

Rural Builder

Serving The Construction Trade Since 1967
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JULY 2025
Vol. 59, Issue 5

2025 GOLD KEY AWARD WINNERS



**FLIP TO
SPECIAL
SECTION:
METAL
BUILDER**





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Annual Gold Key of Excellence Awards

Rural Builder Honors Top-Rated Suppliers

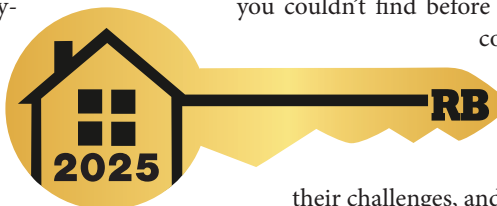
Once again, Rural Builder is honoring suppliers that our readers have voted as providing the best products, services, and prices. There's no better endorsement than those earned from actual buyers. They know from firsthand experience when companies not only meet but exceed their expectations. With that in mind, we're pleased to recognize those businesses that have earned the trust and loyalty of their customers by highlighting their accomplishment with a 2025 Gold Key of Excellence Award.

These suppliers have such a vast combined universe of products and services that you're almost certain to learn something new each time you read through the issue. A careful reading is well worth the time because you're likely to stumble across a

product or service needed in an upcoming project or maybe you *wished* you had known about for a previous project. It might be a unique product or one that's available in a size, color, or model you couldn't find before or didn't even know existed. And, of course, suppliers are constantly releasing new products and variations, so it's good to keep up to date.

A big part of the reason we exist is to help our readers find solutions to their challenges, and that's why the Gold Key issue is so important. It's one way we help introduce readers to suppliers who provide the help they need to save time and money on the jobsite. And with the ever-increasing competition, that's a key to business success.

— Dan Brownell



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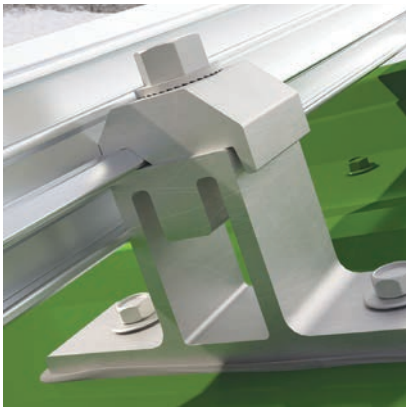
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CORRECTIONS TO MAY 2025 ISSUE

• In the "Printed Steel Siding" article, the correct distributor for Tru-Steel HD® is United Steel Supply.

• In the "New Products at the Show" article, this is the correct description for AceClamp's new screw down bracket: The Color Snap® Universal Screw Down Bracket allows our popular Color Snap rail to be installed on nearly any roof. With quick installation and pre-assembled components, it saves time and labor. This versatile, cost-effective snow retention solution is now compatible with more roofs than ever before — dependable, efficient, and trusted.



This is the correct photo caption: AceClamp's Color Snap® Universal Screw Down Bracket is pre-assembled & designed for quick, hassle-free installation.

Rural Builder regrets these errors.

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Gary Reichert,
 Publisher, Shield Wall Media



WORK ETHIC SCHOLARSHIP

Attitude Is the Most Important Thing

From Applying for a Scholarship to Working at a Job

BY LINDA SCHMID

Hannah Maienbrook had always loved hands-on activities. Dyslexia made school difficult, but she found she learned by doing.

FINDING OUT ABOUT WELDING

In eighth grade, the students were given the chance to learn about various career courses that depart from the usual choices. A police course, a culinary degree, nursing, construction, and others were offered at the Trade Center as part of their curriculum. Maienbrook decided to pursue welding.

As the only student who chose the welding course, she got a lot of attention, and once she got the hang of it, she found that she enjoyed making things. It was very satisfying and it was fun. Maienbrook thought she could see herself doing it for the rest of her life. After high school in Linden, Michigan, she signed on to the area trade school, Hobart, and when she applied, she was informed about the mikeroweWORKS Foundation Scholarship. Hannah and family had always watched *Dirty Jobs*, so they were excited to find out that there was a scholarship for people who did dirty jobs.

Maienbrook went through the application process without any problem. Though she had to answer essay questions, something that is not the easiest for her, she said, "I don't think it was much to ask when they were offering free money for school."

Part of the application process was to create a video that showed why the applicant was a good choice for the scholarship. Maienbrook's video showed her in the small fab shop she worked at. The ventilation system wasn't always reliable and she was doing a lot of MIG welding, so she was depicted in her usual working attire, covered in grease and enjoying it.



Jumping through the hoops paid off; she received the scholarship and it helped pay for technical college.

When starting your welding education, a student learns all the basic processes and then chooses a particular focus. Maienbrook really enjoyed TIG (tungsten inert gas) welding and she decided to take that pathway.

Instructors recognized her deep interest in TIG, making an exception and allowing her to complete that portion before continuing with other classes.

Between hands-on exercises, class lectures, and minimal reading, Maienbrook became a welder. Instructors allowed her to take oral exams just as she had in high school. She found that

learning impediments such as dyslexia, or ADHD aren't uncommon in the welding trade. With determination these things can be overcome.

AFTER TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Following technical college, Maienbrook got a traveling job



As a result of a collaboration with mikeroweWORKS Foundation (www.mikeroweworks.org), *Rural Builder* is featuring profiles of Work Ethic Scholarship recipients in each of its issues. Over 2,000 scholarships have been awarded to trade-school students who value hard work and taking personal responsibility. *Rural Builder* applauds these students and wants to acknowledge their choice to apply their talents to skilled trades. Thank you, mikeroweWORKS Foundation, for your continuing efforts to close the skills gap and "reconnect the average American with the value of a skilled workforce."

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Maienbrook stick welding in class.



Maienbrook practicing her favorite: TIG welding.

making cheese vats and other fine grade work; this involves advanced process techniques. She found it challenging, but she stuck with it because she recognized that she was learning so much.

Working in this industry, Maienbrook found that, for the most part, she was working with guys.

"I get along with the guys because there is no drama with me and I want to do everything," said Maienbrook. "A lot of the old-timers treat me like I'm their daughter," she added. "It's great!"

Eventually she decided she would like to find work close to home. She found one at Baker's Industry owned by Lincoln Electric, and since she had always wanted to get into nuclear and aerospace, this was a great opportunity for her!

Other benefits of living near home again include her ability to give back by helping out at the high school she attended, working with students who are interested in welding. She was also chosen

as one of three of the trade school's previous students who were the most driven welders to serve on the welding board. In this capacity, she provides feedback on what skills the students need to develop to go out into the welding field and other insights.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Maienbrook has looked into becoming a Construction Welding Inspector (CWI). This job entails inspection and certification of welds to make sure they meet code and are safe for bridges and other structures.

She is also considering becoming a welding teacher at either the high school or technical college. She has been serving as a mentor over the last five years and loves it. She thinks that in order to get more young people into welding, it is important to get them excited about it because, in the end, it's all about attitude. **RB**



WINNERS OF THE 2025 GOLD KEY OF EXCELLENCE AWARDS

**YOUR COMPANY'S SUCCESS DEPENDS ON YOUR TIMELY PROJECT COMPLETION...
YOU NEED SUPPLIERS WITH QUALITY SERVICE AND PRODUCTS!**

Knowing who you can turn to is the motive behind Rural Builders' annual Gold Key program. From the very beginning, in 1983, we were going directly to users to ask for their feedback regarding which companies were doing the best job of providing the best products, the best services, and at the best prices.

Originally, we could only rely on feedback through the U.S. Postal Service. Now, in addition to "snail mail," we also use online voting and email voting to get our results.

This year, four companies join the "Gold Key Club" with their first-ever award: Dutch Tech Inc., Eastside Machine Co., SWI Machinery, and W.E.H. Supply. PLUS, this year's honorary Gold

Key of Service is awarded to the Shed Haulers Brotherhood, which has coordinated the donation and delivery of more than 600 sheds for those who lost their homes to Hurricane Helene. Although the devastation from that storm isn't front page news anymore, people are still suffering. Shed Haulers Brotherhood has continued to work behind the scenes, however, to help those in need.

Learn more in the pages ahead, as many of the companies share additional information about their products and services. In each case, the number of gold keys won corresponds to the number of years the company has received the award.

CONGRATULATIONS to this year's winners!



43 GOLD KEYS

Plyco Corporation

42 GOLD KEYS

Maze Nails

41 GOLD KEYS

Wick Buildings

39 GOLD KEYS

A.J. Manufacturing Inc.

37 GOLD KEYS

Dynamic Fastener

23 GOLD KEYS

Everlast Roofing, Inc.
Graber Post Buildings Inc.
Leland Industries, Inc.
MWI Components

22 GOLD KEYS

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Atlas Building Products
Marco Industries
Triangle Fastener

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Chief Buildings
Levi's Building Components

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Steel Dynamics Inc.

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Post Protector

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Metal Rollforming Systems
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7 GOLD KEYS

ASC Machine Tools Inc.
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United Steel Supply

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Acu-Form

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Snap-Z

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AceClamp
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Coated Metals Group
Combilift
Englert Inc.
Kirsch BP/Sharkskin
Roof Underlayments
New Tech Machinery
Red Dot Products
SteelGrip SAMM
True Metal Supply

1 GOLD KEY

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SWI Machinery
W.E.H. Supply



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Our commitment to meeting customer needs has driven recent expansions across our operations. We've bolstered our delivery capabilities with fleet additions at both our Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, and Hickory, North Carolina, locations, ensuring even more reliable service throughout the lower 48 states. Inside our facilities, strategic investments in advanced warehouse equipment have doubled our pre-hung door production capacity, reduced lead times while maintaining the exceptional quality our customers expect.

The Apple advantage extends beyond our logistics infrastructure to our product innovation. Our comprehensive catalog now features 10' wave slides for playground applications, broadening our reach into the recreational construction sector. This complements our established offerings of roll-up doors, specialty windows, and our signature collection of 117 pre-hung door variants. From hardware essentials like hurricane straps and truss plates to finishing touches such as vents and shutters, we provide everything builders need under one reliable supply partnership.

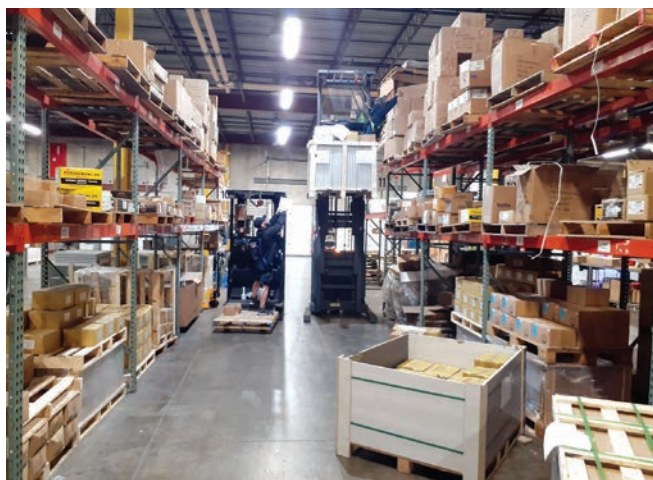
Behind every product stands our experienced team of over 30



industry professionals, collectively bringing more than five decades of expertise to solve your most challenging supply needs. Whether you prefer Early-Buy planning, Direct-Container efficiency, or just-in-time Direct-Ship convenience, our flexible fulfillment options accommodate diverse operational requirements.

As we look toward the future, our dedication to the building community remains unwavering. We're honored by the recognition this Gold Key Award represents and remain focused on earning your trust with every interaction, every order, and every delivery.

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We want to thank the builders, the contractors, and their customers for the continued trust and support they have shown in DRIPSTOP™.

As a builder or building owner, have you thought or received a call stating, **"It's raining inside my building!"**

It is probably condensation. Once the building is up, the remedies are fewer, less effective, and more expensive. **THE KEY IS** to install panels with a condensation control membrane like **DRIPSTOP™** during construction.

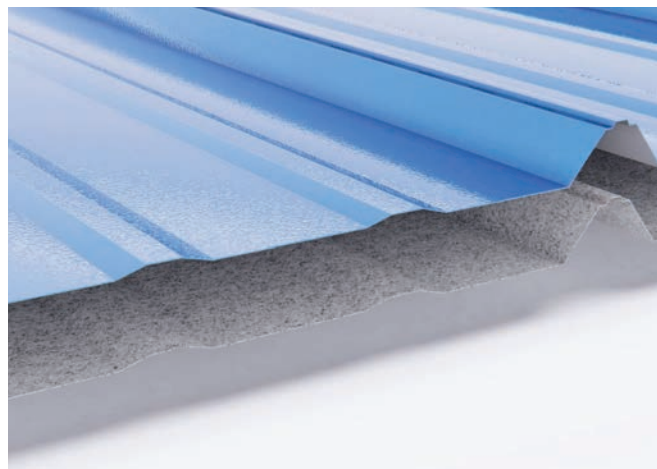
The reason your customers might not think about condensation until it's too late is ... *They cannot see it, touch it, or feel it, until it is already a problem.* Understanding what causes condensation and the solution for it can be confusing. However, builders who educate their customers about condensation at the beginning of the construction process can avoid those angry phone calls or concerns.

What is condensation and where does it come from?

Moisture is in the air all around us almost always. Under the right conditions, that moist air can change its physical form from a gas to a liquid. Just like a glass of ice water sweats and leaves a ring on the table in the summer, bare metal roofing sweats under similar conditions. This is a simple fact of science, and it happens when warm, wet air meets a cold solid surface, then water droplets form, or condensate appears. It is almost unavoidable in most parts of the country due to seasonal climate and temperature changes.

Can it be stopped or prevented?

Traditionally, a layer of insulation has been used to prevent the warm moist air from reaching the cold metal panels. More recently, builders have found a new and different way to "control" the condensation, using a felt membrane to "catch" the moisture as it forms overnight, and then "release it" as the sun and air moves across the metal roofing panels during the day.



While insulation can be an effective solution, especially when installed to specifications; a condensation control membrane, like DRIPSTOP™, offers numerous advantages for both the builders and building owners. As the building is erected, DRIPSTOP™ arrives already installed on the metal panels; there is no time spent installing insulation. This increases job-site safety for the builder by eliminating blind steps to purlins covered with insulation. It also saves the time typically spent tacking that insulation down to the purlins. Since no insulation is being used, windy days become much less of a challenge. Once the building is complete and properly vented, birds will not peck holes, the DRIPSTOP™ will not sag or come down, and it will not require cleaning or maintenance; it is virtually worry-free. DRIPSTOP™ can help protect the steel from corrosion with its specially designed adhesive barrier. There is no reason why a properly installed and vented metal roof with DRIPSTOP™ will not look and act the same 20+ years down the road! **RB**



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Condensation control



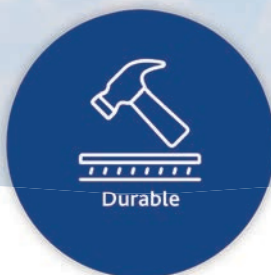
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A Superior Shield Against Summer Heat

In an era increasingly defined by the imperative of energy efficiency and sustainable construction practices, Therma-Guard, a premium reflective insulation product offered by Dutch Tech Inc., distinguishes itself as a leading technology.

Therma-Guard incorporates state-of-the-art materials to create an exceptionally durable product. Its advantages include straightforward installation, substantial potential for energy cost reduction, and eligibility for tax credits when installed in residential properties.

Therma-Guard is fundamentally a reflective insulation with a foam core, notably reinforced by its robust woven backing that is nearly impossible to tear. This attribute, frequently highlighted in builder testimonials on Dutch Tech's website, emphasizes a significant advantage: strength and durability. In contrast to more delicate insulation materials that can't hold up to a little wind, Therma-Guard is engineered to endure the demands of construction and provide enduring performance. This durability ensures a reliable and efficient thermal barrier in nearly any type of building.

Ease of installation is another key benefit for contractors evaluating materials for projects. While comprehensive technical installation details are available in a downloadable guide on Dutch Tech's website, the product is generally recognized for its user-friendly application. A standard slap stapler is sufficient for secure attachment, even in windy conditions.

This ease of installation is critical for professional builders aiming for efficiency and potentially for DIY enthusiasts undertaking smaller projects. Simplified installation can reduce labor costs and accelerate project completion, enhancing Therma-Guard's overall economic value.

However, the most compelling argument for Therma-Guard is its capacity



for significant energy cost savings. The product's reflective properties effectively minimize heat radiation, reducing heat penetration into the building envelope by 96-97% in hot climates. This capability lessens the demand on air conditioning systems, making Therma-Guard a versatile solution for diverse geographical locations and climate conditions.

Dutch Tech distributes Therma-Guard through its authorized dealers and directly to roll formers and lumber yards, directing contractors to purchase from these outlets. The standard roll size of 6'2"x125' is practical for numerous construction and renovation projects. A full truckload accommodates 342 rolls of the 6'2" product, and the company accommodates smaller orders as needed.

In conclusion, Therma-Guard is a ro-

bust, easily installed, and energy-efficient insulation solution for post-frame buildings, pole barns, garages, workshops, metal buildings, and more. Its reflective characteristics provide a clear pathway to reducing energy consumption and associated costs. The company's dedication to superior customer service, very short lead times, American manufacturing, and wholesale distribution underscores why Therma-Guard has become a popular product in a short time. As the demand for sustainable and energy-saving building materials continues to increase, Therma-Guard, recognized as the most robust reflective insulation available, is poised to play a crucial role in developing more energy-efficient buildings. Contact Dutch Tech today to learn more about Therma-Guard reflective insulation. **RB**

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ENGLERT

WEBSITE: www.englertinc.com

PHONE: 1-800-ENGLERT

New England Net-Positive Home Pairs Sustainability with Timeless Metal Roofing

BY JONATHAN GIACCHI

In a quiet New England town, a newly completed custom residence is redefining what it means to build for the future. Not just designed for net-zero performance, this home goes a step further — producing more energy than it consumes. It blends modern efficiency with architectural elegance, all anchored by a standing seam metal roof from Englert.



The homeowner focused on long-term energy efficiency and minimal maintenance; knew his roofing choice would be critical. He sought a system that would not only elevate the home's appearance but also play an active role in its energy performance. Englert's standing seam roof was the ideal solution — offering exceptional durability, compatibility with solar, and timeless curb appeal.

More than a design element, the Englert roof is a key contributor to the home's performance. The Englert A1300 metal roof panel's sleek profile supports a full solar array used on the sloped roof sections while providing weather resistance and a long service life. Made with recycled content and built to last, the roof helps minimize environmental impact without compromising aesthetics.

In addition, Englert's RainPro gutter system was installed to manage water runoff efficiently while enhancing the home's clean, modern look. Combining the capacity of a 6-inch gutter with the sleek profile of a 5-inch, RainPro features heavy-gauge aluminum, concealed hangers for added strength, and a Scratch-Guard™ paint finish available in a range of designer colors — all backed by a limited lifetime warranty.

The home features a high-performance envelope with continuous exterior insulation, triple-pane windows, and a tightly sealed structure. All-electric systems, including a heat pump HVAC and



water heating, as well as ERVs operate with high efficiency — powered largely by the energy produced on the roof.

Every component of the home was selected with care, from Roseburg engineered framing materials to advanced air-sealing strategies. The result is a home that stays comfortable year-round while keeping energy consumption to a minimum.

Now part of Great Day Improvements, Englert continues to support projects like this with top-tier roofing products that combine performance and beauty. Backed by one of the nation's fastest-growing home improvement companies, Englert brings homeowners added peace of mind through trusted expertise and national reach.

The standing seam metal roof stands out not only for its sleek lines and modern finish, but for its role in delivering a high-performance, future-ready home. As demand for energy-efficient living grows, this project is a powerful example of how thoughtful design and proven materials — like those from Englert — can help homeowners meet today's goals while planning for tomorrow. **RB**

Location: New England

Roofing & Gutters: Englert

Windows: Schuco Triple Pane

Siding: Acre and Allura

Insulation: TimberHP wood fiber

Solar Mounts: S-5!

Solar Array: 25kW with REC Panels

Energy Storage: Enphase Microinverters & Batteries

Architect: Steve Baczek





Englert has earned a **2025 Gold Key of Excellence Award**



We're thrilled to share the exciting news that Englert has been honored with the prestigious 2025 Gold Key of Excellence Award! This recognition is not just an accolade; it's a testament to our commitment to excellence in providing top-notch products and unparalleled service to our valued customers like you.

The Gold Key of Excellence program celebrates the crème de la crème of the rural contracting industry, acknowledging those who go above and beyond to support and serve metal roofers like yourself. This award is a nod to the elite standards we uphold in our industry. Englert is proud to receive its second Gold Key of Excellence Award.



1.800.ENGLERT
www.englertinc.com



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a Great Day Improvements brand



EVERLAST ROOFING, INC.

WEBSITE: www.everlastroofing.com

PHONE: 888-339-0059 toll free

Leading the Way in the Next Generation of Metal Roofing®

In the evolving landscape of metal roofing, Everlast Roofing, Inc. remains a driving force of innovation and reliability. With a steadfast commitment to quality, Everlast is shaping the future of roofing through advanced solutions designed to withstand even the most demanding environments.

ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE: THE OMNI SERIES

The heart of the OMNI series lies in its use of true 28-gauge steel, measured before paint for greater thickness and strength. This key design feature enhances OMNI's long-term durability, allowing it to withstand higher snow and wind loads while offering exceptional hail resistance. Other benefits include increased job-site durability and reduced common issues like oil canning, ghosting, and purlin show-through, making it a top choice for lasting, reliable roofing.

NEW PRODUCTS THAT BLEND STYLE AND STRENGTH

The Quartz textured finish, available in 16 vibrant colors, delivers both style and performance. Featuring the NexGen Super Durable Paint System, it includes a high-performance resin formulation that improves chalk and fade resistance, gloss retention, and color durability. This finish also offers excellent resistance to atmospheric staining and dirt residue, ensuring



your roof maintains its aesthetic appeal for years to come.

Inspired by the natural beauty of wood, Everlast's printed coils bring the warmth and character of organic textures to metal surfaces. With four unique designs, each print offers a distinctive aesthetic, providing a versatile alternative to traditional materials. These nature-inspired finishes give you the visual appeal of wood without relying on costly, cumbersome, or environmentally harmful materials.

Everlast's board and batten coil is designed to provide unmatched strength and resilience. Crafted from high-quality materials, it enhances structural integrity while requiring minimal upkeep. The vertical design of board and batten efficiently sheds water, reducing the risk of moisture damage and promoting longevity. Whether enduring extreme weather or everyday wear, this coil ensures dependable protection for generations.

THOROUGH TESTING FOR UNMATCHED PERFORMANCE

Everlast Roofing's dedication to qual-



ity goes beyond innovation in design—it's backed by extensive real-world testing. To ensure that every product meets the highest performance standards, Everlast partners with cutting-edge research and testing facilities. They conduct accelerated laboratory corrosion tests alongside rigorous outdoor exposure trials, simulating a wide range of environmental conditions to ensure long-lasting durability.

EXPANDING THE HORIZON: NEW LOCATION

Everlast Roofing is proud to announce the opening of a new facility in Eaton, Ohio. This strategic expansion strengthens their ability to meet regional demand and ensures they can deliver high-quality metal products and services exactly when and where their customers need them most.

A TRUSTED PARTNER FOR YOUR NEXT BUILD

Offering products to the agricultural, commercial, architectural, and residential markets, Everlast Roofing, Inc. is your trusted partner for your next building project. Their innovative products and commitment to quality ensure that you can build with confidence, knowing that you are using materials that are built to last. **RB**

AT A GLANCE

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Award Winner**

BOARD & BATTEN COIL

COIL WIDTH	13.5"
GAUGE	26 Gauge
SUBSTRATE	AZM® or Galvalume
LF WEIGHT LENGTH	0.84# 1,000 LF



Crafted for durability and style, our Board & Batten Coil is the perfect choice for creating high-quality siding that stands the test of time. With superior weather resistance and a wide range of color options, this coil ensures a flawless, long-lasting appearance for any project. Whether facing harsh climates or everyday wear, metal board and batten siding stands strong, safeguarding your home for generations.

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JANUS INTERNATIONAL

WEBSITE: www.janusintl.com

PHONE: 770-562-2850

FAX: 770-562-1991

Janus International Group: Built for Builders, Powered by Innovation

Janus International Group remains at the forefront of the self-storage, commercial and industrial door industries. What began in 2002 with just 18 employees and a breakthrough third-generation steel roll-up door has grown into a global company built on innovation, quality and trusted partnerships.

Founder David Curtis engineered that original maintenance-free, dead axle door to outperform the competition—and it did. Over two decades later, that same commitment to excellence continues to drive Janus's growth and product evolution.



Today, Janus employs nearly 2,400 people and operates across North America, the UK, France, Poland and Australia—and has cemented its place as a top-performing business beyond just doors.

Their comprehensive solutions include:

- A full line of **roll-up and swing doors** in multiple sizes and over 30 color options
- **Door replacement, retrofitting and restoration services**
- **Relocatable storage units**
- **Facility maintenance and improvement programs**
- The industry's most advanced **smart access technology**

Their award-winning **Nokē™ Smart Entry platform** continues to push the boundaries of facility automation. New for this year, **Nokē ION™** is a magnetic,



hardwired, inside-the-door smart lock that complements **Nokē ONE™**, the battery-powered external smart lock. Together, these technologies deliver a complete, mobile-enabled access control solution for today's facilities.

And the industry has taken notice.

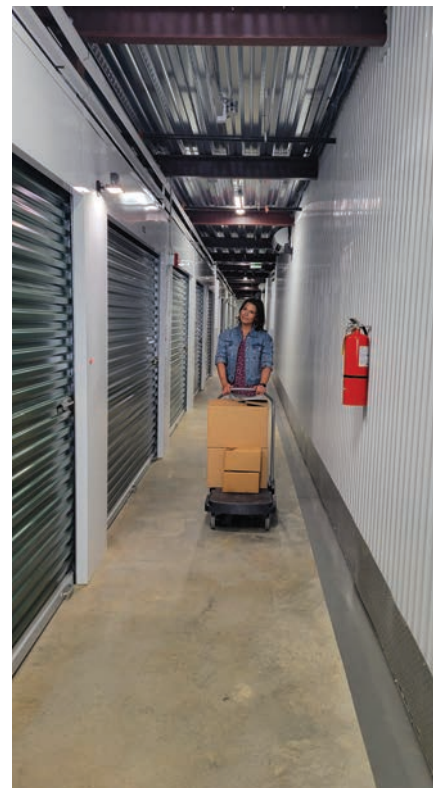
In 2025, **Janus won three ISS Best of Business Awards:**

- **Best Self-Storage Door**
- **Best Retrofitting/Refurbishing**
- **Best Technology Innovation**

Additionally, for the **fourth consecutive year**, Janus is honored to receive the **Gold Key of Excellence**, voted on by builders nationwide for offering the **best products, best service and best prices.**

When you partner with Janus International, you're aligning with a team that knows the industry, understands your challenges and delivers reliable solutions backed by decades of expertise.

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KIRSCH BP/SHARKSKIN ROOF UNDERLAYMENTS

WEBSITE: www.sharkskinroof.com

PHONE: 877-742-7507

PROJECT: ST. PETERS CATHEDRAL, ERIE, PA

Scope of works: Slate Re-Roof, Standing Seam Copper Roof, and Gutters Replacement

Contractor: A.W. Farrell & Son, Inc. Erie, Pennsylvania

Copper Roof and Gutters: Armor Fab, LLC, Erie, Pennsylvania. 30-SQ of Copper Roofing. 750' feet of gutter

Project Manager: Randy Pace

Assistant Project Manager: Tony Lazarony

Slate Foremen: Sean Irwin and Gary Fish, and Journeyman Paul Gibbs from Roofer's Local 210. 230-SQ of Slate

Copper Work Foremen: Kody Pace and Chris Hogue from Sheetmetal Local 12

In 1873, ground was broken to begin the building of the St. Peters Cathedral in Erie, Pennsylvania. A slate roof was installed on the steep pitches, along with a standing seam copper roof at lower pitches, and copper gutters set-into the stone perimeter of the roof.

Prior to the re-roof \$2 million in "gold leaf" was applied to the walls and ceilings inside the church. This meant the winter prior to the new roof installation the existing roof had to be protected. The re-roof began in the Spring of 2023, with the 150-year-old slate being removed first, as Sharkskin Ultra SA® was installed to protect the Cathedral.

Sharkskin Ultra SA® was chosen for the re-roof of the St. Peters Cathedral, in Erie, Pennsylvania, for its long term 50-year warranty and High-Temp rating under the new Greenstone Slate roof and Standing Seam Copper Roof. In addition, the Cathedral is approximately a little more than a mile from Lake Erie. Lake Erie is known for its strong "lake breeze" winds. The men from A.W. Farrell & Son, Inc., have experience with Sharkskin Ultra SA® and know once installed properly, it's not going to blow off.

In addition, the walking surface of the Sharkskin Ultra SA® provided the men setting the roof scaffolding, and roof jacks with a safe walking surface. The scaffolding set directly on top of the Sharkskin Ultra SA® was leak-free during the roof installation. Sharkskin Ultra SA provided leak-free protection on the entire project from start to finish, as well as providing 12-Month UV Protection.

With the top of the Cathedral steeple at 300' and the distance to



the top of the gutters at 80'-100', it was important that the project ran smoothly. Every pallet of slate had to be "ring tested," which means a hammer is used to test the slate, to make sure there are no cracks. The slate will ping in just the right way to confirm, soundness. In addition, slate was pulled from three separate pallets onto one, to maintain even color dispersion across

the roof plane, to eliminate blotches of lighter and darker slates.

The standing seam copper roof panels and copper gutters were fabricated locally by Armor Fab, LLC, owned by Robert Pace. The copper gutters were made in 20' lengths and craned up to the roof. The on-site crane was invaluable for the installation of both the Copper Sheetmetal work and slate roof installation.

Another beautiful roof installation from the men at A.W. Farrell & Son, Inc. **RB**

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MAZE NAILS

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QUALITY DOESN'T HAPPEN OVERNIGHT

T rue quality is earned — not claimed. It takes years of rigorous testing, real-world performance, and proven durability to create a product that stands above the rest — especially in exterior fasteners. At Maze Nails, we understand that better than anyone. That's why we've spent generations perfecting our craft.

Since 1848, Maze Nails has been rooted in the lumber business. Over the decades, we've grown, evolved, and adapted to meet the ever-changing needs of the building industry. Today, we're proud to be recognized as the #1 Specialty Nail Manufacturer in the USA, with a product line trusted by professionals across the post-frame industry.

What sets us apart? Precision. Experience. Reliability. Our top-of-the-line machinery, expertly trained team, and deep industry knowledge allow us to produce nails that consistently outperform the competition. But quality doesn't stop at manufacturing — we've also mastered the logistics. From managing inventory and raw materials to ensuring timely shipments, our operations are as dependable as the products we ship.

While cost is always a consideration, it should never come at the expense of quality. Choosing cheaper, lower-grade fasteners may save a few dollars upfront — but can lead to costly repairs and failures down the road. At Maze Nails, we don't cut corners. We never compromise our standards to match low-quality imports.

Our commitment to excellence has earned us nationwide loyalty, numerous industry accolades, and a reputation built on results.

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trusted Maze for quality that lasts.

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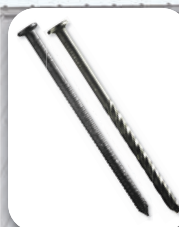
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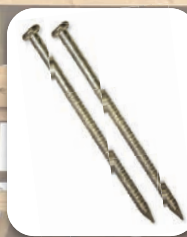
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MWI Celebrates

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This recognition reaffirms our steadfast commitment to the core values that have defined us since 1985: reliable delivery, industry-leading customer service, and innovative products that simplify construction in the rural building and post-frame industry.

For 40 years, we have proudly served customers across the United States and Canada by manufacturing and delivering high-quality components that help bring their building visions to life. From the beginning, we have prioritized sourcing nearly all our materials in the United States to ensure consistency, reliability, and trust in every product. With most products shipping within a week, our industry-best lead times reflect our dedication to speed and accuracy. Our experienced customer service team supports each client through the entire process from product selection to final installation.



MWI Team at the 2025 NFBA Show



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Innovation continues to lead our growth, including the launch of several new high-performance products. Titan Board is a durable, UV-resistant PVC cladding ideal for interior walls and ceilings, offering a clean finish at a cost comparable to other wall coverings. X-Cell Closures are dense foam strips that seal gaps between roof decks and panels, protecting against moisture, pests, and air leaks, even in subfreezing temperatures. Our X-Treme Series, featuring the XE and X2 Hybrid Closures, combines durability with easy installation. Made from vented PET fibers, they allow airflow, reduce freezing risk, and block dirt and pests. The XE offers a budget-friendly 1.5-inch width, while the X2 is 2 inches wide. Both the XE and the X2 are available for the Ag Panel 9"OC and the R-Panel profiles.



In addition to our newest innovations, we continue to manufacture a strong lineup of trusted, high-performance products including Cupolas, Track and Hardware, Ridge Ventilation, Soffit and Trim Ventilation, Dutch and Arcadian Doors, Horse Stalls, and Reflective Insulation. Each is crafted to meet the highest standards of quality and performance. We also proudly distribute Polycarbonate and PVC panels that enhance animal health and productivity in agricultural settings. Practical solutions like Uni-Seal and the Labor Saver continue to provide added value by simplifying metal roofing and retrofit installations.

We are deeply grateful to our loyal customers, dedicated employees, and industry partners who have made this achievement possible. Your support inspires us to continuously improve, innovate, and deliver excellence across every touchpoint.

Thank you for recognizing MWI Components with the 2025 Golden Key of Excellence Award. It is our honor to serve the rural building and post-frame industry, and we look forward to what the future holds.



STEEL DYNAMICS

WEBSITE: www.steeldynamics.com **PHONE:** 260-969-3500

Since its founding in 1993, Steel Dynamics Inc.® has proudly provided best-in-class customer service and support, quality, innovative technology, and most importantly, a focus on safety for all of its employees. Creating and maintaining a healthy and safe work environment is core to SDI's values. The company strives to maintain a safety-focused culture to help ensure that every team member goes home safely at the end of each shift, and takes an active role in remaining safe, both on the job and at home.

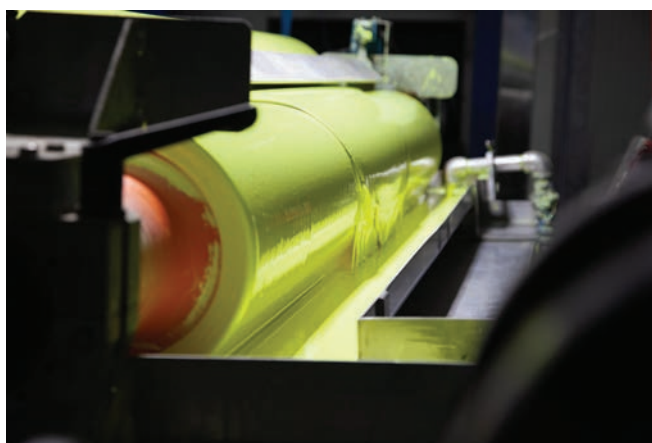
Over the past 30 years, the SDI Flat Roll Group has grown from a single mini mill operation in Butler, Indiana, into five divisions across the United States, each offering unique capabilities and products. Three electric arc furnace (EAF) mills in Butler, Indiana, Columbus, Mississippi, and Sinton, Texas, form the backbone of SDI's steelmaking operations, producing millions of tons of flat rolled steel every year. These locations offer in-house metallic coating and pre-paint services, creating a streamlined supply chain for customers. Six finishing lines at the Heartland Division in Terre Haute, Indiana, and The Techs in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, round out SDI's flat-rolled capabilities, offering niche sizes and coatings not found anywhere else.

SDI is one of the largest domestic producers of Galvalume® coated steel coils, which are often painted at one of their 6 pre-paint lines. Painted Galvalume® steel sheet is the material of choice for siding and roofing, providing superior weather resistance and longevity to any structure. SDI has more than 20 years of experience producing painted Galvalume® coils and is an industry-leading expert on the product.

As one of the most sustainable steelmakers in the world, all of SDI's steel-making operations utilize EAF technology, which produces significantly less carbon emissions than traditional basic oxygen furnaces. This, along with strategic partnerships with clean energy providers, allows SDI to boast some of the lowest scope 1 and scope 2 emissions in the industry.

SDI is continuously working to develop new and innovative products and services to better support an ever-evolving steel industry. A recent product of this innovative drive is the Tru-Steel HD® digital print line in Butler, Indiana. This cutting-edge operation utilizes a large-format digital printer to transfer hi-resolution images of natural materials like wood and stone onto steel sheet. The printer's ability to output millions of colors creates images with incredible depth and detail.

On a much grander scale, SDI begins production this year at their new, state-of-the-art aluminum rolling mill in Columbus, Mississippi, aptly named Aluminum Dynamics™. This facility will allow SDI to serve the aluminum packaging, automotive, construction, and transportation industries with high-quality prod-



ucts and customer service.

SDI is proud to once again be the recipient of a Gold Key award and is thankful for both the team that made it possible, and for the customers who continue to work with and support them. **RB**

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SWI MACHINERY

WEBSITE: www.swimachinery.com **PHONE:** 770-766-0880

From Coil to Finished Part...

SWI is proving you can work smarter, not harder.

While many sheet metal forming equipment manufacturers are touting their automated solutions, the proof is in SWI's numbers. Check out the stats of the part forming automation after just one day of demonstrations during Australian Manufacturing Week in Melbourne, Australia.

The system logged 354 completed parts in just under 10 hours. The significance

of this was summed up nicely by Darren Monson, VP of Sales at SWI.

"Production numbers like this can easily exceed what some of our customers do in real life in an average day of production — let alone running demonstrations at a trade exhibit. The key is our automation that allows us to run these kinds of numbers in just a short span of time with little to no operator intervention."

While SWI is not the first to introduce production automation, the ease-of-use of

SWI machinery, combined with proven output, is sure to make an impact on the rural builder marketplace.

Jason Smoak of SWI adds, "We can automate an entire production line for those companies looking to take it to the next level. By themselves, SWI machines are very reliable and easy to operate. But working together as an automated solution, we are achieving exceptional production capacity...from coil to finished part." **RB**



1. CX5 Coil Changer picks coil material according to job specifications.



2. Coils are loaded into the Uncoiler and fed into the slitter.



3. Marxman Pro Slitter automatically adjusts blades to the width of the part specification.



4. Sheet Loader System collects and sorts blanks, then positions into Long Folder.



5. Duplex Long Folder bends sheet metal material to part specs.



6. Part Handler/Unloader collects finished parts and moves to collection area.

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UNCOILING



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MAKE THE SWITCH.





UNITED STEEL SUPPLY

WEBSITE: www.unitedsteelsupply.com

PHONE: 512-263-0954

United Steel Supply wins its seventh consecutive Rural Builder Gold Key of Excellence award, following its first win in 2019.

As America's largest distributor of painted steel and Galvalume®, United Steel Supply builds its reputation on a guiding principle of service.

"What an amazing recognition," says United Steel Supply National Sales Manager Conrad Farley. "This award means a great deal to us and we are truly humbled by this honor and proud to receive an award and recognition that comes directly from the rural building marketplace. We listen to our customers and work hard to make sure our commitment to service and quality is always the priority."

United Steel Supply's dedication to its customers drives the company and underpins its core objective: delivering the highest level of service among all steel providers in the industry. "Our relationships with our customers give us the opportunity to listen to what they care about then work hard to provide the best service and quality. Everyone at United Steel Supply takes personal pride and responsibility in valuing every order we receive by a customer and we never take it for granted," said Farley. "It's never about where we are today; it's about 1 year from today, 5 years from today, and how we help our customers' growth and success long term."

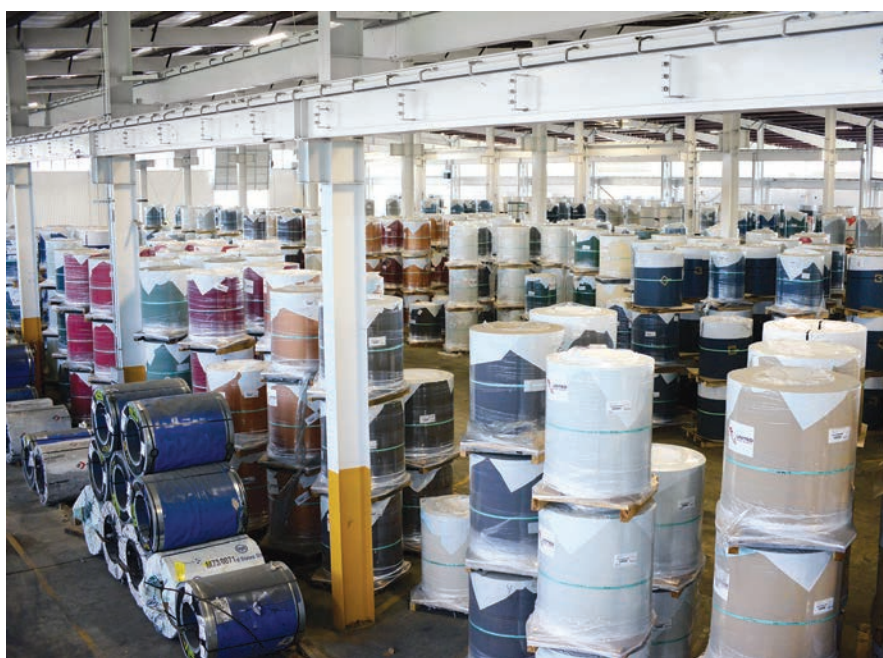
United Steel Supply holds its customers in high esteem and delivers value-added solutions at every opportunity. The company focuses on metal construction and roofing materials and serves customers coast-to-coast.

"We truly lead by service," said Farley. "We focus on providing service that is second to none and feel everything else will fall in line. We hope that commitment to service and responsiveness gives

our customers the edge they need to stay competitive in their own markets."

Farley expresses his gratitude for the company receiving its seventh consecutive Gold Key. "Our customers are our

friends and it's always so good to hear from a good friend. That's what this award is! We are truly blessed and beyond grateful. Thank you, again, to all the customers who voted for United Steel Supply. **RB**



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5 GOLD KEYS WON



ACU-FORM

WEBSITE: www.acuformequipment.com **PHONE:** 330-674-4003 **FAX:** 330-674-4035

Established in 2010, Acu-Form has provided nothing less than the highest quality roll forming machines. We use tried and true manufacturing processes that prioritize proven design and strict quality control checks that allow us to offer the Acu-Form promise.

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Power Options: We offer hydraulic, mechanical, and electrical power sources depending on your needs, including options for full automation.

Pre-Tested Machines: All Acu-Form machines are tested using customer supplied material. This enables turnkey operation upon installation.

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offerings.

Shipping & Installation: Upon machine completion, full service shipping and installation is available including the arrangement of technical support to connect to your power supply.

Acu-Form is here to support you beyond just delivery and installation. The purchase of any machine always includes access to technical support, as well as a full line of replacement parts that are available for immediate delivery. **RB**



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A.J. Manufacturing is honored to be recognized by our customers with another Gold Key Award. Our employees are thankful for the collaborative customer relationships and the trust that those customers have in A.J.'s products and services. Our entire team appreciates the opportunity to be an innovative partner to the post frame industry and looks forward to meeting the continuously expanding needs of the industry.

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EZ FIT trim on a series 7100 door.



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consistently, our customers can focus on their business and customers. In addition to the basics, we are constantly looking to improve the quality and performance of our products while holding costs in-line.

Quality materials, exceptional customer service, innovative designs, and a dedication to excellence are the principles that make up A.J.'s promise to continue to deliver value beyond customer's expectations. For more information about any of A.J.'s products call 1-800-328-9448 or visit ajdoor.com. **RB**



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By A.J. Manufacturing

Quality Finish that Inspires Trust

A.J. Manufacturing has been painting, in-house, for over 20 years. Today we provide a high quality finish on all doors and windows using Sherwin Williams Polane® Solar Reflective Polyurethane Enamel. The Sherwin Williams enamel is a two-component polyurethane heat reflective coating for exterior use on heat sensitive substrates providing excellent color and gloss retention. A.J. windows are available with custom painted exteriors and white, tan, or champagne interiors and grids are always color matched to accent your building. Doors can be fully painted or painted on just the exterior.

Benefits of Polane® Solar Reflective Polyurethane Enamel include:

- Protects heat sensitive substrates from heat build up due to solar radiation
- Mar, abrasion, and chemical resistance
- Free of lead and chromate hazards
- Designed to meet AAMA 614, AAMA 624, and AAMA 2604 performance specifications
- Painted finish on exterior only on windows
- Painted finish on interior/exterior on doors



AJ MANUFACTURING, INC.
BUILDING IDEAS

☎ 800-328-9448 @ www.ajdoor.com





ASC MACHINE TOOLS

WEBSITE: www.ascmt.com

PHONE: 509-534-6600

WHICH PANEL ROLLFORMING LINE FITS MY NEEDS?

The decision to purchase the right Panel Rollforming Line for your current and future needs is not easy! Each configuration has advantages and disadvantages depending on the application and existing setup in your plant.

ASC is proud to offer three Panel Rollforming Lines, which all feature High Quality Cast Rollformer Stands and multiple Pre- and Post-Cut Options. All Lines come with a Touchscreen Controller with optional Upload/Download of Orders, and Remote Support.

1. The **ALPHA SERIES™** is a feed-to-stop Rollforming Line and the lower-cost option for customers with reduced production volumes. The Line features a close-coupled front end or a hydraulic Post-Cut



Shear, both keeping the line footprint under 40'!

2. The **SELECT SERIES™** is designed for customers with increased production needs and offers a variety of additional features to improve throughput and efficiency. Depending on the product and Cut-Off System, the Line offers production speeds between 150 and 250 fpm!



3. The **CLASSIC SERIES™** has been the strongest workhorse in the industry for decades! Paired with ASC's Mechanical Press, the line offers the highest Net Throughput speed in the Industry with up to 400 fpm on 10' panel lengths!



All of these lines are proudly designed and manufactured in the U.S. in Spokane, Washington, since 1949. **RB**

PREMIUM QUALITY ROLLFORMING MACHINERY

MADE IN THE USA SINCE 1949

PANEL LINES
TRIM ROLLFORMER
PURLIN LINES
ROLL UP DOOR LINES
SEAMING STATIONS
ROLL UP STATIONS
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ASC MACHINE TOOLS, INC.
SPOKANE, WA USA





19 GOLD KEYS WON



ATLAS BUILDING PRODUCTS

WEBSITE: www.atlasfasteners.com

PHONE: 800-321-6977

“Invisible products, but noticeable service,” summarized Atlas Building Products company president Don Bratcher. Atlas Building Products specializes in accessory products like fasteners, sealant, venting, and closure, where the more invisible they are the better the product is. “As soon as someone notices or has to think too much about the fasteners attaching a metal roof, there’s a problem.”

Although their products may blend seamlessly into a finished roof, their service to their customers attracts attention. When asked what makes Atlas stand out in the marketplace, Bratcher said, “We have the capabilities, technical knowledge, and logistical footprint to successfully support our customer’s business needs nationwide; and 129 years of experience doing it.”

This commitment to service over the last century has propelled

them to the forefront of the industry, positioning them as the leading provider of fasteners for the PEMB, Post Frame, and Component sectors in the USA.

Strategically positioned across three key locations, their facilities ensure swift and efficient delivery nationwide. Each Atlas site has the capability to streamline operations, from painting, packaging, and shipping of fasteners, to cutting closures to meet specialized requirements promptly. At their headquarters in Ashland, Ohio, they also manufacture high quality fasteners. To learn more about Atlas, visit

their website at atlasfasteners.com.

We are honored to present Atlas Building Products with their 19th Gold Key of Excellence award. This is an amazing testament to their impact on our industry. Please join us in congratulating Atlas. **RB**



Building Products Simplified

Strong Fasteners. Better Builds.

Reliable metal-to-metal and
metal-to-wood
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B BECK 120
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YEARS STRONG

BECK – WHERE (R)EVOLUTION HAPPENS

At BECK, we're not just about fastening - we're about revolutionizing the way you connect. Our innovative technology takes strength to new heights and is designed with sustainability in mind. Expect durability and longevity from our fastening solutions. With BECK, your projects are guaranteed to stand the test of time. Explore more at www.beck-fastening.com

BECK AMERICA INC.

800-239-8665

WWW.BECK-FASTENING.COM



4 GOLD KEYS WON

B BECK
Beyond Fastening

BECK AMERICA INC.

WEBSITE: www.beck-fastening.com

PHONE: 800-239-8665

Thank you to everyone who voted! We are honored to be nominated into this select group for the fourth year in a row by our customers. BECK America proudly serves as North America's distribution arm for BECK, which has over 120 years of expertise in fastening technology, focused on our customers' needs. We are committed to addressing challenges in fastening technology while maintaining high standards in materials and customer service. Products such as innovative robotic fastening solutions, the world's first pneumatically driven collated wooden nail - LIGNOLOC®, and the one and only SCRAIL®, just to name a few. Our aspiration is "BEYOND FASTENING," as we strive to offer our customers much more than just fastening systems. **RB**

**FASCO® Cordless
Joist/Anchor Nailer
with SCRAIL®
Anchor & Anchor
Nails**



**FASCO® F91B
Jumbo Nailer &
Jumbo Nails**



**FASCO® F70G Cordless
Fence Stapler & Diamond
Coated Fence Staples**





THE BRADBURY GROUP

WEBSITE: www.bradburygroup.com

PHONE: 620-345-6394

Whether you are a company with entry-level production requirements or an established manufacturer, The Bradbury Group designs and builds roll forming and coil processing equipment that will grow your business. Bradbury Group provides quality metal panel and standing seam roll formers, purlin roll formers, trim roll formers, trim folders, recoiling lines, insulated panel lines, coil processing lines, levelers, metal shingle and tile lines, automated production lines, and related equipment for numerous industries.

For companies who want to start manufacturing panels, Bradbury Group entry-level pre- and post-cut roll forming lines

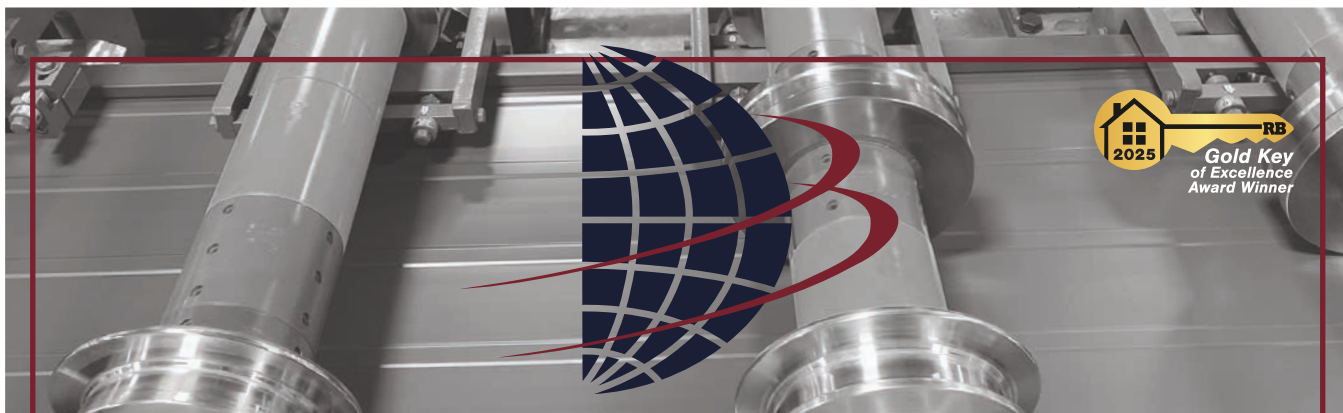


produce the highest quality panel in the industry. The Bradbury B.O.S.S.™ shear panel line has production speeds up to 300 FPM with an accuracy of 1/16" and is a reliable option for established manufacturers with high volume demand.

Purlin line models from The Bradbury Group include the Hayes QC300™, the Hayes FC350™, the Bradbury VTR™+plus, and the Bradbury QTR™ that range from a semi-manual changeover system to a fully automatic changeover system with

8-gauge material capacity, 24" web width capability, auto nesting, and purlin stacking.

For over 65 years, Bradbury has been a trusted industry leader for manufacturers around the world. Contact us to talk about your manufacturing process wants and needs. **RB**



THE BRADBURY GROUP

Metal Panel & Standing Seam Roll Formers	Purlin Roll Formers
Trim Folders	Trim Roll Formers
Recoiling Lines	Levelers
Insulated Panel Lines	Metal Shingle & Tile Lines
Coil Processing Lines	

**From entry level to high-production equipment,
The Bradbury Group will help grow your business.**

WE BUILD MACHINES. WE SELL SOLUTIONS.

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bradbury@bradburygroup.com

bradburygroup.com



CHIEF BUILDINGS

WEBSITE: www.chiefbuildings.com

PHONE: 800-845-1767



When it comes to agricultural operations, durability and efficiency are key. Chief Buildings offers top-tier metal building solutions that stand up to the toughest farm and ranch conditions. Our customizable structures are ideal for equipment storage, livestock housing, and grain handling facilities. Built with high-quality steel and engineered for longevity, Chief Buildings reduce maintenance costs and provide reliable protection year-round. Farmers appreciate

the quick construction timelines and flexibility in design, which allow for future expansion as operations grow. With nearly 60 years of experience and a commitment to American-made excellence, Chief Buildings understands the needs of agricultural producers. Whether you're building a new barn or expanding storage, investing in a Chief Building means investing in a structure that works as hard as you do. Quality, strength, and service — Chief delivers it all. **RB**



800-845-1767
chiefbuildings.com

When it comes to designing and manufacturing custom-engineered metal building systems, we have the experience and expertise to bring your vision to life.



**16X GOLD KEY
AWARD WINNER**





COMBILIFT
LIFTING INNOVATION

COMBILIFT LIFTING INNOVATION

WEBSITE: www.combilift.com

PHONE: 336-378-8884

Combilift has revolutionized the material-handling sector by providing custom-made and space-saving solutions to your problems since 1998.

The Irish manufacturer offers a wide range of multidirectional forklifts, pedestrian stackers, sideloaders, narrow aisle articulated trucks, container loaders, and straddle carriers with capacities ranging from 2,200 lbs to 200,000 lbs.

Multidirectional forklift models such as those in the C-Series and CB range are designed to travel sideways while handling long and bulky loads, for example pipes, timber panels, or steel. The sideways function eliminates the need for overhead carrying while navigating tight spaces, which significantly reduces the risk of injury. This, in turn, allows for much better and cost-effective use of all available space, which is one of a company's most valuable assets. An additional safety feature is that these forklifts are built with a very low center of gravity, allowing for a low-to-the-ground movement of your load.

For more information, you can contact us at Combilift.com / +1 336-378-8884. **RB**



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INCH OF
YOUR
STORAGE
SPACE!**

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Combilift's range of multidirectional forklifts, pedestrian reach trucks, straddle carriers and container loaders will allow you to maximize the capacity, improve efficiency and enhance the safety of your facility.

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DIRECT METALS, INC.

WEBSITE: www.directmetalsinc.com

PHONE: 855-800-8878

FAX: 239-599-8545

DIRECT METALS INC. (DMI) is a supplier of fasteners, closure strips, and other building accessories for the steel-frame, post-frame, industrial, and residential building industries. A core tenet of the DMI philosophy is to market products that enhance the value of any building project. Key products include the PANCLIP Pancake and Wafer head fasteners along with panel clips for standing seam metal roof systems. These fasteners pass rigid Dade County specifications for use in high-corrosion areas.

Building owners and homeowners today demand more quality in the fasteners and accessories that have become a more

important part of their commercial or residential metal roof project. Corrosion resistance is a key concern. DMI Carbon steel screws are standard with a 1,000-hour rated corrosion resistant coating. The DMI exclusive 304 SS cap SCAMP screws are essential to keep intact a 40-year metal panel warranty. The SCAMP is Dade County listed. Powder-coated color matching is available for many standard industry panel colors.

DMI is a supplier to the nation's largest roofing supply companies. The BULLET BOOT roof vent pipe and GOOSENECK stove and dryer vent flashings carry a 35-year warranty, color match a shingle roof, and are Florida Building Code approved.

Other building accessories include 304 and 316 SS rivets, BUTYL*ROLL tape mastic and tube sealants, EPDM pipe flashings, foil insulation, solid and vented closure strips and rolls and the most extensive polycarbonate panel line available for sidelight and skylight applications.

In 3rd quarter 2025, DMI will introduce its own design WOODZIP & STEELZIP fasteners for post-frame & steel-frame applications. Paired with the 304 SS Cap SCAMP, this will form the most corrosion resistant line of carbon steel & long-life fasteners in the industry.

DMI again thanks the readers of RURAL BUILDER for this GOLD KEY award. **RB**

SINGLE SOURCE

PANCLIP



SCAMP



Whether a metal roof is standing seam or exposed fastener, DMI has the high quality products for a successful roof project.

- PANCLIP low-profile Pancake & Wafer Head standing seam roof screws & panel clips for SNAP-LOCK & MECHANICAL LOCK profiles.
- SCAMP 304 SS Cap Type 17 & SD Points for Post-Frame & Steel-Frame metal building applications have a 40 year warranty.
- PANCLIP & SCAMP Fasteners meet Dade County, FL specifications for coastal, high-corrosion applications.
- Accessories such as Pipe Flashings, Butyl Mastic & tube sealants, 304 SS Rivets, solid & vented foam closure strips round out the product line.



WITH EVERYTHING BUT THE COIL, DMI IS THE COMPLETE SOURCE FOR THE METAL ROOFING MANUFACTURER.

• All DMI products are sold through an authorized distributor network •

CALL 855-800-8878 • www.directmetalsinc.com



GOLDEN RULE FASTENERS

WEBSITE: www.goldenrulefastenersinc.com

PHONE: 334-283-4030

At Golden Rule Fasteners, we have been committed to excellence in every aspect of our business since our beginning in 1991. We work with suppliers in the U.S. and Taiwan to provide the best products available. We develop innovative new designs to move the industry forward, make the job easier, and provide an aesthetically pleasing finished project. We listen to our customers to identify the need for new products or new variations of existing products.

We have over 30,000 square feet stocked full of inventory. Our extensive inventory allows us to ship most orders same day.



Thanks to our quick turnaround time on orders, our customers are able to stock less product in their warehouses, freeing up capital for other areas of their business.

Our focus on service is not only to ship orders same day but to make the total buying experience easy and enjoyable. We re-

ceive orders by phone, fax, email, and text messaging. Our friendly staff are happy to take orders, answer questions, and provide product information. We are honored to receive another Gold Key Award and will continue to work hard to remain one of the top suppliers in the industry. **RB**

GOLDEN RULE FASTENERS, INC.

NOW STOCKING STAR DRIVE PANCAKE SCREWS!



When you need it fast, call Golden Rule Fasteners!



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GRABER POST BUILDINGS, INC.

WEBSITE: www.graberpost.com

PHONE: 800-264-5013

Neatly tucked away down an old country road just outside of Montgomery, Indiana, sits the impressive Graber Post Buildings sales office and manufacturing complex. Forged from humble and modest beginnings, in 1973 Glen Graber started GPB with the help of three other Amish carpenters. His purpose was to provide for his entire family.

As a skilled carpenter, Graber knew that providing the best quality materials and craftsmanship while erecting post-frame buildings would be a key factor to his success. In 1987, the supply chain issues helped him make one of his biggest business decisions ever. He invested in a computerized rollformer to produce his own siding and roofing panels. It was a major risk in the early stages of his business venture, but it yielded great opportunities for future growth. And it did just that.

Today, Graber Post Buildings has grown year after year while building on the same core values that Mr. Graber set in place from day one: providing the best building materials at a fair and competitive price. GPB has over 30 subcontracting crews to build build-

ings and install metal roofs in a two-hour radius of Montgomery, Indiana. We stock and distribute every item needed for post/stud frame buildings and metal roofs. We build custom wood trusses, laminated columns, five metal siding/roofing profiles, metal trims, windows, doors, overhead doors, and any other imaginable items you may need.

Residential post-frame buildings or “shouses/barndominiums” have become the popular topic the last few years. To help the design process, our website features a design tool that allows you to come up with your own custom design that can then be submitted for a free, no-obligation quote. We also feature a color visualizer that will help aid in picking the perfect color combination for your next build. Finally, to help with design inspiration, we have a gallery with all our top projects to give you great ideas/tips to include in your next build. For your next garage, shop, shouse, or metal roof, please give us a call and see how we can help you save money while getting the building or roof that you’ve always dreamed of. To learn more about our company, visit www.graberpost.com. **RB**



Built on TRUST Backed By QUALITY

With over 50 years of experience, you can trust our team to bring you the quality and craftsmanship that you need.



Dealer/Installer Of:



GRABERPOST.COM | 800-264-5013
Montgomery, IN 47558



HIXWOOD

WEBSITE: www.hixwood.com

PHONE: 715-644-0765

FAX: 715-644-0994

Hixwood Metal LLC Since 1998

Our brand is built on Quality ... you can count on. Super Rib 100 Premium Quality roofing and siding, both Textured and Smooth are the hallmark of our offerings. Quality equipment to get you product on the ground when you need it. Quality people who cater to both contractors and individual builders alike.

PREMIUM MATERIALS & SERVICE

Super Rib 100-28 ga. G-100 galvanized has been our hallmark product for decades, and our state-of-the-art machines will produce custom trims designed by our customers. We know metal, so when

you call, you will be talking to an expert who knows the product and can efficiently and accurately help you with your order. We are your supplier of choice for premium quality materials, delivered in a timely manner.

TESTIMONIALS

Don't ask us; ask our customers. "Hixwood Metal has continuously delivered high quality products in a very timely manner, allowing me to focus on running the business."

"I have been purchasing from Hixwood for the last 10 years. The quality is superior and you can typically place a large

order and get it delivered or pick it up the next day!"

"Trust Hixwood to get quality products on the ground when you need them, and with piggy-back forklift trucks it makes everything more efficient for the contractor."

At Hixwood, we have learned that our legacy gives us a distinct advantage from somebody trying to get into the panel business for the first time. Long-term commitment to the industry is very important to our customer base and Hixwood is here for the long haul.

Thanks to our contractors who are awarding us the Gold Key award again.

RB

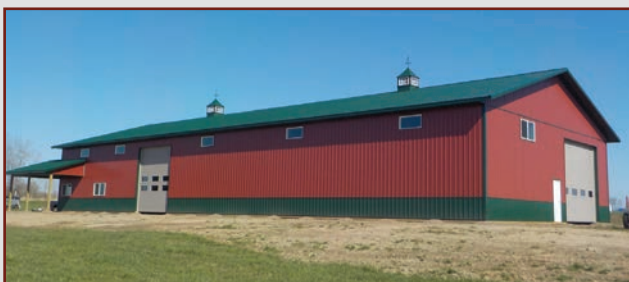


*Thank you
for honoring us with the Gold Key award.*

From our grassroots heritage to our current footprint, covering the Midwest to Eastern United States, we are here to serve you! We can meet all your postframe building needs, complete packages OR if you roll your own, we stock the full spectrum of coil.



715-644-0765 — Fax: 715-644-0994





LELAND INDUSTRIES INC.

WEBSITE: www.lelandindustries.com

PHONE: 800-263-3393

Leland Industries domestically manufactures a complete line of fasteners for the metal roofing and cladding industry. We produce self-tapping and self-drilling sealing fasteners up to 12" in #10, #12, and #14 diameters.

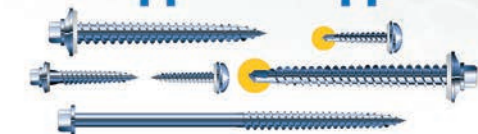
Leland Industries' fasteners are 100% North American made in carbon or stainless steel. Our exclusive JS1000 plating is an industry leader in corrosion protection, and our Powder Coating is available in 100s of colors to match any panel (plus, we offer a warranty to match the life of the panel).

Leland has the ability to manufacture fasteners to meet the demands and needs of our customers, from standards to specials. We understand that product availability is paramount for our partners and we have been bringing the nut and bolt fastener business back home since 1984. Please visit our website for more information. **RB**



LELAND Specialty Fasteners

Master Grippers® Grippers MDP®



For the post frame building industry
MDP metal panel to wood or light steel girt or purlin.

Master Tappers®



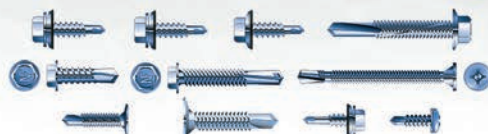
Roof panel to panel - roof sheet to structural A - AB - B points available, type F, type 23, type 1, BP & more. Lengths to 8" available.



AVAILABLE: A325 STRUCTURAL BOLTS

A325 Heavy Hex Structural Bolts assembled and unassembled in our convenient 1/4 Keg Pails. Manufactured in 1/2", 5/8" & 3/4" diameters in lengths from 1-1/4" to 6".

Master Drillers®



Attach metal panel to metal girt or purlin, stitching & structural applications. Lengths to 8" available.

Powder Coating

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Our Powder Coated paint system allows us to match your painted steel supplier's warranty.



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Made in Canada



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LEVI'S BUILDING COMPONENTS

WEBSITE: www.levisbuildingcomponents.com

PHONE: 877-897-7020

Levi's Building Components® originated as a small operation in Bird-in-Hand, Pennsylvania. Its founder, Levi Fisher, pioneered inventive solutions for prevalent challenges in the metal roofing industry. Among his innovations were the Snow Defender® snow guards and the ReGrip™ screw, engineered to supplant unreliable nails.

Levi's ingenuity extended to time-saving and cost-effective techniques for custom painting and color matching roofing fasteners. As the business flourished, Levi's son, Steve Fisher, assumed ownership and CEO responsibilities, steering the company into an era of expansion.

Now guided by Steve's direction, Levi's Building Components® underwent swift expansion, broadening its product portfolio and establishing a state-of-the-art facility in 2021. Presently, Levi's Building Components® products adorn residences and structures across the nation.



Suppliers nationwide rely on the company's unwavering commitment to product excellence, exceptional customer service, and prompt delivery. With an extensive and ever-expanding product lineup, Levi's Building Components® stands as the go-to destination for dependable metal roofing and post frame accessories. **RB**



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www.levisbuildingcomponents.com



MALCO TOOLS

WEBSITE: www.malcotools.com

PHONE: 320-274-7387

Time-Saving Metal Roofing Tools from Malco

In 2025, Malco Tools is proudly celebrating 75 years of serving the trades with high quality, ergonomic products, including its newest line of metal roofing tools for jobs using mechanical lock standing-seams for stainless steel, steel, aluminum, copper and zinc panels.

Get more done faster, and with less manual effort, with Malco's 1.5" Progressive Profiling Bender Set (FSP1), the 2" Power-Assisted Metal Cutter (FSXC2) and 2" Power-Assisted Metal Seamer (FSXS2), and 1" and 1.5" Hand Seamers (FSHS).

The Progressive Profiling Bender Set

eliminates the need to rent heavy and cumbersome tools to form male and female profiles for 1.5" standing seams with ease and speed.

For light commercial projects, trade pros can quote repair and retrofit jobs with confidence, knowing that they can handle the installation or removal of virtually any material. The Power-Assisted Seamers and Cutters plug into any cordless drill to become the fastest available on the market — saving valuable time, energy and money.

For smaller jobs, select the 1" or 1.5"

Hand Seamers to finish panels with a high-performance tool that gets the job done right, every time. Designed for seaming both the first (90°) stage and second (180°) stage locks of a mechanical seam, the FSHS is Malco's recommended seamer for closing 1" or 1.5" mechanical lock panels by hand.

Malco Tools is now part of The Malco Group, a leading manufacturer and distributor of high-quality building construction solutions that power the success of businesses and trade pros across North America. **RB**

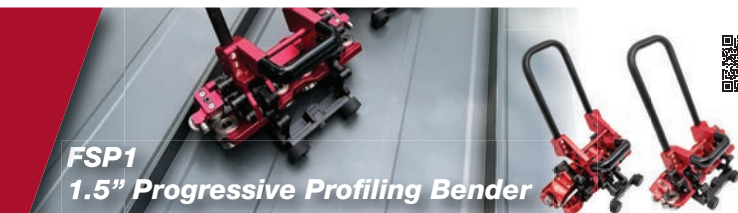


Proud to be A 2025 Gold Key of Excellence Winner



The Newest Items from our Metal Bender Line!

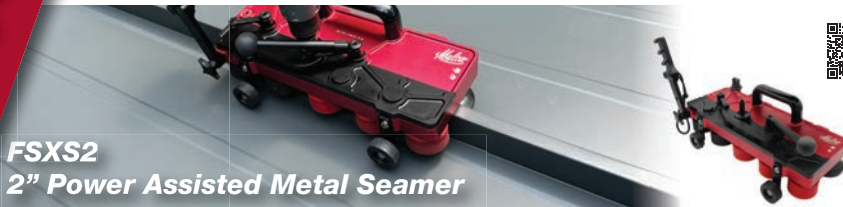
FSP1
1.5" Progressive Profiling Bender



FSXC2
2" Power Assisted Metal Cutter



FSXS2
2" Power Assisted Metal Seamer



FSHS2 & FSHS
Hand Seamers - 1" and 1.5"



Malco Tools, Inc. • Annandale, MN • www.malcotools.com • ©2025



METAL ROLLFORMING SYSTEMS

WEBSITE: www.mrsrollform.com

PHONE: 888-284-6794

Metal Rollforming Systems (MRS) is excited and honored to receive another Gold Key of Excellence award. MRS has been producing roll formers since 1993 and strives to create the best roll former for our customers. Metal Rollforming Systems aims to be your one-stop shop for all your roll forming needs, allowing you to save time and money when purchasing a roll former. Along with our complete roll former panel lines, we specialize in custom trim profiles along with all the needed accessories to complete your metal panel needs.

Our most recent roll former design is

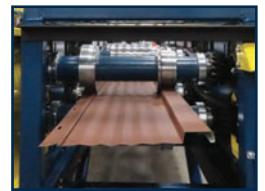
our Patriot Rollforming Line. With an integrated shear and modular die set, any number of profiles can be run on a single machine. This offers our customers flexibility for their production while costing less than our standard lines. The Patriot Line can also be reconstructed into a slit and recoil line, which is ideal for trim and snap-loc panel manufacturing.

We pride ourselves on our technical support for our customers. Our customers' success is our success. Our business is based largely on repeat customers and referrals, and we are honored that our customers speak so highly of us. We live under the philosophy that, "Service is the lifeblood of

our organization. Everything flows from it and is nourished by it. Customer service is not a department; it's an attitude."

We strive to make the best experience for our customers and to make them confident they've purchased the right roll former from the right company.

Metal Rollforming Systems has grown from a single man building roll formers to a 100-person crew. Our complete in-house design and production allows our team to keep precision control over each aspect of the manufacturing process. This assures us that each roll former is done right and will be reliable for our customers for many years to come. **RB**



Panel Rollformers

Titan, Signature & Patriot

Trim Rollformers

Single & Multi Profiles

Slitting Lines

Stand Alone, Cut to Length, & Slit to Recoil

Decoilers, Upenders, Shears

and much more!

**Industry Leading Quality
Unrivalled Service**



A 30 YEAR
HERITAGE



888.284.6794 | www.mrsrollform.com
info@mrsrollform.com
4511 N Freya St. | Spokane, WA 99217





MFM BUILDING PRODUCTS

WEBSITE: www.mfmbp.com

PHONE: 800-882-7663

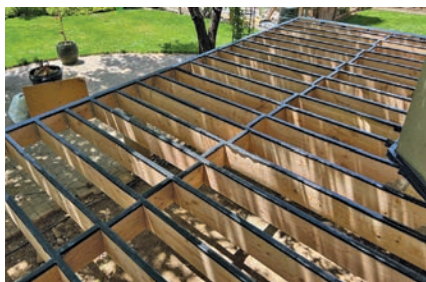


DeckWrap Post

MFM DeckWrap provides an added revenue opportunity. MFM DeckWrap PowerBond® is a self-adhering and self-sealing membrane for use on the structural support system of a deck, as well as posts. The product features a durable film surface and patented PowerBond® adhesive system to aggressively adhere to the wood surface, even in cold temperatures. Using DeckWrap PowerBond® will extend the life of your customer's decks and posts by preventing water penetration.

A great accessory product to complement your deck sales.

Free product samples, technical literature, installation instructions, and more are available by calling 800-882-7663 or by visiting www.mfmbp.com/deckwrap. **RB**



DeckWrap PowerBond Deck



Protection for your deck starts **UNDERNEATH IT.**

DeckWrap PowerBond® is the quick and easy way to extend the life of deck support systems and posts. Our patented PowerBond® adhesive aggressively adheres to all wood types, even in temperatures as low as 25°F. Self-adhering and self-sealing for protection you can trust, roll after roll.

mfm® BUILDING PRODUCTS CORP.

Request a free sample at www.mfmbp.com.



PROTECTION FOR LEDGER BOARDS • JOIST TOPS • JOIST ENDS • POSTS



PALRAM AMERICAS

WEBSITE: www.palram.com/us **PHONE:** 800-999-9459

With over 60 years of thermoplastic experience, Palram is a leading manufacturer of Polycarbonate and PVC sheets. Combining our rich history, rigorous manufacturing standards, and commitment to superior service, we've become trusted partners to contractors servicing the post frame, pole barn, barn-dominium, and agricultural outdoor storage buildings and their wet/wash down areas.

Palram is a leader in daylighting and interior wall cladding solutions. Palram branded SUNSKY corrugated polycarbonate panels for skylights and sidelights

have led the market in optimizing natural daylight and cutting electrical costs for years.

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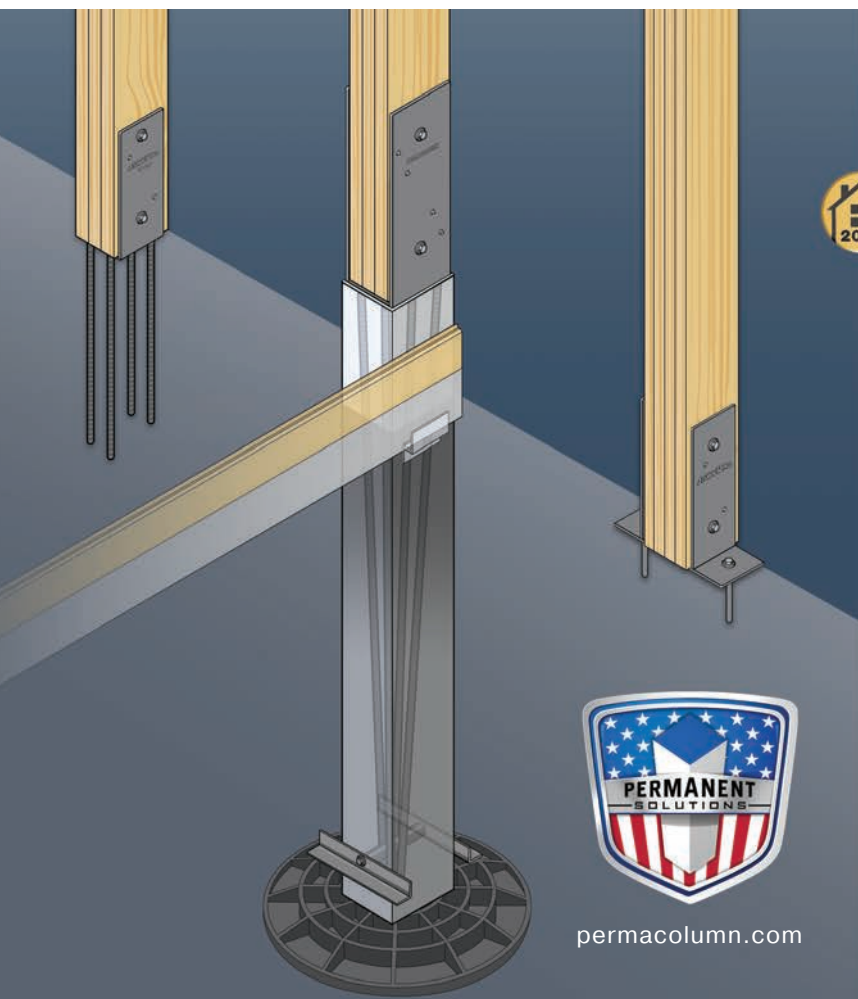
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Trac-Rite Door: Setting the Standard in Rural Construction—An 8-Time Gold Key Award Winner

In rural construction, durability isn't a luxury—it's a necessity. Whether it's a machinery shed, farm workshop, storage facility, or ag equipment building, builders need doors that perform without fail. That's exactly what **Trac-Rite** has delivered for over 40 years. Now, as an **eight-time Gold Key Award winner**, Trac-Rite is once again being recognized for its consistent quality, dependable service, and commitment to the construction professionals who rely on its products every day.

Trac-Rite has become a household name on job sites across North America by manufacturing steel roll-up doors designed for tough conditions. Their products stand up to high winds, extreme temperatures, and frequent use—making them an ideal fit for agricultural, commercial, and rural applications alike.



What sets Trac-Rite apart is its **vertically integrated approach**. While many suppliers offer piecemeal solutions, Trac-Rite manufactures a full line of roll-up doors and complete hallway and partition systems. This all-in-one model simplifies planning and procurement, shortens lead times, and ensures consistent quality—an especially valuable advantage for builders managing complex or remote projects.

Over the past year, Trac-Rite expanded its logistics network with new manufacturing distribution centers in **Wisconsin and Alabama**, strengthening its ability to serve builders across the U.S., Canada, and Latin America. These moves support Trac-Rite's position as the **oldest roll-up door manufacturer in North America**, with the infrastructure to back its promises.

But what matters most to rural builders isn't age—it's reliability. And Trac-Rite has earned their trust. Being voted a Gold Key Award winner for the eighth time isn't just a milestone—it's validation from the very people who count on Trac-Rite day in and day out.

In an industry where performance is paramount and job site timelines are tight, Trac-Rite continues to raise the bar. From barns to boat storage, if you're looking for a door built to work as hard as you do, **Trac-Rite is a name you can trust. RB**



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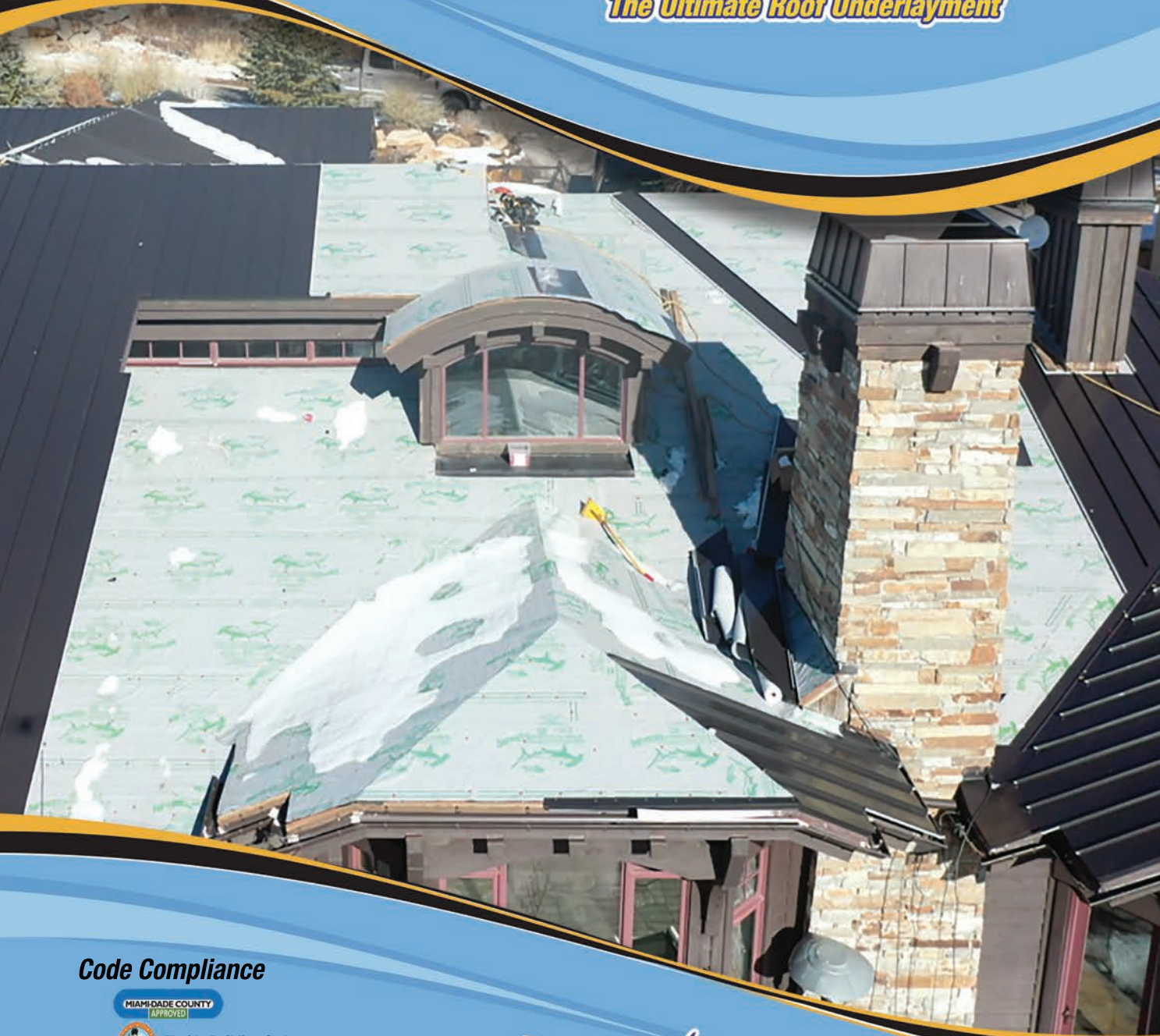
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BY LINDA SCHMID

The Shed Haulers Brotherhood

A Business Organization with Helping Hands

Rural Builder magazine is pleased to award Shed Haulers Brotherhood with the 2025 Gold Key of Service Award for its tireless ongoing work to donate and deliver shed homes for those left homeless by Hurricane Helene in September 2024.



The need for shed donations continues. Byler estimates that there are still thousands without permanent homes.

Hurricane Helene devastated areas across the southeastern part of the United States in September 2024. It was the deadliest to strike the U.S. mainland since Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana in 2005. Helene is reported to have caused hundreds of deaths and billions of dollars in damages.

When the Shed Haulers Brotherhood, headquartered in South Carolina, heard from others, or saw for themselves, what the devastation was like, how many people were left without homes, without cars, with businesses destroyed, with employers gone, leaving them with no job to help them get through this horrific event, they thought they had to help. They decided people would be better off with sheds to live in rather than being out in the cold. Shed donations began.

HELPING PEOPLE

Sam Byler, the acting leader of the Shed Hauler's Brotherhood,

has been helping with cleanup and getting people sheds. He and his group originally pledged to get 100 sheds to 100 families, couples, and singles. They have far surpassed that goal, delivering more than 600 sheds to those in need from donors all over the country. The work goes on because many are still homeless.

During cleanup in South Carolina, temporary homes were needed and, within 24 hours, they had donations for half of what was needed. Everyone in the industry helped: builders, dealers, rent-to-owners, anyone who could. The sheds are small structures, 8'x16' or 10'x24', but they insulate them, and they are dry places to come in out of the cold. There were some people who had no reserves, elderly, a veterinary service, and a few others who were likely to use these shelters as their forever home, so volunteers made them a little bigger and turned them into cabins.

In Tennessee, trees came down and people lost electrical service. Some were without electricity for long periods of time and people's homes were destroyed. In Tennessee and North Carolina, the earth had been ripped up and when it rained, flooding and mudslides began. Many people lost absolutely everything.

Byler said FEMA came out and issued vouchers for some people to obtain temporary shelter in motels, but sooner or later those vouchers run out. Other organizations have come out to help including Amish groups, some church groups, and others. A group called Get Out of the Cold, in Barnardville, North Carolina, led by Jeremy Barker is building sheds for people. Drivers from Texas, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and all over, have come out to donate sheds.

HANDING OUT HOPE

Even with all this generosity, there are still so many in need and not enough resources to go around. Many people were living in tents in the cold winter weather. When they contact Byler and ask when they can expect a shed/home, he has to say, "I'm sorry, just hold on to hope. We will get to you."

The worst thing is that a crisis like this leaves many people without hope. Sometimes it has resulted in suicide. Seeing this is what inspires Byler to help the hurricane victims. He and his fellow volunteers are trying to give hope.



Shed deliveries have come from all over the United States, and many more are needed.



The sheds don't have running water and are dependent on generators for power, when fuel is available, but they're a welcome relief from tent camping.

WHAT ARE SHED HOMES LIKE?

"When people get their shed, they walk in and it's snug and warm and clean, you can see in their faces that a little bit of hope has come back to them," Byler said.

The sheds these volunteers are giving people are good shelter; they are insulated, they have decent windows and doors. Most people are using generators to provide electricity and heat, though it's always a struggle to get fuel for them. However, these tiny homes have no running water. Much of the area's infrastructure is gone; sewer systems are washed out and wells are contaminated. If they had plumbing in their homes, there would be nowhere for the waste to go. People are using Porta Potties and incinerating toilets.

THE SHED HAULERS BROTHERHOOD

Who is this group helping so many people? The Shed Haulers Brotherhood began

when, in 2018 or 19, an owner/operator bought a new truck but bad fuel messed up the engine, and the shed haulers on the Facebook page decided to come together and support him and another shed hauler whose new motor went bad. Together the group raised the \$31,000 that they needed to help both. The group then decided to become more formalized, and the original group had 289 charter members.

Some members have come and some have gone, Byler said. He believes membership is now around 250. However, it's not just the brotherhood members who are involved in helping people. They have many followers and people across the industry who have stepped up. In fact, one volunteer said he'd never seen anything like it. Even church groups he's seen have not pulled together and been this committed to helping others.

Helping comes naturally to the Brotherhood. They are committed to helping

each other, connecting lenders with industry people, helping each other any way they can. Byler has said that he, as well as others who are helping, all have personal reasons, as well, for doing so. Someone helped them out when they really needed it.

WHAT NOW?

Although Byler and other volunteers have done so much, Byler struggles with the knowledge that there are still so many people without homes. He sees some people rebuilding, but NPR gave the number of 120,000 homes destroyed by Helene, and Byler figures that just between western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee, there are easily 50,000 people without permanent homes.

Byler hopes that people will be able to put their lives together and move on, but he thinks that eventually, they will have to go back and install water in all these shed homes.

SEVERAL WAYS TO HELP

Volunteers are needed. Byler said there are so many opportunities. Cleanup is ongoing, and his group and others will welcome anyone who offers.

If you can't volunteer, every restoration project needs money. Visit the website below and find out more about the work.

<https://shbrotherhood.org/donate>

If you don't have money to give, Byler asks for your prayers for everyone who has been affected by Hurricane Helene.

RB

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BY RURAL BUILDER STAFF

■ HIXWOOD WELCOMES WES GINGERICH TO SALES TEAM

Hixwood, a leading roll-formed steel panel building supply company based in Wisconsin, has announced the addition of Wes Gingerich as its new outside coil salesperson for the Midwest territory. Gingerich will serve customers across Colorado, New Mexico, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Iowa, Missouri, and Arkansas, reporting directly to Noah Oberholtzer.



Wes Gingerich,
*Hixwood's new
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for the Midwest
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With a strong legacy of values and

craftsmanship dating back to 1998, Hixwood [www.hixwood.com] has continued to grow and evolve since its 2020 acquisition by Ambassador Supply. Under the leadership of General Manager Paul Zimmerman, the company has invested in people, technology, and operational excellence — doubling its revenue in just three years.

“Wes brings a drive for excellence and a wealth of industry knowledge that perfectly align with the culture and values we prioritize at Hixwood,” said Zimmerman. “We are so fortunate to have him join our team as we continue building momentum across the region.”

Gingerich is an industry veteran who brings valuable experience in coil sales.

■ MFM BUILDING PRODUCTS HIRES NEW REPRESENTATION FOR NORTH TEXAS

MFM Building Products, a manufacturer of a full envelope of waterproofing and weather barrier products for the building industry, is pleased to announce that the firm has reached an agreement with Veteran Group Sales to represent MFM in North Texas.

Veteran Group Sales has a long history of serving both the residential and commercial building products industry, as the agency was founded more than 60 years ago. The agency will represent MFM's line of self-adhering waterproofing membranes with 1-Step and 2-Step distributors. **RB**

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- 🍔 Tailgate Cookout & Happy Hour – Tuesday, Aug. 5
- 🏌️ Golf or Farm Tech Day Outing – Wednesday, Aug. 6
- 🍴 Dinner & WFBA Membership Meeting – Wednesday Night

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REGISTER TODAY



BY DAN BROWNELL

Sealants for Windows

An Overview of Materials Used for Window Weatherproofing

Window sealants play an important role in maintaining a building's integrity by providing a protective barrier against external elements. They're essential for weatherproofing, as they help seal gaps and cracks around windows, preventing drafts, rain, and wind from penetrating the interior space. They also contribute significantly to energy efficiency by reducing heat loss in the winter and keeping cool air inside during the summer, which lowers energy consumption and utility costs. Furthermore, window sealants prevent moisture infiltration, which is vital for avoiding mold growth, wood rot, and structural damage caused by prolonged exposure to humidity and water intrusion. By ensuring a tight, long-lasting seal, high-quality window sealants enhance the durability, comfort, and overall performance of a building.

TYPES OF SEALANTS

There are a number of window sealant types: silicone, polyurethane, acrylic latex caulk, butyl rubber, and hybrid (Silane-Modified Polymers or SMPs). Each has pros and cons and is best suited for particular applications.

SILICONE SEALANTS

Pros

Silicone sealants offer excellent flexibility and durability, are resistant to UV rays, weather, and temperature extremes, and have a long lifespan of 20 years or more.

Cons

The disadvantage of silicone sealants is that they have poor adhesion to some surfaces, like wood and masonry, they're not paintable, and can be expensive.

Applications

Silicone sealants are best used for glass-to-metal, glass-to-glass, or glass-to-ceramic applications and exterior windows where flexibility and UV resistance are needed.

POLYURETHANE SEALANTS

Pros

Polyurethane sealants offer strong adhesion to a variety of materials, including wood, metal, and masonry, are paintable after curing, and provide good durability and flexibility.

Cons

The downside of polyurethane sealants is that they have a shorter lifespan compared to silicone, typically 5 to 10 years. They're also sensitive to UV exposure and may degrade over time



WeatherMaster sealant is an example of a hybrid sealant. It can be applied to windows, doors, exterior trim, siding, gutters, vents, and more. It's permanently flexible, can be applied in extreme weather conditions, and is available in more than 200 colors.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DYNAMIC FASTENER.

unless protected. In addition, they take longer to cure.

Applications

Polyurethane sealants are recommended for wood and masonry windows and for applications requiring high strength and adhesion.

ACRYLIC LATEX CAULK

Pros

Acrylic latex caulk is paintable and easy to apply, is cost effective, and is low VOC and easy to clean up with water.

Cons

Acrylic latex caulks have a downside in that they're less flexible and can crack over time, they're not as durable in extreme weather conditions, and provide poor adhesion to non-porous surfaces like glass.

Applications

Acrylic latex caulk is best for interior window trims and frames and where painting is required.

BUTYL RUBBER SEALANTS

Pros

Buty rubber sealants offer excellent adhesion to various materials, are highly water-resistant, and remain flexible in extreme temperatures.

Cons

The disadvantage of butyl rubber sealants is that they're stringy

when applied, which can make them messy. In addition, they aren't paintable, and can shrink over time.

Applications

Butyl rubber sealants are best suited for skylights and roofing windows.

HYBRID SEALANTS (SILANE-MODIFIED POLYMERS OR SMPs)

Pros

Hybrid sealants combine the best properties of silicone and polyurethane and are made with silane-modified polymers, also known as SMPs. They provide strong adhesion and UV resistance and are paintable and low VOC.

Cons

The disadvantage of hybrid sealants is that they are more expensive than traditional sealants and have limited availability in some markets.

Applications

Hybrid sealants are best for high-performance exterior window sealing and applications requiring durability and paintability.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Preparation

Window sealant application — especially exterior application — is more sensitive to environmental factors than many other construction tasks. Surfaces to be sealed need to be clean, dry, and free from dust or grease for proper adhesion. This can take careful planning and coordination to ensure that materials kept on site are properly stored and protected from the elements and that sealing is done when the temperatures and humidity are in the proper range. Before sealing takes place, surfaces should be inspected and cleaned if necessary to ensure proper bonding. The time spent properly prepping can save considerable time and expense in preventing callbacks.

Color Options

Silicone, polyurethane, acrylic, and butyl sealants are available in only a limited number of basic colors. Hybrid sealants, however, have many more color options allowing for better aesthetics.

Application

Some sealants need a primer for proper adhesion to certain substrates. Joint depth should also be considered. Proper joint width-to-depth ratio is generally 2:1, which allows for optimal movement. For deep gaps, backer rods help control sealant depth and allow for adequate movement.

Applying during hot weather may make the sealant runny, or during cold weather may make it stiff and difficult to extrude. Either of these situations may make application ineffective. In ad-

dition, applying too little or too much sealant can cause flaws in the bead, and improper tooling of the bead can leave air pockets or gaps. Omitting backer rods to fill in deep joints can require too much sealant, which can result in reduced flexibility.

Curing

Some sealants require specific curing conditions. Applying a long-curing sealant during hot temperatures may make moisture escape by bubbling up through sealant, causing holes. Extreme temperatures and high humidity can cause longer cure times, which can reduce bonding. Dirt or dust in the air can collect on a wet bead before it skins over, so it's essential to ensure that the air is free of contaminants until skin-over takes place.

CONCLUSION

Sealing windows is an important task that needs proper preparation and execution to ensure the job is done correctly. This includes careful selection of the sealant for the specific application and that it's applied under the right conditions to meet code requirements and to ensure maximum performance and lifespan of the windows. **RB**



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BY JACOB PRATER

Proper Fertilizer Storage

Safeguarding Fertilizer Quality, Effectiveness, and Security

Fertilizer is a crucial component of many crop and livestock operations since soil fertility affects crop growth and yield in a greater way than any input other than water. As such, there is often a need to be able to store fertilizer on a farm. Whether your client needs to store synthetic fertilizers, manure, or compost, there is usually a need for some type of structure for storage, either short-term or long-term.

REASONS FOR LONG-TERM STORAGE

The fertilizer storage needs of any operation are likely to vary. If your client is close to railway and a grain elevator or agricultural cooperative, there might not be a need to store a lot of fertilizer, as it can be picked up or delivered easily on an as-needed basis. If your client's operation is farther away or the operation is larger, however, there is likely a practical benefit in being able to store fertilizer in quantity until needed.

In addition, recent supply chain disruptions and market uncertainties (COVID, Ukraine conflict, and tariff increases) might lead some to have crucial inputs on hand in case of supply limitations and/or rapid price increases. Because there are good reasons to store fertilizer on site, there are some best practices for storage. As with anything being stored, there are some key factors to consider. In this case, it's critical to maintain fertilizer quality, avoid environmental impacts (spills), and have ready access for use.

KEEP FERTILIZER DRY, COOL, AND OUT OF THE SUN

Maintaining the quality of stored fertilizer comes down to some simple guidelines: keep it dry, keep it cool, and keep it out of the sun. The impact of each of these factors depends on what's stored and for how long. The shorter the storage, the less they matter, and the longer the storage, the more all three matter.

Because most operations aren't likely to store fertilizer for more than a year (and usually for much less than that), keeping it dry



A tension-fabric storage building for fertilizer. PHOTO COURTESY OF LEGACY BUILDING SOLUTIONS

and shaded may be sufficient, but don't discount the value of keeping the temperature as consistent as possible. With that said, the simplest storage for short duration is a pile at the edge of a field where the material can be quickly loaded and spread. This method, while simple, doesn't work for everything and is likely limited to fertilizers such as lime, gypsum, manure, and compost, and only for short duration (a week or so).

The major cause of fertilizer degradation and loss of nutrients is moisture. Most dry fertilizers are hygroscopic and will readily absorb moisture from the air. Temperature changes — where dry fertilizer ends up cooler than the air coming in — will exacerbate this situation. (Think dew forming on the fertilizer). With enough added moisture, dry fertilizers will clump, leading to poor spreading, and they can even dissolve and make a briny liquid that's tough to contain and may be highly corrosive. In either case, a producer is left with a product that's less effective than desired.

For these reasons, it's critical that dry fertilizer is covered. While covering fertilizer with tarps can be a short-term solution, a better strategy might be storing it in a fabric-on-steel building or in a dedicated post-frame building. In either case, a concrete floor is critical, along with low walls to create bunks to separate

materials and allow higher stacking of materials instead of just open piles. Access to these bunks from both sides may be desirable, with an alternative of having more bunks for the same materials. Either way works well to allow a producer to have a first-in, first-out approach for dry fertilizers. This will help avoid loss of quality of the oldest material and make sure that it all gets used.

The approach with storing dry manures and composts is similar, although the degree to which manure or compost needs to be sheltered from the elements is lessened, as these materials are spread with equipment that's designed for that purpose. Manures and composts aren't hygroscopic, and clumping won't be a problem. However, it's still good practice to keep dry manures and composts dry, as they're bulky materials and are much heavier and harder to transport when damp. Additionally, keeping them dry reduces runoff.

For some specialty fertilizers, photodegradation can be an issue. While the large-scale use of coated, controlled-release fertilizers for field crops is limited, some clients may operate orchards, greenhouses, or grow high-value crops where the use of these fertilizers is more common. When storing these coated fertilizers, it's critical to keep them out of the sun, as UV light degrades the coatings and will make these fertilizers less effective because they'll lose their slow-release coating. Additionally, if constructing fertilizer storage for a golf course, lawn care service, or other turfgrass operation such as a sod farm, keeping the sun off the storage area will also be critical, as turf grass management often uses controlled-release fertilizers.

STORING PACKAGED FERTILIZERS

When storing packaged fertilizers rather than bulk fertilizers, there are some guidelines for storage. For container fertilizers (bags, totes, or other bulk containers), it's prudent to keep them in their original labeled containers and to use secondary containers to contain any spills. It's a good idea to use pallets or shelving to keep fertilizer off the ground to allow quick and efficient inspection of the containers. It's far easier to spot leaks and spills when the containers are on pallets or shelves and will also help keep the materials out of any puddles on the ground or floor. Plus, they're easier to move if they're on pallets.

FERTILIZER SECURITY

A final note concerns fertilizer security. Fertilizer is an expensive material, which is an incentive for theft. In addition, some fertilizers have been used for nefarious purposes. Unfortunately, there have been high-profile cases, such as the tragic 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, in which the bomber used a Ryder truck packed with ammonium nitrate to kill 168 people, including 19 children.

For these reasons, federal and state regulations have been established to help safeguard fertilizers from both accidental explosion and deliberate use as a weapon. At the federal level, 29

Fertilizer Storage with Tension Fabric Buildings

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Corrosion can devastate fertilizer storage and distribution structures if they aren't built to protect themselves against the caustic nature of the material they are housing. Tension fabric buildings are a popular facility option, since polyvinyl chloride (PVC) fabric cladding is naturally resistant to corrosive elements.

Because the framing structure is still made of metal, leading fabric building manufacturers have turned to solid I-beam framing to replace hollow-tube truss frames. This eliminates the chance of rust originating inside the frame, helping to greatly extend the longevity of a structure.

Hot-dip galvanizing is a common protective measure for I-beams and other steel members; however, because galvanizing's intention is simply to slow down corrosion, and not prevent it, some suppliers instead use an epoxy coating method. With this approach, the structural beams are sandblasted, then painted with zinc, and finally are coated by epoxy layers — all of which combine to create a true barrier between corrosive fertilizer dust and the building's steel frame.

CFR 1910.109 regulates storage of explosive materials, including ammonium nitrate. It requires fire protection, separation from combustible materials, and ventilation.

Other agencies can be involved, under the EPA's EPCRA (Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act), the Clean Water Act, which is designed to prevent runoff and spills, and CFATS (Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards), which falls under the jurisdiction of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). With the quantity of ammonium nitrate that some farms use, they can exceed the threshold amounts that can require federal reporting under CFATS.

Farmers may need a state fertilizer applicator license and may need to follow state laws for hazardous material reporting, locked storage, and signage, and have a plan in place with the local fire department and emergency planner.

Part of the planning for fertilizer storage requires a thorough understanding of the laws and guidelines that regulate it. More information is available from The Fertilizer Institute website (tfi.org) in its Safety & Security section and on the Responsible Ag website (responsibleag.org).

CONCLUSION

By listening to what types of fertilizers your client intends to store, as well as how much and for how long, you can help them meet their needs with an efficient and effective building or structure for their needs. **RB**

Jacob Prater is a soil scientist and associate professor in Wisconsin. His passion is natural resource management along with the wise and effective use of those resources to improve human life.

Your Team, Your Company, Your Town

Take a Page from MWI's Playbook

Do your employees feel appreciated? Do they feel a sense of community at work? Is there a sense of connection to the geographical community in which your business operates? Giving back to these interrelated communities goes a great way toward building employee morale and creating and enhancing a positive image of your business in the larger communities.

While all of these connections have always helped businesses to thrive, they are even more important today. If you are looking for young people to come and work for you, then you are trying to capture the attention of Millennials and Gen Z. While pay is still important to all workers, these groups tend to embrace the ideals of social consciousness to a greater degree than earlier generations have. Showing younger people that you care about your employees, your community, and the larger world is important.

IN THE COMMUNITY

MWI Components, manufacturer of doors, horse stalls, ridge ventilation, cupolas, and more, cares about giving back. One of the ways they have turned that care into something tangible is by partnering with the Chamber of Commerce to help the community. The group works to create jobs, pool resources, and lend a helping hand to companies with the events they sponsor. The group also works as a resource hub for business loans, and they are involved in pulling together more childcare centers for working parents. Last year, there was flooding in the area and the Chamber of Commerce went to the aid of the people involved, finding housing and resources



MWI's Manufacturing Day Tour Team.

for them.

The Chamber has helped put on programs for the Young Professionals group so that they can see what MWI actually does. Young people will see that many of the opportunities in manufacturing can be very fulfilling, which aids in employee recruitment. It also helps the community understand their business since most of

national organization helps companies from all industries to create events and social media posts to share their support of Manufacturing Day. Last Year, the company held a couple plant tours and presentations with community leaders for their Manufacturing Day Event. They are still working out the plans and possibilities for this year's Manufacturing Day.



MWI donates to the police department annually.

their product is shipped out of the area.

The company supports the Manufacturing Day initiative, which aims to engage the next generations in all things manufacturing across numerous fields. This

Employees are encouraged to participate in other community events such as the Keep Iowa Beautiful Campaign. A group went out to do a litter cleanup, improving the community and working together for a good cause.

The local annual town fair is called Flag Fest, as it coincides with Flag Day. Jasmine Williams, employee of MWI Corporation and coordinator of the committee in charge of employee involvement, partners with Fest coordinators,

and employees are encouraged to volunteer. They gather employees, family, and friends to participate in the parade, the 5K, and other activities.

"Not only do events like this boost mo-



MWI collaborated with other agencies to build and donate this addition to the Clay County Fairgrounds.

rale because participants feel they are doing something for the community, they also have fun doing it!" said Williams. Further, Williams said many of the company's people are involved in the community and many sit on local committees and boards.

At the end of the year, the company makes donations to the police department, firefighters, sheriff's office, EMTs, and first responders. These entities use the funds for new gear or whatever they may need. There is one notable exception: the police department.

The Spencer Police Department uses its funds to implement a "Shop with a Cop" program. This is an event where policemen are paired with children to shop for holiday gifts. This brings joy to the children and helps the police bond with the community.

INSIDE THE BUSINESS

Creating a sense of community in a business naturally has a lot to do with respect and fairness, which management has a large impact on. MWI's culture is intentional; it is focused on the idea that every employee is a professional and should be respectful of each other and everyone

with whom they come into contact.

Beyond that, there are definitely other things they do to enhance the team feeling. Having specific people, teams, or other groups lead these efforts is very helpful.



Santa delivers treats both healthy and sweet!

Although you may have real intentions to create team events for employees, everyday business can get in the way and then those good intentions aren't realized. One way to counteract this problem is to designate a team to take on the task of finding and implementing programs and events.

"We formed a Wellness committee because we think wellness is important for our employees," Williams said. "The committee has organized various wellness ini-



MWI employees volunteer to "Keep Iowa Beautiful!"

tiatives including the 75 Hard Challenge, which includes 75 straight days of workouts along with reading and other healthy habits," she added.

The Wellness Committee includes seven people from a variety of departments across the company, including the CEO.

This group's role has evolved from simply reviewing and implementing wellness programs to deciding on a variety of activities and events for employees based on boosting morale and encouraging people to bond socially, such as lunches throughout the year, a disk golf tournament, and a picnic event at the Nature Center in town.

Santa makes an appearance in December to deliver clementines to employees at MWI. Why clementines? They're a healthy alternative to all the sweet treats during the holidays and employees appreciate

it. The company hosts an annual Chili Cook Off in October and they will present a BBQ Smoke Off Competition for employees during the 4th of July week.

"Being involved is important," Williams said. "I encourage every manufacturer to engage your employees and to get involved with your community, too. The results are noticeable; these kinds of involvement can enhance employees' pride, sense of belonging, and feeling of fulfillment." **RB**

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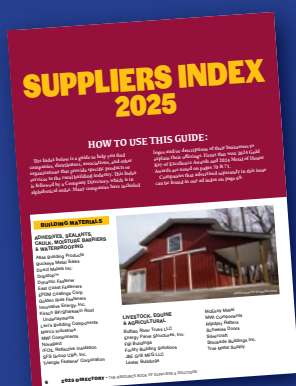
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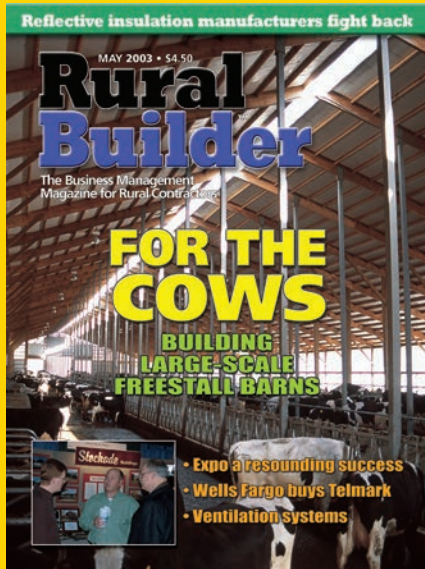
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CODE ISSUES

Alternate Unbalanced Snow Load Approved for Use in Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Department of Commerce, Safety & Buildings Division recently reviewed and approved an alternate standard for analyzing unbalanced snow loads on hip and gable roof buildings, in response to a request made by the Wisconsin Frame Builders Association.

The alternate standard is called "1995 National Building Code of Canada for Unbalanced Roof Snow Load — Hip and Gable Roofs," and it reduces the effective snow load required by the International Building Code, which became mandatory for commercial buildings in the state on July 1, 2002. Wisconsin's previous building code had a lesser requirement for the amount of unbalanced snow load to be considered in design. After learning and applying the IBC provisions for unbalanced snow loads, based upon ASCE 7-98, section 7.6, WFBA engineers soon noticed that vertical snow load reactions at walls and columns were coming out 25 to 85 percent higher than they were for the same building designed under Wisconsin's former code.

The request to the state for an alternative standard was drafted by Leo Shirek, P.E., of Wick Buildings on behalf of the engineer members of the WFBA. Shirek noted that the WFBA membership has historically been responsible for the design and construction of more than 1,500 commercial buildings per year with not one record of a building failure or problem due to snow loads. The

dramatic increase in snow load requirements imposed by the IBC could not be supported by case history in Wisconsin. The cost impact to each commercial building, estimated from 3 to 20 percent, depending on building geometry and size, did not seem to add value to building owners who must bear the additional costs.

The state's four-page evaluation contains the information required by the building designer to determine the alternate unbalanced snow load. Unlike the IBC/ASCE provisions, there is not a thermal factor involved and the building width or length are not involved in the analysis.

According to the alternate standard, the unbalanced snow load analysis is not required for roof slopes less than 15 degrees (3.1:12). On roofs with slopes greater than 15 degrees, the unbalanced snow load is always zero on one side of the ridge while the snow load on the opposite side varies from 100 to 125 percent of the Canadian code's sloped roof snow load; note that the Canadian code's sloped roof snow load is not used in Wisconsin building design except as an intermediate value for determining the unbalanced snow load.

Limitations and conditions on using the alternate standard are also contained within the evaluation and should be read in their entirety before being utilized by the building designer of record.

The balanced snow load will con-

tinue to be governed by the IBC Section 1608.4, which is based upon ASCE 7 Section 7.4. The National Building Code of Canada was viewed as a favorable alternate standard for the unbalanced snow load provision of IBC 1608.6, ASCE 7 7.6, since the Canadian code is an actively maintained working standard in effect throughout an area of the world that has a higher snow load potential on its buildings than Wisconsin.

WFBA engineers met twice during 2002 to discuss structural design issues and other aspects of the IBC that have influenced the post-frame industry in Wisconsin, such as building area limitations, fire barriers, and automatic sprinkler requirements. The state is currently reviewing an additional alternate standard submitted by the WFBA which would allow post-frame building designers to utilize foundation design pressures similar to those found in ANSI/ASAE EP486.1 "Shallow Post Foundation Design" as an alternate to the soil foundation pressure values found in IBC Table 1804.2.

WFBA members who attended one or more of the engineering meetings are: David Bonhoff, P.E. University of Wisconsin-Madison, Kevin Conroy, S.E., P.E., Lester Building Systems; Gavin Dorsch, Dorsch Designs, LLC; Al Geisthardt, Plyco Corp.; Aaron Halberg P.E. Halberg Engineering; David Kamel, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Matt Lawinger, Cleary Building Corp.; Mike McCormick, Morton Buildings; John Rave, P.E., 4th Dimension Design, Inc.; Tom Schwarz, M.P.B. Builders, Inc.; Leo Shirek, P.E., Wick Buildings; Roger Solberg, Cleary Building Corp.; Eugene Thiede, Hartje Lumber, Inc.; Roger Thiel, P.E., Walters Buildings; Richard Zimmerman, P.E., Cleary Building Corp. **RB**



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Located in Tennessee, this impressive 41'x50'x12' post-frame hobby shop exemplifies the marriage of form and function, thanks to premium materials and expert craftsmanship. The building features True Metal Supply's Textured Black Tuff-Rib metal roofing paired with Textured Burnished Slate Tuff-Rib siding, creating a striking contrast while ensuring long-lasting durability.

Beyond its robust metal envelope, the shop boasts Palram Americas' Solar Gray sidelights for natural illumination, Sherwin Williams Coil Coatings' WeatherXL® Coil Coatings for outstanding color retention, and secure structural elements like Parallel Chord Steel Trusses supplied by True Metal Supply.

Functional additions, including Janus roll-up doors and Plyco walk doors, enhance accessibility, while Levi's Building Components, Triangle Fastener, and Atlas Bolt and Screw Company's Wood Ultimate® fasteners provide reliable structural connections. From its wainscoting accent to its energy-efficient design, this hobby shop stands as a testament to high-quality materials and a commitment to excellence. It's more than just a building — it's a reflection of a vision brought to life with precision and style. **RB**





THE DETAILS:

Location: Tennessee

Size: 41'x50'x12'

Foundation: Concrete pad

Roof Panels: True Metal Supply
Textured Black Tuff-Rib, through-fastened metal panels

Wall Panels: True Metal Supply
Textured Burnished Slate Tuff-Rib, through-fastened metal panels

Trusses: True Metal Supply
parallel chord steel trusses

Sidelights: Palram Americas'
Solar Gray panels

Coil Coatings: Sherwin Williams
WeatherXL® Coil Coating

Post Columns: Old South Wood
Preserving #1 Southern Yellow Pine,
Structural #1 6"x6"

Fasteners:
Levi's Building Components
FrameGrip structural framing screws
Atlas Bolt and Screw Company Wood
Ultimate® fasteners
Triangle Fastener Sturdi-Wall Drillset
Anchors Model SW66

Rollup Doors: Janus Model 950

Walk Doors: Plyco Series 99E

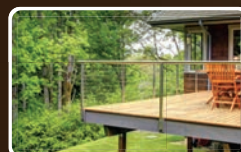
Solar Panel Clamps: S-5! clamps



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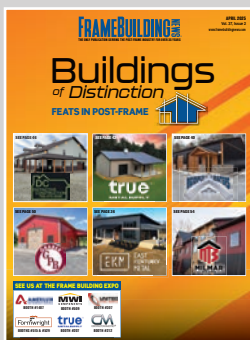
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BY GARY REICHERT, PUBLISHER

U.S. Ag and Ag Construction Market Showing Optimism

In the CSI columns, we rely heavily on the results from our proprietary surveys. This provides current information and data specific to our subscribers and the businesses we interact with. It is also valuable to aggregate information from other resources. This allows us to corroborate the data we generate and provide context to the information we generate.

When looking at broader industry data, it is critical to remember that most data looks at wider categories within the industry and may not be granular enough to be applied directly to a specific niche. That said, here are some nuggets from other data sources with attributions to allow you to return to them in the future.

The health and market sentiment for agriculture has an obvious relationship to the types of construction covered in Rural Builder magazine. Purdue University is a great source of agricultural industry information and market sentiment. It issues a monthly Ag Economy Barometer and conducts an annual Producer Survey.

The May Barometer result (released June 3, 2025) is 158. This is the highest since May 2021 and up 10 points since April. Find the Ag Economy Barometer on the Bloomberg Terminal: AGEGBARO, AGECCURC and AGECFTE.

The Purdue University/CME Group Ag Economy Barometer is a nationwide measure of the health of the U.S. agricultural economy. The table showing the historical Barometer data from May 2016 shows a marked increase over the last few months, almost doubling since December 2024.

Purdue University's annual Producer Survey also demonstrates increased optimism in agriculture. 32% of respondents believe their farm operation will be better off in a year vs. 21% thinking it will be worse. 53% think the next five years for U.S. agriculture will be "Good Times," while only 20% predict "Bad Times." Both of these represent an increase in positive sentiment over the previous few years.

Purdue University also publishes a Farm Capital Investment Index. This index for May 2025 was at 55, also a significant increase from December 2024. April was 61, which was the highest since May 2021.

According to the data from Purdue University, the outlook for agriculture and ag construction appears significantly more positive than it has for four years. More information and the charts provided can be found at <https://ag.purdue.edu/commercialag/ageconomybarometer/charts>. **RB**

