Pittsburgh, PA -- In celebration of America Recycles Day, the **Steel Recycling Institute** (SRI) announced today that the recycling rate for the world's most recycled material – steel – is at an all-time high of 92 percent. More than 85 million tons of steel scrap was consumed by steelmaking furnaces in 2011—an increase of nearly 10 million net tons versus 2010.

“This high level of scrap consumption is a reflection of the North American steel industry’s commitment to conserving energy and natural resources,” Gregory L. Crawford, executive director of SRI, said. “The use of steel in everyday products, including packaging, appliances, automotive and construction ensures quality while also supporting product stewardship, knowing that these products are routinely recycled at the end of their use, thanks to steel.”

Each year, more steel is recycled than paper, aluminum, plastic and glass combined, maintaining steel’s identity as North America’s most recycled material. This is reflected through the recycling rates of the quality products commonly made with steel.

The recycling rate for steel packaging has also reached an all-time high of 70.8 percent – with more than 1.5 million net tons of steel recycled. Automobile recycling rates have regained balance at 94.5 percent. This figure came after several years in excess of 100 percent – meaning more old cars had been coming off the road than new ones going back onto it.

Appliance recycling remained stable at 90 percent with more than 2.9 million net tons of steel recycled. Construction rates also remained stable with a recycling rate of 98 percent for construction plates and beams along with a rate of 70 percent for construction rebar.

Recycling rates for steel are generally released up to 18 months following the end of the calendar year as they are based on data released from: American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI) Annual Statistical Reports, US Geological Survey, EPA Characterization of Municipal Solid Waste, National Automobile Dealers Association, Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers and the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries.

“While steel continues to be North America’s most recycled material, there is still progress that can be made,” continues Crawford. “Educating recycling coordinators and consumers on the inclusion of materials, especially empty steel aerosol cans, will increase the overall tonnage for the industry. America Recycles Day is a great reminder to all of us that there is more that we can be doing to divert valuable resources from our nation’s landfills.”

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America Recycles Day is November 15. The Steel Recycling Institute was a founding member and SRI would like to encourage all consumers to take the pledge to recycle at <http://americarecyclesday.org/pledge/>.

SRI also provides resources to help consumers learn about how and where to recycle their steel products locally. Visit the Steel Recycling Locator at recycle-steel.org for additional information.

“The Steel Recycling Locator is one of the most comprehensive resources for steel recycling available to the public,” says Crawford. “It contains more than 35,000 records that benchmark the recycling infrastructure for all steel products.”

About the Steel Recycling Institute

The Steel Recycling Institute (SRI), a unit of the American Iron and Steel Institute, is an industry association dedicated to communicating the sustainable efforts of the North American steel industry. The SRI educates the solid waste industry, government, business and ultimately the consumer about the benefits of steel’s recycling accomplishments and advancements in sustainability. For more information on the steel industry’s sustainable efforts visit www.recycle-steel.org or www.sustainable-steel.org. Or follow the SRI on Twitter [@EnviroMetal](https://twitter.com/EnviroMetal).

Source: Steel Recycling Institute, November 15, 2012

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MARKETPLACE

Apartment Market Expansion Continues as Growth Rate Moderates

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Apartment markets improved across all areas for the seventh quarter in a row, but the pace of improvement moderated according to the National Multi Housing Council's (NMHC) Quarterly Survey of Apartment Market Conditions. The survey's indexes measuring Market Tightness (56), Sales Volume (51), Equity Financing (56) and Debt Financing (65) all measured at 50 or higher, indicating growth from the previous quarter.

“Even after nearly three years of recovery, apartment markets around the country remain strong as more report tightening conditions than not,” said NMHC Chief Economist Mark Obrinsky. “The dynamic that began in 2010 remains in place: the increase in prospective apartment residents continues to outpace the pickup in new apartments completed. While development activity has picked up considerably since the trough, finance for both acquisition and construction remains constrained, flowing mainly to the best properties in the top markets.”

Key findings include:

- **Financing still available only for top markets.** Only one in five (21 percent) reported acquisition capital being similarly available for all geographic markets and properties. Construction financing was even more restricted. Just 8 percent of respondents indicated construction financing for new apartments was available in all markets for all property types. The vast majority reported construction financing as only available for either the top properties in the top markets (37 percent) or for all property types in the top markets (36 percent).
- **Market Tightness Index declined to 56 from 76.** Marking the 11th straight quarter of the index topping 50, the majority (62 percent) reported stable market conditions. One quarter reported tighter markets and 14 percent indicated markets as looser.
- **The Sales Volume Index dipped three points to 51.** For the eighth consecutive quarter, “unchanged” was the most common response (49 percent), compared to 24 percent who indicated tightening conditions and 21 percent who said sales volume was lower.
- **Equity financing conditions still improving.** Dipping two points to 56, the Equity Financing Index remained above 50 for the 13th quarter in a row. However, 14 percent reported that equity financing was less available, up from 9 percent last quarter. This compares to 26 percent who reported equity as more available and 56 percent reporting no change this quarter.

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- **Debt Financing Index remains high.** The Debt Financing Index declined from 77 to 65, but only 9 percent believed that borrowing conditions for debt financing had worsened—the seventh consecutive quarter in the single digits.

Full survey data are available at www.nmhc.org/goto/60975.

About the survey: The October 2012 Quarterly Survey of Apartment Market Conditions was conducted October 15-22, with 89 CEOs and other senior executives of apartment-related firms nationwide responding.

* * *

Based in Washington, D.C., NMHC is a national association representing the interests of the larger and most prominent apartment firms in the U.S. NMHC's members are the principal officers of firms engaged in all aspects of the apartment industry, including owners, developers, managers and financiers. One-third of Americans rent their housing, and over 14 percent live in a rental apartment. For more information, contact NMHC at 202/974-2300, e-mail the Council at info@nmhc.org, or visit NMHC's web site at www.nmhc.org.

Source: National Multi Housing Council, October 31, 2012

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MARKETPLACE

Apartment Boom Drives Housing Starts Up

Housing starts rose 3.6 percent in October to an 894,000 unit pace. Starts were revised slightly lower in September, but the report is generally good news. Housing is one area poised to do better during the coming year, even if the overall economy stumbles a bit.

All of October's increase was in multifamily units, which rose 11.9 percent to a 300,000 unit pace. This marks the highest pace for multifamily construction since July 2008. Multifamily starts are now up 37.0 percent on a year-to-date basis (YTD) from the prior year and permits are up even more than that, climbing 54.5 percent, suggesting building activity will remain strong for some time to come. The boom in apartment construction reflects strong underlying fundamentals for the apartment market. With absorption of apartments running nearly three times stronger than completions, vacancy rates have tumbled a full percentage point lower over the past year to 4.6 percent and helped send effective rents up 3.7 percent.

Click on the pdf below to view the full report.

[Attachment](#)

Source: Wells Fargo, November 20, 2012

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Steel Stud Manufacturers Association Announces 2012 International Building Code (IBC) Version of Product Technical Guide

CHICAGO, IL – (November 16, 2012) – The Steel Stud Manufacturers Association (SSMA) has released the 2009/2012 International Building Code (IBC) version of their Product Technical Guide. SSMA is the first to make a technical guide available that complies with the 2012 IBC regulations. This guide includes span and load tables for both structural and nonstructural cold-formed steel framing wall, floor and ceiling systems. In addition, it contains data based on the requirements of American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI) North American Specification for the Design of Cold-Formed Steel Structural Members (AISI S100-07 with supplement S2-10).

“In keeping with SSMA’s mission of being the leader in supporting the development and maintenance of quality product standards and specifications, the Product Technical Guide is in compliance with the latest building codes and standards,” said SSMA Technical Director Rahim Zadeh, P.E.

The Product Technical Guide is available for download on the SSMA website at www.ssma.com.

About SSMA

The Steel Stud Manufacturers Association is a Chicago-based national trade association representing leading manufacturers of steel studs, track and joists. Roll forming company members support the development and maintenance of quality product standards and specifications for the cold formed steel manufacturing industry. The organization creates market growth opportunities for cold-formed steel through research, marketing and education. For more information on SSMA, please visit www.ssma.com.

Source: Steel Stud Manufacturers Association, November 16, 2012

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Steel Framing Industry Association Approves First Ever Certification Program for Cold-Formed Steel Connectors

Program promotes consistent manufacturing quality

FALLS CHURCH, VA – The first ever industry program to independently certify that cold-formed steel (CFS) connectors consistently meet certain minimum manufacturing quality standards has been approved by the Steel Framing Industry Association (SFIA).

In CFS construction, connectors are galvanized steel straps, ties, or angles typically used to hold structural elements of a building together, such as connecting the top of a wall to the roof trusses or attaching walls to the foundation. Connectors are considered “structural elements” that play a crucial role in the design of modern buildings, and help ensure that buildings are safe even when subjected to high winds and seismic forces.

Manufacturers that participate in the SFIA program, titled *Manufacturing Compliance Certification Program*, agree to comply with the program requirements that govern the materials used to produce the connectors, protection against corrosion, manufacturing tolerances, and marking requirements. A third-party administrator audits each manufacturing facility twice a year to ensure these standards are met. With the approval of this program, the SFIA is now beginning to invite and encourage all companies that manufacture CFS connectors to apply for the program, and has made participation in the program a membership requirement. Selection of the third-party administrator for this SFIA program is underway, with audits to begin in July 2013.

“The tools that are available to builders and designers today have made building construction more precise than ever. This SFIA program provides everyone in the supply chain with the assurance that SFIA-certified products will meet or exceed the specification and performance requirements each and every time,” says Bill Courtney, President of the Steel Framing Industry Association and CEO of ClarkDietrich Building Systems. He adds that this is another step forward that the SFIA has taken in leading the unification of CFS manufacturing and construction standards for the industry, and in expanding the market for steel framing products.

Steel Framing Industry Association

The SFIA represents more than 950 members composed of steel mills, coil coaters, processors, roll-formers, fabricators, engineers, material distributors and framing contractors. SFIA promotes using cold-formed steel framing, advocates pro-industry codes and standards, conducts seminars and supports competitiveness through innovation. SFIA provides statistical and trend data for the industry regarding safety, steel usage and prices. For more information, visit <http://www.steel framingassociation.org/>.

Source: *Steel Framing Industry Association, November 15, 2012*

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US Construction Industry Adds 17,000 Jobs In October

The US construction industry gained 17,000 jobs in October, a 0.3% increase compared to September, according to government data released on Friday. The primary metals industry added 1,000 jobs month on month, while the fabricated metals industry lost about the same number of jobs in the same period.

Construction jobs totaled 5.54 million in October, up from about 5.52 million in September. The Bureau of Labor Statistics found that the country added 4,600 nonresidential building jobs, bringing the sector's employment up to 663,200 in October.

Analysis by the Associated General Contractors of America found that overall construction employment is 20,000, or 0.4 percent higher year on year, up from October 2011's level of 5.52 million workers. October's employment level is also down 2.2 million compared to six years ago, when the industry's employment peaked at 7.7 million construction workers.

"Despite five consecutive months of construction employment gains, the overall employment picture is essentially unchanged from a year ago," said Ken Simonson, the association's chief economist. "Construction employment appears stuck in a state of mild monthly flux with little change to the overall number of jobs."

In October, the primary metals industry added 1,000 jobs onto September's total, bringing total industry employment to 406,000 jobs. The fabricated metals industry lost 1,200 jobs month on month, as employment for the sector fell to 1.41 million.

Source: *Steel Business Briefing*, November 5, 2012

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MARKETPLACE

Canadian Forestry Facing Labor Shortage

With a rebound in U.S. housing, continued demand from China, and billions of dollars in home and infrastructure rebuilds due to Hurricane Sandy, an increase in skilled laborers will be required.

Unfortunately, laborers who meet these specifications are not readily available, having long abandoned the dying [Canadian] timber industry to pursue other types of work; this is resulting in a labor shortage. MaryAnne Arcand, executive director of the Central Interior Logging Association, says, "As demand ramps up, we're not going to find the employees we need." She predicts that her industry alone will be short some 2,000 skilled workers.

The U.S. housing crash in 2008 saw many skilled workers cross over to other, more prosperous, heavy industries, such as mining, and oil and gas. Arcan says that to address this issue, they are not only encouraging skilled workers across Canada, but also overseas immigrants, to do the work.

Dwight Yochim, executive director of the BC Truck Loggers Association, says that over the last few years members went down to a skeleton crew and now more companies are gearing up, with some even turning down work due to labour shortages. Yochim said most of the upswing is due to early signs of a rebound in the U.S. housing market.

He adds that prior to the collapse, British Columbia held approximately a 10% share of the U.S.'s \$500-billion residential home market, and that this evaporated with the housing crisis, resulting in 23 BC mill closures. Yochim believes the repercussions of Sandy will start to add demand for logs in the next few months, but that the question now is whether BC companies will have the infrastructure needed oiled up and ready to go, and dequate manpower in light of a rapidly aging workforce.

Source: *Widman's Market Barometer, November 21, 2012*

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