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FEBRUARY 2026
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BY GARY REICHERT

Building Momentum in 2026

Welcome to the February 2026 issue of *Rural Builder* magazine. It is an exciting time for Shield Wall Media. *Rural Builder* Magazine turns 60 this year, *Metal Roofing Magazine* turns 25 this year. Max Builds a Pole Barn (our second children's book in the Max Builds Series) is being printed. And the 2026 NFBA Show in Oklahoma City is happening.

Another major item is that *Rural Builder* has a new editor, and Shield Wall Media has a new Director of Sales.

I want to introduce Kathleen Riley. She brings a wealth of experience to the editor role in both editorial and agricultural realms. We have been orienting *Rural Builder* toward agricultural construction, and she is perfect for this task.

We will all be at the NFBA Show in February and look forward to seeing you. Have a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2026.

— Gary Reichert, Publisher



EDITOR'S NOTE

BY KATHLEEN RILEY

Mud on My Boots

It didn't come to *Rural Builder* through a glass office door. I went through a gate that sticks in winter and swings too fast in summer. If you've ever tried to carry a notebook, a phone, a camera, and bad coffee while dodging livestock with opinions or a dog with ambition, we already speak the same language.

I'm Kathleen Riley, your new editor.

My background lies where agriculture, animals, and buildings intersect. I've spent decades around barns, arenas, kennels, and farmyards, learning that good construction isn't about theory—it's about whether the roof holds, the doors



open in bad weather, and the building does its job without complaint.

I've edited multiple dog and equine publications, and I'm an award-winning photographer, artist, and writer, trained to notice the details that matter: structure, function, and the quiet strength of things built right. I also bring a solid background in sales and marketing, translating technical expertise into clear, honest messaging that respects both builders and budgets.

My goal is simple: make *Rural Builder* practical, relevant, and grounded in real-world experience. No fluff. No hype. Just solid information for the people who build rural America.

I welcome your ideas, insights, and hard-earned lessons. This magazine works best as a conversation—straightforward, practical, and built with both boots on the ground.

— Kathleen Riley,
Editor, *Rural Builder*





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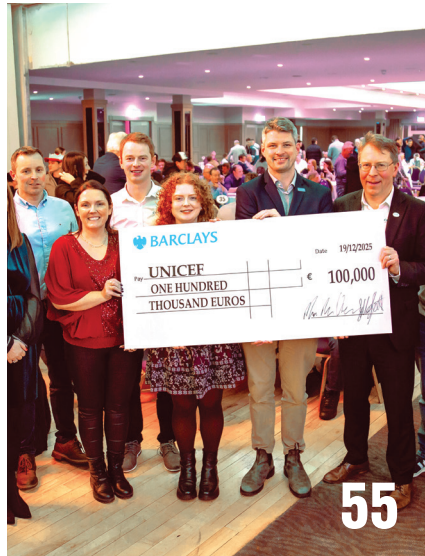
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Gary Reichert,
Publisher, Shield Wall Media



Trade School + mikeroweWORKS Foundation Scholarship

“The number of opportunities can be overwhelming.”

BY LINDA SCHMID

Maryssa Bayless grew up making mud pies, running around outside, and riding horses. She was a tomboy who was interested in tactile and creative activities. As a kid she thought she would grow up to be a chef or a cosmetologist, something hands-on. Then as a senior in high school, she faced the reality that whatever route she took the financing was on her and she began to explore all of her options.

“I fell into the trap of thinking that the next step had to be college if I wanted a career that pays,” Bayless said.

She began classes at the College of the Ozarks in Branson, Missouri, declaring herself a communication arts student. Within two years, however, she dropped out realizing that she wasn’t preparing for a career that she wanted.

“The last thing I wanted to do was sit indoors at a desk from 8 to 5 every day all dressed up, so business classes were out too,” Bayless said. “I wanted hard work that would tire me out; I craved manual labor and the feeling of satisfaction that comes from working hard,” she added.

PURSUING A NEW PLAN

Knowing she had to come up with a plan if she didn’t want to end up living in her mom’s basement, she applied to WSU Tech. It seemed like a good idea for many reasons: it would be hands-on, she would learn a practical skill that she would have forever, it was more affordable, and she would be guaranteed work when she completed her training.

Bayless’s mom suggested she apply for the mikeroweWORKS Scholarship, so she did. The application steps for the mikeroweWORKS Scholarship were extensive yet straightforward. She realized that all of the steps she was required to take during the



application process helped her to know that she really wanted to go down the path she was embarking upon.

Applicants for the scholarship are further required to sign the S.W.E.A.T. (Skill & Work Ethic Aren’t Taboo) Pledge which is filled with statements meant to encourage workers to work hard, take responsibility for themselves and their work, and in short espouse a positive attitude while doing everything in their power to succeed. Finally, they are asked to compose a thirteenth statement they would add to the other twelve that make up the pledge. Bayless’s statement expressed the idea that able-bodied people should serve the less fortunate. As the child of a single mom, she knew how much a helping hand can mean.



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 2,600 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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The scholarship she received did a lot for Bayless, paying her entire way through her Associate degree program in Construction Science/Carpentry.

Her program focused on carpentry, and it included sheet rock, wood framing, metal framing, insulation and more. The program included a week of class time, then three weeks on the jobsite learning hands-on through her apprenticeship, then back to class for a week followed by another three weeks in the field, and so on. In this way Bayless was able to implement the knowledge she gained in class while working in the field and making money.

A CAREER IN CARPENTRY

After she graduated, Bayless began working for local builders, however she began to fear that her standards were being compromised. She feels strongly about doing quality work, and she sometimes felt pressured to cut corners in order to adhere to a timeline.

Now that she works freelance, Bayless said that she continues to work on efficiency, but now she can do it without putting her work standard at risk. She also does a great scope of work including remodeling, trim, sheetrock, custom shelving, and painting.

Bayless loves being her own boss and she doesn't have the kind of overhead she would have if she owned her own business, so she is enjoying the freedom of freelancing, choosing which jobs she takes on and having the ability to take time off when she wants to.

"Right now I am focusing on the quality of my work while enjoying a little freedom, but in five to ten years I would like to have my own business," Bayless said. "Eventually I may go for a contractor's license, but I want to work in the field for a while first. I

want to earn the respect of the tradesmen I will be working with, so I want to have a lot of hands-on experience before I become a general contractor."

While working in the field, she is networking, making the contacts that will help her with her future plans.

"I know some really great, experienced contractors whose wisdom I can tap into when I need counsel," Bayless said.

FITTING INTO THE INDUSTRY

As a woman, Bayless said she definitely finds herself to be in the minority on jobsites, but she hasn't really had any problems with that.

"If someone makes a comment, you dish it back," she said. "However, my work speaks for itself. If your male co-workers see that you are doing quality work, you gain their respect."

With young men, there tends to be competitiveness Bayless said. "Usually it's healthy competition which can help to make you a better carpenter."

Middle aged men tend to be the bosses, and Bayless has only had positive experiences with them. Her mentor and boss, Paul took her in as an apprentice and taught her everything she knows. He was an incredible influence on her, helping her become the kind of carpenter she is today.

"He was very respectful, knowledgeable, and firm, and I am indebted to him for all his wisdom," she said.

Older men are not always as open to a young woman doing the work, but Bayless said she greatly respects them anyway because they know what to do and how to do it well.

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ADVICE FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

“Don’t go to college just because people say you should,” Bayless said. “So many college graduates have accumulated debt, and they can only find jobs with entry level wages – and sometimes they can’t even find a job. Meanwhile I went to work for a couple of years and saved money.

“Many people are successful without a college degree,” Bayless said. “If you are unsure of your career path, try out trade school. Even if it ends up not being your thing, you will learn a useful skill. Apply for a mikeroweWORKS scholarship too; it opens up so many opportunities.”

Bayless points out that there are many other trades besides carpentry to choose from, and even if you went to tech school and got a construction science degree, you could take it in several directions, such as becoming an estimator or a cost analysis coordinator.

HELPING PEOPLE

Circling back to the S.W.E.A.T. pledge Bayless took, she has begun giving a helping hand to people in her community who could use it. Mounting a TV for a lady who couldn’t do it her-

self, patching walls, offering discounts on jobs...she has found small ways to help people. She believes her abilities are God-given and as her career grows, so will her opportunities to help others.

P.S. A BUSINESS OF HER OWN

Since the interview and the first draft of this article, Bayless’ career has taken a big step forward: she started her own company in Wichita, Kansas, Steadfast Home Improvements LLC! This decision was based on her recognition of an important truth.

“I feel most fulfilled and joyful when I am doing the work that I love,” Bayless said. “I was letting perfect be the enemy of good, and I decided it was time to go for it!”

The company offers residential remodeling, painting, custom shelves, laying floors, and handyman tasks. Bayless is focused on integrity and providing quality work.

“I believe that I am working for the Lord,” she said, “and therefore the work that I do needs to be top notch.” **RB**



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Church Construction: A Stable Market Segment for Rural Builders

Rural churches remain one of the most consistent and overlooked construction markets in rural America. More than worship spaces, these facilities function as community infrastructure—supporting civic meetings, food programs, youth activities, emergency response, and social services.

For builders specializing in post-frame, metal, and hybrid construction systems, church projects align closely with existing skill sets while offering long-term, relationship-driven opportunities.

Why Churches Matter to Rural Markets

In many rural communities, churches are the only large-capacity public-use buildings available. As a result, their facilities must accommodate multiple functions, often seven days a week, which creates demand for:

- Clear-span interiors for assembly use
- Flexible floor plans that adapt over time
- Durable building envelopes with low maintenance requirements
- Energy-efficient systems that reduce long-term operating costs

These requirements make post-frame and pre-engineered metal building systems a natural fit.

A Reliable Construction Segment

Unlike speculative construction, church projects are typically planned years in advance and funded through capital campaigns, grants, or phased development. This results in:

- Predictable project timelines
- Fewer scope changes once plans are approved
- Opportunities for phased expansions and repeat work

Builders who successfully complete an initial project are often retained for future additions or renovations.

Construction Systems That Deliver Value

Post-frame construction offers rural churches reduced foundation costs, faster build times, and large, open interiors ideal for worship and community use. Metal and hybrid systems add long-term durability, high wind and snow-load performance, and design flexibility for modern façades.

Operational Considerations

Church projects often involve multiple stakeholders rather than a single owner. Builders who emphasize clear communication, defined scopes, and realistic budgets are better positioned for success. Familiarity with assembly occupancy requirements, accessibility standards, and acoustics is also critical to keeping projects on schedule.

Community Visibility, Business Value

Church construction projects are obvious and frequently lead to referrals for municipal, nonprofit, and agricultural facilities. For rural builders, these projects strengthen local relationships while providing stable, purpose-driven work.

A Strategic Fit for Rural Builders

Churches continue to invest in facilities that serve both congregations and communities. For builders already serving rural markets, church construction represents a durable, repeatable segment—one that aligns with post-frame and metal building expertise and supports long-term business growth. **RB**



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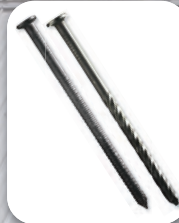
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BY JAMES CHARLES, E-IMPACT MARKETING

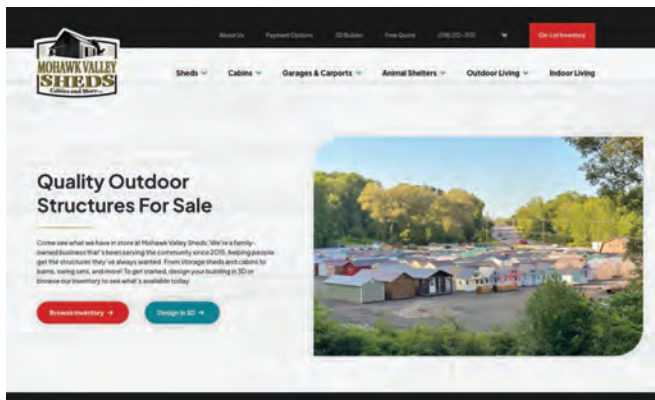
Top 11 Marketing Mistakes Builders Keep Making Online (And How To Fix Them)

Even great builders can struggle to translate their craftsmanship into a strong online presence. Yet in a world where your customers start their search online, your digital footprint is critical to your company's visibility. To help you show up with confidence, here are some of the most common online missteps builders make and how to fix them.

1 Undefined Products & Services

Honestly, you'd be surprised by how few companies have their products and services clearly defined on their site. Many businesses make the mistake of trying to do everything for everyone, which usually ends up with them not doing much for anyone.

It's not enough to just get people to your site. You want it to be clear the second someone lands on your site, what it is you do, where you do it, and how anyone interested can get a hold of you. To do that, you want to have a really clear idea of what your core product and service offerings are and then have a clear category



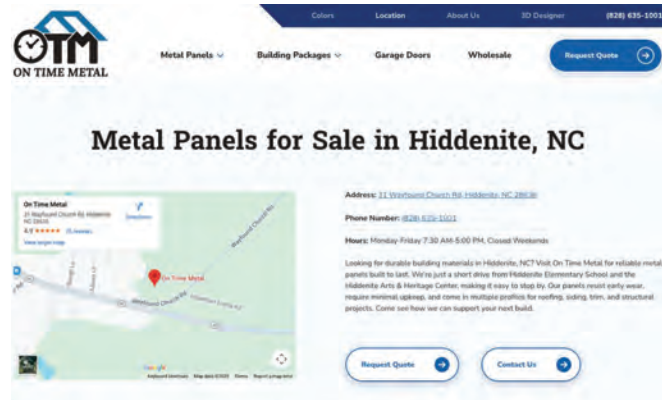
Example of clearly defined product categories on a website, courtesy of Mohawk Valley Sheds.

and subcategory page structure that lays those out.

A good example is a post-frame company. The "post-frame" category includes hay barns, garages, utility buildings, residential barndominiums, or sheds. If all of that gets lumped under a single "Post-Frame" page, potential customers (and search engines) have a less-clear understanding of what you actually build.

2 Lack of Localization

One of the most important things you can do for your website and your online visibility is to ensure that the area



On Time Metal shows how a well-structured location page can strengthen Local SEO and improve visibility.

you serve is defined and clear on your website. Too many companies have their address or service area in the footer, but no information about where they work in their header or near the top of the page.

Most builders serve a specific geographic area, so whether that's part of a state, a set of countries, or a few cities, it's important to narrow the focus of the website to exactly where you serve to target the most relevant customers. Local SEO is essential for service-based businesses because it helps you show up in the areas you actually serve. Make sure your service and location pages are clear, your business information is consistent across the web, and your Google Business Profile is fully updated.

3 Poor Photo Quality

People truly do buy with their eyes. So, photo quality is essential to your business. Having a lot of stock photography or having old or poor-quality photos doesn't instill a lot of confidence in your work.

Use clear photos of completed projects, plus a few in-progress shots to show your team at work. Start with smartphone images, then hire a photographer once you have projects worth showcasing, especially those you want to attract more of.

Once people are on your website, having high-quality photos will convince them that you are the business that they want.

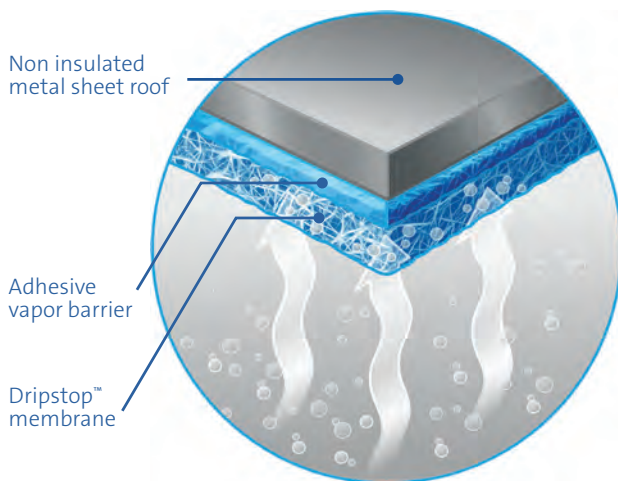
4 Unclear Calls to Action (CTAs)

Calls to Action (CTAs) should make it unmistakably clear what you want visitors to do. Use a bold primary but-

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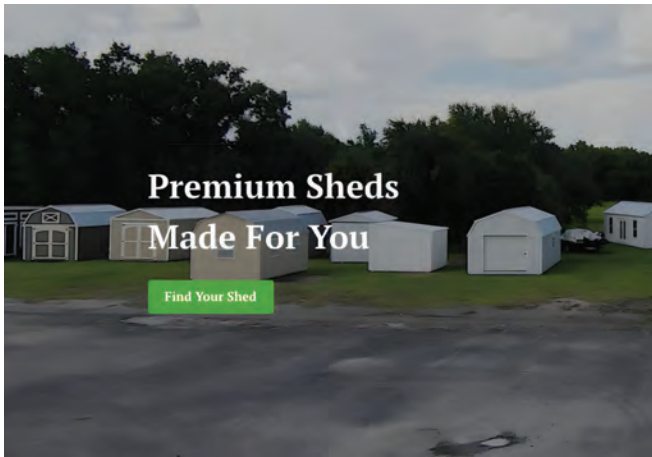
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South Country Sheds provides a great example of what a clear, effective CTA should look like.

ton; if most of your sales happen by phone, that might be “Call Us” or “Call Now.” Then include a secondary CTA, like “Contact Us,” that directs users to a form.

But be sure to really think through what action you want people to take and make once they’re on your website, and look at the way your site is set up; is it currently a no-brainer for them to take that?

I recommend that your single, primary CTA live at the top of your site in the header so that it’s visible and easily accessible on every page.

5 Underutilized “About Us” Pages

The “About Us” page on your website might not be on your radar; you might not even have one, but in my experience, “About Us” pages are very important to a business and its brand.



From A Shed To An Office Building In Lancaster

E-Impact Marketing’s About Us page, highlighting the company’s story and the people behind the work..

Your “About Us” page is your chance to put a face to your business. You don’t need to feature every employee, but you should include the owner, any office staff who interact with customers, and, ideally, your builders as well.

Not only does this humanize your company, but, particularly for builders, it lets people know who they’re trusting to build on their property.

6 No Reviews or Review Presence

You should be highlighting the reviews you get. Most often, they’re on Google. It’s not difficult to integrate your Google or your Facebook reviews into your website and have them display there, or you can put a link for people to go read all your reviews.

Third-party reviews are the best because people and search engines want to know that it’s people reviewing you positively in a space that you don’t control.

The best way to get more reviews for your company is to ask for them and to make leaving a review as easy as possible for anyone who can. The more friction you take out of the process for your customers, the better.

Incentivize your crews to ask for reviews. When they’re motivated, service improves, and reviews increase in both quality and quantity. Keep your team invested wherever you can.

7 Undefined Brand

You can think about your brand as a closet where people store all of their experiences or “touchpoints” with your company and advertising. If you have a clear brand, you’ve given people a clear, mental place to put all the different things that they’ve seen or heard about your brand.

One of the biggest mistakes companies make is inconsistent branding. For SEO, your business name, address, phone number, and website URL must appear exactly the same everywhere online. If one listing says “Bob and Sons Construction, LLC,” another says “Bob and Sons Construction,” and another reads “Bobs & Sons Construction,” search engines and customers won’t know they refer to the same company. The same applies to outdated addresses, phone numbers, or URLs. If anything has changed, update it everywhere your brand appears.

Beyond the basics, strong branding also communicates what your company stands for. If we return to the closet idea, then you have to understand what kind of closet your brand is. People don’t store their cleaning supplies in filing cabinets, and usually don’t store their important papers in wardrobes. As a brand, you should indicate who you are and what you stand for. Are you high-end? Modern and cutting-edge? Defining and shaping that perception is what elevates basic branding into something meaningful and memorable.



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8 Lack of Clear Pricing

Lack of clear pricing is a critical mistake for builders. Pricing is complex, and it can be hard to simplify or list if you're doing custom structures.

You likely already have a streamlined sales and quoting process, so consider bringing pieces of it onto your website. Even ballpark pricing helps filter out tire kickers and gives serious customers a clearer path to plan. Search engines also favor transparent, structured pricing, so the more clarity you can offer, the better.

You don't need to have super-detailed price sheets for every add-on, but including base model pricing, standard packages, or specific building sizes can be helpful. Don't just add pricing information as a PDF or an image; list it on your site in a way that search engines can read and understand it.

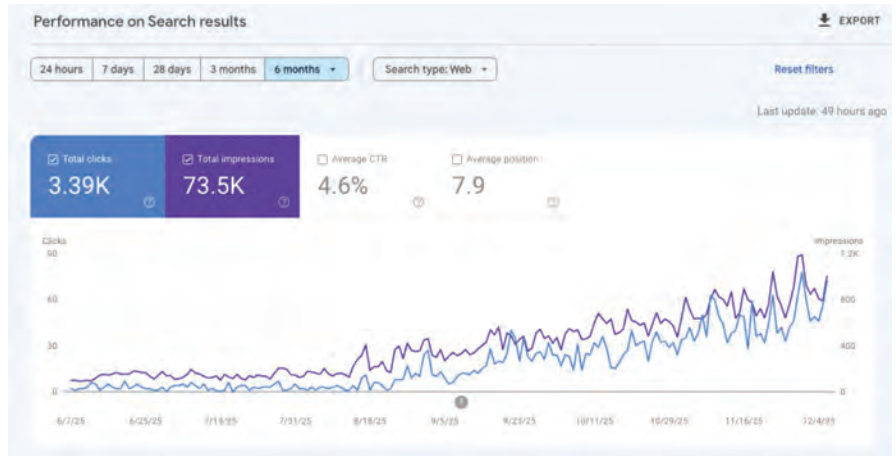
9 Not Using Website or Marketing Analytics Tools

One of the most important goals for myself and my team is that the work we do provides measurable results. It's impossible to know if any changes you are making online are working if you don't have some kind of tracking or analytics tool set up.

The most important metrics you want to keep track of are:

- Website traffic – how many people are visiting your site.
- Traffic sources – which channels (organic search, paid ads, social, etc.) are driving those visits.
- Conversions – your primary actions, such as form submissions.
- Interaction tracking – important engagement events like 3D configurator usage or clicks on major "Click to Call" buttons.

Start by identifying the main actions you want people to take on your website and how you'll know when those actions happen. With that in place,



Google Search Console data showing steady traffic growth

you can work backward to understand what's working now and what opportunities exist to improve or grow.

10 Outdated Socials and Blogs

Truthfully, a blog shouldn't be your top priority when building your online presence. Blogs can be valuable in the right situations, but simply copy-pasting generic AI-generated articles because "you're supposed to have a blog" won't do you any favors.

Social media is valuable when you share in-progress work, finished photos, or even pricing details. Consistent posting lets you integrate a live feed into your website, helping you reach people on social platforms while adding fresh content and social proof to your site.

11 Broken Links and Technical Errors

Of course, there's no amount of review integration, redefining of brand, or brand new design work you can do that will increase your business's online presence if your site simply doesn't work.

At a very basic level, you need your site to load quickly and be found by search engines.

You should also keep an eye on broken links. You need to make sure that all the essential pages on your site are up and running and are working as designed.

There are tools that you can use to crawl your site to help find and avoid issues like these.

First Steps for Your Business:

These mistakes can feel overwhelming, so start simple. Get your website live with a clear call to action. Then make sure it explains what you do, where you work, and how to contact you. From there, focus on attracting the right traffic, showcasing credibility, and giving visitors enough information to feel confident choosing you. Keep measuring results and adjusting as you grow.

All of these fixes are things you can address yourself. As you grow, you might need to outsource your online work so that you can stay focused on building and operating your core business.

Having a strong online presence is more important than ever, especially as younger, internet-first generations begin searching for construction and home services. If people can't find you online, you risk becoming invisible. A solid website won't replace word of mouth, but it will amplify it and help you reach customers who may have never found you otherwise.

Start with the fundamentals, build steadily, and treat your online presence the same way you approach your projects: with clarity and craftsmanship! **RB**

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BY RURAL BUILDER STAFF

Agricultural Accelerated Depreciation Under the OBBBA:

What Rural Builders and Their Clients Need to Know About Buildings, Fixtures, and Farm Equipment

As a rural builder or ag-focused contractor, tax policy isn't some abstract thing that only accountants worry about. When depreciation rules change, you hear about it almost immediately—from customers asking questions, to design tweaks mid-project, to last-minute decisions on what gets installed before year-end.

That's precisely why the proposed One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) has caught the attention of agricultural producers and the builders who serve them. Accelerated depreciation is back in the conversation, especially when it comes to farm buildings and the equipment and fixtures that are built into post-frame and metal structures.

The tricky part? The line between a “building,” a “permanently attached fixture,” and “equipment” isn't always as clear as it should be. And while the IRS and tax advisors will always have the final say, builders who understand the basics are in a much better position to help clients plan smartly from the start—and avoid uncomfortable surprises once the building is up and the invoices are paid.

Knowing how these pieces generally fit together doesn't make you a tax expert—but it does make you a better partner to your customer.

ACCELERATED DEPRECIATION: A REFRESHER FOR AGRICULTURAL CONSTRUCTION

Accelerated depreciation allows qualifying businesses to recover the cost of capital investments faster than under a standard straight-line depreciation schedule. In agriculture, this typically intersects with:

- MACRS (Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System)
- Bonus depreciation (where applicable)
- Section 179 expensing, subject to annual limits and eligibility rules

Historically, agricultural producers have been able to depreciate many types of **equipment and certain building components** over shortened recovery periods—provided the assets meet specific criteria related to use, attachment, and function.

The OBBBA, as proposed, reinforces congressional intent to encourage capital investment in domestic production, including



agriculture. That makes the classification of building components more important than ever.

THE BIG QUESTION: WHAT COUNTS AS THE BUILDING—AND WHAT DOESN'T?

For depreciation purposes, the IRS generally distinguishes between:

1. The building structure itself
2. Structural components
3. Tangible personal property
4. Land improvements

Accelerated depreciation is typically more favorable for items classified as **tangible personal property** or qualifying land improvements than for the building shell.

For rural builders, this distinction often comes down to **fixtures and permanently attached components**.

FIXTURES PERMANENTLY ATTACHED TO AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS

A fixture does not automatically become ineligible for accelerated depreciation simply because it is bolted, wired, or plumbed into a structure. Instead, classification hinges on **function**, not just attachment.

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The Builder's Job (in simple terms)

Builders aren't tax professionals

But builders can:

- Say what each thing does
- Keep costs separate
- Write things down clearly

That helps the tax professionals decide what counts faster.

The One Big Rule

Builders should say:

"This *might* count faster. Ask your accountant."

Builders should **never** say:

"This definitely counts."

Bottom Line

- Buildings = slow
- Farm-working stuff = fast
- Bolts don't matter
- Purpose matters

If it helps animals, crops, or production, it often gets counted faster—even if it's screwed to the wall.

Here's a **safe, repeatable, one-paragraph explainer** builders can use with customers without stepping into tax-advice territory:

"I'm not a tax advisor, but in general, the building itself—posts, walls, and roof—usually depreciates slowly, while equipment that helps your farm operate often depreciates faster. Even if something is permanently attached, like large ventilation fans, livestock waterers, or production-related systems, it may still be treated as equipment because of what it does, not how it's attached. The key is how each item functions in your operation, and that's something your accountant or tax professional will ultimately decide. Our job as the builder is to clearly document what's installed and what it's used for so they have the information they need."

RESOURCES

• Internal Revenue Service - One, Big, Beautiful Bill provisions
- <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/one-big-beautiful-bill-provisions>

• Congress Full Text of H.R.1 - An act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of H. Con. Res. 14. 119th Congress (2025-2026) <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/1/text>

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Wikipedia - One Big Beautiful Bill
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/One_Big_Beautiful_Bill_Act

Key considerations include:

- Does the item primarily serve the **business operation**, or the building itself?
- Would it still be useful if the building's use changed?
- Is it specialized for agricultural production?

Under long-standing IRS guidance and case law, many fixtures permanently attached to agricultural buildings may still qualify as depreciable equipment rather than structural components.

FANS, WATERERS, AND REAL-WORLD EXAMPLES

HVLS Fans (High Velocity Low Speed Fans)

Large-diameter fans used in livestock barns, riding arenas, or poultry houses are a frequent point of confusion.

In many agricultural applications, HVLS fans are considered **equipment used directly in production**—supporting animal health, ventilation, and environmental control.

Waterers and Livestock Watering Systems

Livestock waterers that are plumbed into concrete pads or foundation walls raise similar questions.

Generally speaking:

- Waterers explicitly designed for livestock use
- Not integral to the building's structural integrity
- Removable or replaceable without damaging the structure ...are commonly classified as equipment rather than build-

ing components. Even when connected to underground utilities, these systems often fall under shorter recovery periods than the barn or shelter itself.

However, related infrastructure—such as buried water lines or concrete work extending beyond the immediate equipment footprint—may be treated differently.

**Peripheral Fixtures and Components:
Where Builders Must Be Careful**

Peripheral components can be depreciable, but not all qualify equally. Items often evaluated separately include:

- Electrical systems serving specific equipment
- Plumbing dedicated to production use
- Control panels, sensors, and automation systems
- Specialized lighting for animal or crop production

If these systems are **dedicated to equipment or production processes**, they may qualify for accelerated depreciation. If they serve the general building (lighting, walkways, offices, or non-production areas), they are more likely to be classified as structural components.

This distinction underscores why **how a building is designed and documented matters**. Builders who clearly define systems as production-related—rather than general-purpose—can materially affect a client’s tax outcome.

Post-Frame and Metal Buildings: A Strategic Advantage

Post-frame and metal agricultural buildings often lend themselves well to favorable depreciation treatment because they are:

- Highly modular
- Equipment-centric by design

Checklist: Supporting Accelerated Depreciation Without Giving Tax Advice

Rural builders play a key role in how agricultural assets are classified for depreciation. While final determinations rest with tax professionals, the following best practices can help owners and advisors evaluate eligibility under the accelerated depreciation rules of the OBBBA and existing IRS guidance.

During Design & Planning

- Clarify the building’s primary use. Livestock housing, equipment storage, processing, or mixed-use facilities may be treated differently for depreciation.
- Identify production-related systems early. Note which components directly support animal health, crop production, or operational efficiency.
- Discuss equipment-heavy design options. Post-frame and metal buildings often allow clearer separation between structure and equipment.

During Construction

- Itemize invoices and contracts. Separate line items for equipment, fixtures, and specialty systems are critical for later classification.
- Document dedicated systems. Electrical, plumbing, and mechanical systems serving specific equipment should be clearly identified as such.
- Note method of attachment—but don’t rely on it alone. Permanently attached does not automatically

mean “structural component.”

Common Items to Flag for Review

- HVLS fans used for livestock comfort or ventilation
- Livestock waterers (e.g., Ritchie waterers) and associated pads or mounts
- Specialized lighting for animal or crop production
- Environmental controls, sensors, and automation systems
- Feed, watering, or manure-handling equipment integrated into the building

After Project Completion

- Provide as-built drawings and system descriptions. These help tax professionals understand how assets function within the operation.
- Encourage consultation with a tax advisor or cost segregation specialist

Especially on larger projects or multi-use facilities.

- Avoid making depreciation promises. Use language such as “may qualify” or “commonly treated as,” not guarantees.

Builder Best Practice

- Position yourself as a documentation partner—not a tax authority. Builders who help clients organize information add value without assuming liability.

- Built around production workflows rather than finished interiors

When paired with clear construction documentation, these structures can make it easier for tax professionals to allocate costs between the building shell and qualifying equipment or fixtures.

For builders, this presents an opportunity—not to give tax advice—but to **collaborate early** with owners, accountants, and lenders during the design phase.

WHAT RURAL BUILDERS SHOULD TELL CLIENTS (AND WHAT THEY SHOULDN'T)

Builders should avoid definitive tax claims, but they can responsibly communicate that:

- Many permanently attached agricultural fixtures may qualify for accelerated depreciation.
- Classification depends on function, not just attachment.

- Cost segregation and proper documentation are critical.
- Final determinations rest with tax professionals and IRS guidance.

The OBBBA's emphasis on domestic production investment makes these conversations more timely—but also more nuanced.

BOTTOM LINE

Accelerated depreciation remains one of the most powerful financial tools available to agricultural producers—and one of the most misunderstood. As legislation like the OBBBA brings renewed focus to capital investment incentives, rural builders are on the front lines of implementation.

Understanding how fixtures, fans, waterers, and peripheral systems are commonly treated can help builders ask better questions, design smarter buildings, and add tangible value for their clients—long before the tax return is filed.

As always, builders and owners should consult qualified tax professionals for asset classification and depreciation elections. **RB**

The Super Simple Version

What is accelerated depreciation?

It means farm owners can count the costs of the things they buy faster when they file their taxes.

Faster counting = less tax now, which helps cash flow.

What counts?

The government likes it when farmers buy things that help them farm.

So things that:

- Help animals stay healthy
- Help crops grow
- Help the farm run better

...often get counted faster than the building itself.

What about the building?

The building shell (walls, roof, posts) is slow.

It gets counted over a long time.

But many things inside the building are not really the building—even if they're bolted on.

"If it's bolted down, is it part of the building?"

Nope. Bolts don't decide.

What it does decides.

Ask this:

- Is it there to help the farm work, or
- Is it there just to be a building?

Do Big Fans count?

Usually, yes.

Big fans in barns or arenas:

- Help animals stay cool
- Keep air moving
- Help production

Even though they're attached, they're doing a job, not holding the building up.

So they're often treated like equipment rather than part of the building.

Do Rtchie waterers count?

Usually, yes.

Livestock waterers:

- They are made just for animals
- Could be replaced without tearing down the barn
- Help animals eat and drink properly

That makes them more like farm tools than walls or floors.

What about wires, pipes, and controls?

If the wires or pipes are:

- Just for that fan, waterer, or feeding system
→ They often get counted faster, too. If they're for:
- Lights in hallways
- Offices
- General use

→ That's usually part of the building.

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Post-Frame Problem Solvers

Find these and more post-frame products at Frame Building Expo 2026

■ By Karen Knapstein

The 58th Annual NFBA Conference and Expo takes place at the Oklahoma Convention Center from February 25-27, 2026. More than 150 companies will fill the expo space in Oklahoma City, including A.J. Manufacturing, ASC Machine Tools, Plyco Corp., MWI Components, and many more.

Builders can walk the Expo floor free of charge; free Expo passes are good for any individual engaged in the business of constructing post-frame buildings.

Here is a preview of a few of the materials and components you'll find on the Expo floor.



Booth 851: AJ Manufacturing bi-fold access door.

AJ Manufacturing (Booth 851) is exhibiting its energy-efficient ceiling access doors pre-hung in self-flashing, fully weather stripped frames. The 24" x 36" and 24" x 48" doors are available in 4" and 6" panel thicknesses. The 4" doors offer R-24 insulating value while 6" thick panels are R-42. Doors are shipped with egress handles. Bifold doors include hold-open struts. Ceiling Access doors can be installed with the Patent Pending Insulation Dam Kits fabricated out of 24-gauge steel that can manage up to 20" of blown cellulose or fiberglass batt insulation.

AkzoNobel Coil & Extrusion Coatings (Booth 744) is exhibiting its CERAM-A-STAR® Select program, which now features CERAM-A-STAR® Select Expressions finishes, bringing new design possibilities. Built on the advanced CERAM-A-STAR® 1050 platform, CERAM-A-STAR® Select Expressions combines the visual appeal of textured prints with a high-performance SMP finish. This unique technology makes it possible to achieve distinctive looks such as wood, slate, or granite while maintaining color stability and lasting protection.



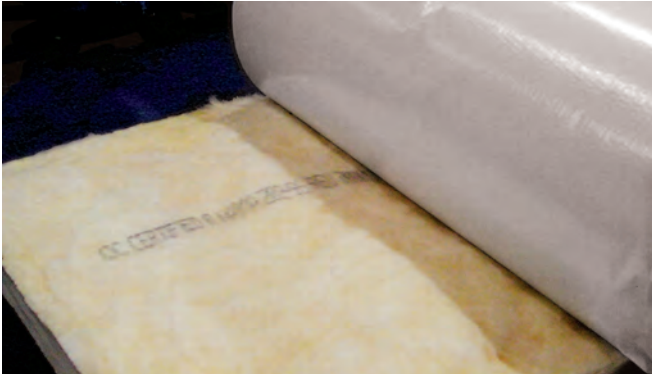
Booth 744: AkzoNobel Coil & Extrusion Coatings CERAM-A-STAR® Select.



Booth 632: ASC Machine Tools F&J Trim Rollformer.

ASC Machine Tools (Booth 632) will be teaching attendees about the ASC F&J Trim Rollformer. ASC offers hand-fed and coil-fed F&J Trim Rollforming Lines with an optional feature allowing the production of two different soffit opening sizes. All lines feature cast rollformer stands and cast bearings blocks, quick access swing safety guard and much more.

NEW PRODUCTS



Booth 735: Bay Insulation Systems fiberglass insulation.

Bay Insulation Systems (Booth 735) manufactures and provides laminated/faced fiberglass insulation in R-values ranging from R-8 to R-32.5, in widths ranging from 36" to 96", and in customized lengths to fit your post-frame building's needs. The product is manufactured using superior quality vapor barriers that are adhered to a NAIMA 202-96 fiberglass blanket. The final product meets the NIA Certified Faced Insulation® Standard 404.2-2024.

GitEstimate (Booth 842) will demonstrate post-frame building estimation software. GitEstimate is a web-based software tool for post-frame and pole barn builders, enabling quick generation of cost estimates for standard designs without requiring expertise. It features company branding, customizable pricing for labor and materials, detailed parts lists with shipping weights, and an admin portal for managing submitted and saved estimates. The tool supports metal and wood trusses, handles



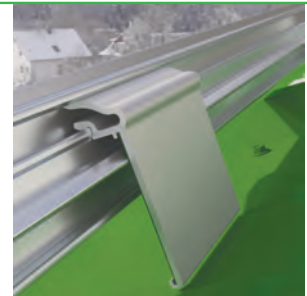
Booth 842: GitEstimate post-frame building estimation software.



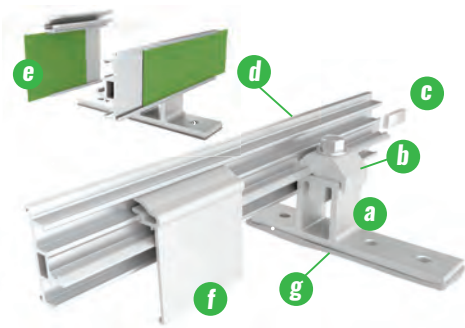
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Haas Door (Booth 751) is exhibiting its American Tradition™ Series, featuring steel door models in several thicknesses, and a recently introduced a 2½” corrosion-resistant aluminum door. This Series is available in 42 models that use overlay boards to



Booth 751: Haas Door American Tradition Series garage doors.

create a realistic depth to the door. The models also include flush or v-groove panel styles, inverted options, and models that allow up to 2 lite sections. Both steel thicknesses are available in 10 solid and five wood grain color options, with fifteen matching overlay colors. The 2½” thick aluminum door is available in Polar White, Sandstone, and Carbon Black, which can be mixed and matched with the overlay color choices. The 2½” thick steel models have the highest thermal performance, with a U-Factor of 0.081. The joints between the sections also feature a bulb seal that meets code requirements for air infiltration.

McElroy Metal (Booth 738), will exhibit the Nostalgia Panel, which blends timeless beauty with modern practicality. Designed to capture the warmth and character of traditional wood siding, it offers homeowners and builders the charm of classic craftsmanship—without the drawbacks. Unlike natural



Booth 738: McElroy Metal Nostalgia Panel.

wood, the Nostalgia Panel won't warp, rot, or invite pests, and it eliminates the constant need for repainting or sealing. Its durable metal construction ensures long-lasting performance and enduring curb appeal. The Nostalgia Panel delivers a smart, low-maintenance solution that preserves the look of yesterday while meeting the efficiency and sustainability demands of today

Plasti-Sleeve Post Protection (Booth 215) will teach attendees about its clean fitting, easy-to-use, slide-on post and skirt board protection sleeves that provide the economical protection many post-frame customers now expect. The Plasti-Sleeve product line includes 22 specialized sizes for Plasti-Sleeve, Plasti-Skirt, an easy-to-use plastic skirt board/grade plank protector, and the economical Short-Sleeve post protector.



Booth 215: Plasti-Sleeve Post Protection post and skirt board barriers.

Plyco Corp. (Booth 601): New for 2026, Plyco will be introducing a line of high-quality fiberglass entry doors. We believe the market will appreciate these hybrid doors, which will be stronger and more durable than traditional composites. The fiberglass doors will be available in two frame systems: our heavy-duty 16 gauge steel frame, as well as our thermal break aluminum 92 frame. The fiberglass panels will be available in smooth and woodgrain embossed profiles in popular designs; with some having direct set glass options. The 60 series will be available in pre-painted white and black frames-doors, while the Designer FG Series will have more enhancements available to really bring your project to life and add curb appeal.

Ridgeline Safety Systems (Booth 733) provides permanent Exposed Tab roof anchors that are built to protect and save lives.

Lives are priceless. Can you afford NOT to use them?



Booth 601: Plyco Corp. Fiberglass Entry Doors.



Booth 733: Ridgeline Safety Systems roof ridge anchors.



Booth 536: Rigidply Rafters Glulam Posts.

Rigidply Rafters' (Booth 536) Glulam Posts deliver strength, straightness, and stability you can trust. Crafted with proven 0.60 PCF CCA treatment for lasting protection, these posts resist rot and decay for decades of reliable performance. Each laminated post acts as a single, solid structural unit—lighter, stronger, and straighter than traditional timbers. Our wet-use, structural-

grade adhesive is stronger than the wood itself, ensuring long-term durability with no gapping or shrinkage. Every Rigidply Glulam Post is precision-engineered and quality-tested under AITC inspection—so you can build with confidence. Made with precision. Backed by history. Designed to perform.

S-5! (Booth 743): After 30 years and 18,000 linear miles of

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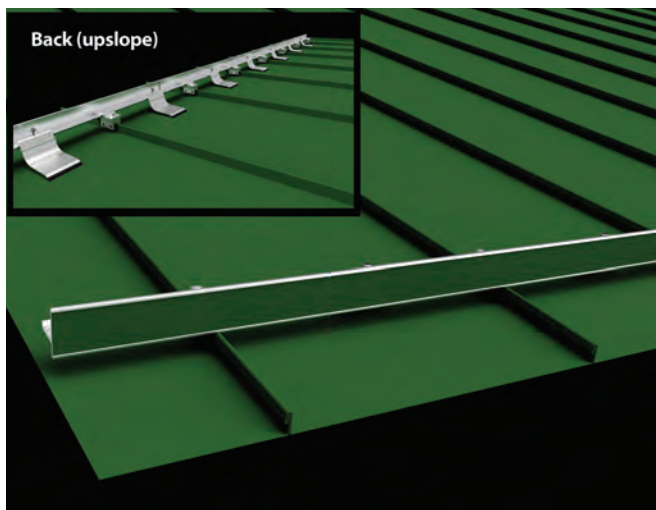
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Booth 743: S-5! ColorGard® 2.0.

SWI Machinery will be exhibiting the Marxman Plus Slitter in **booth 301**. Based on the original Marxman, this machine has automatic nesting with 8 pairs of auto-setting slitter blades. It can run up to 150' per minute on 49" coils. No burrs, virtually no wasted material, and extremely accurate slits. Coupled with a 21.5" touchscreen interface and back-office integration capabilities, the Marxman Plus is an efficient, easy-to-use, and reliable sheet metal blanking machine – ideal for feeding rollforming and long folding operations.

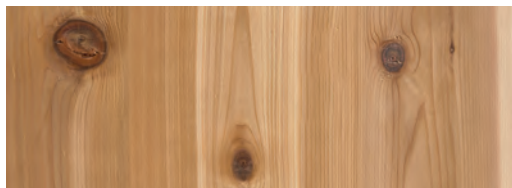


Booth 301: SWI Machinery Marxman Plus Slitter.



Booth 309: Trac-Rite steel roll-up doors.

Trac-Rite (Booth 309) is a 100% employee-owned company with over 40 years of experience, proudly recognized as one of North America's most trusted door manufacturers. Learn about the company's high-quality, 100% American-made steel roll-up doors designed specifically for sheds, garages, carports, and other frame building applications. Our commitment to excellence extends beyond doors—we also provide all necessary components to support your construction projects, ensuring a seamless, worry-free process. With a legacy of durability, reliability, and unmatched customer service, Trac-Rite is your trusted partner for superior frame building solutions.



Booth 621: Tru-Steel HD digitally-printed steel. Pattern shown above: Smooth Cedar.

United Steel Supply (Booth 621) is excited to offer Tru-Steel HD® digitally-printed steel! This innovative product uses a high-resolution digital printer to transfer images of real wood onto sustainable, USA-melted steel sheet.

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To share your news announcements with Frame Building News readers, send them to editor Karen Knapstein at karen@shieldwallmedia.com.

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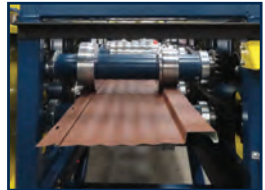
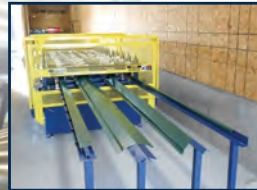
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■ **SIMPSON STRONG-TIE INTRODUCES PFUD™
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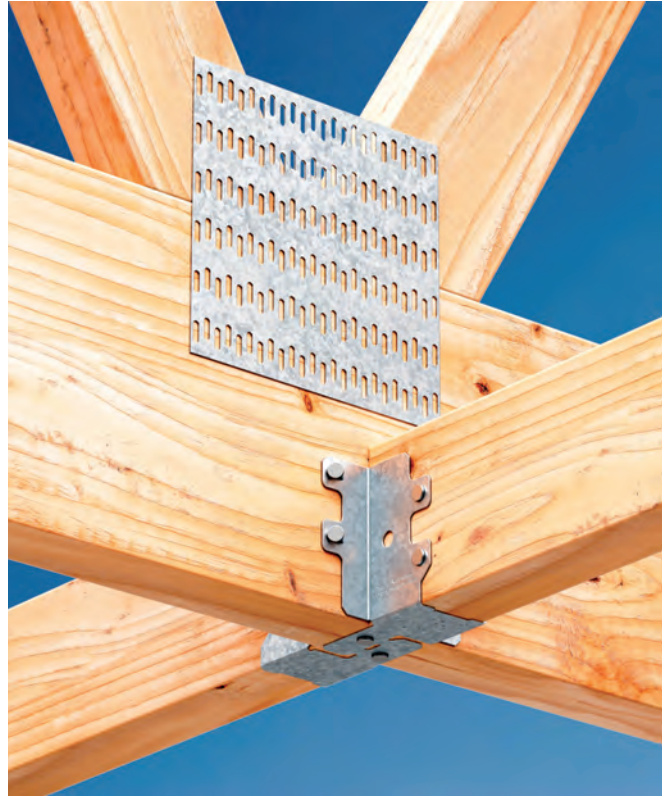
Simpson Strong-Tie, the leader in engineered structural connectors and building solutions, is simplifying post frame construction with the launch of two PFUD™ undersaddle hangers. The hangers feature a two-sided design, so one hanger supports ceiling joists on both sides of a truss, eliminating the need for a separate face-mounted hanger for each joist. The continuous seat fits snugly under the truss's bottom chord, automatically aligning parts vertically for an easier, faster layout. For single-side applications, installers simply bend and separate the hanger along the perforations to create two face-mounted options.

“PFUD undersaddle hangers are extremely versatile, streamlining installation to reduce connector layout labor costs by half versus using two face-mounted hangers,” said Randy Daudet, group product manager for Simpson Strong-Tie. “At the same time, the hangers offer greater reliability and load capacity than toenailed ceiling joists.”

The hangers are thoroughly tested and code-listed. They're load-rated for joist tension forces, so they're ideal with ceiling panels acting as diaphragms or for bottom-chord truss bracing.

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Ventilation for Ag Buildings

Crop Storage and Animal Confinement

Ventilation is one of the most important environmental-control systems in agriculture, yet it's also one of the most misunderstood. Builders know that poor air movement can spoil stored crops, stress livestock, and damage a structure faster than most clients expect. It's also important to understand how fundamentally different the demands are between crop storage buildings and animal housing. In one, the building's job is to protect a commodity that sits passively in bulk; in the other, it must support living organisms producing moisture, heat, and gases every minute of the day.

For professional builders, the key to designing the right ventilation system begins with understanding what you're ventilating for. The goals, load characteristics, and consequences of getting it wrong are not the same. A system that performs beautifully for hay or grain can be a disaster for dairy calves or layers. Conversely, a system sized for livestock is typically excessive and even damaging for stored crops.

This article takes a detailed look at the differences, the expectations of each building type, the interaction with materials and heating systems, and the design considerations builders need to keep in mind when advising clients.

TWO BUILDING TYPES, TWO DIFFERENT PROBLEMS

Although they share the word "ventilation," crop storage buildings and animal housing operate on two completely different environmental timelines.

In a crop building, temperature and humidity change slowly. The load is predictable: a crop gives off moisture gradually as it cures or sits in bulk, and the building's job is to release that moisture before it condenses on cold framing or within the crop itself. The problem is slow-moving but persistent.

In an animal building, air quality can shift in minutes. Animals respire, adding moisture and CO₂. Their manure and bed-

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ding generate ammonia, hydrogen sulfide, and methane. Dust, dander, and hair accumulate in the air. The building must actively remove these contaminants continuously, and in many cases, at high volume.

These differences drive everything else: fan size, placement, air-inlet design, whether natural or mechanical ventilation is appropriate, and what materials should be specified to withstand the interior climate.

VENTILATION REQUIREMENTS IN CROP STORAGE BUILDINGS

Crop storage encompasses everything from hay sheds and grain bins to potato warehouses, seed storage, and multi-use commodity buildings. Each commodity has a different moisture content and tolerance for temperature swings, but they all share a common risk: stored crops off-gas moisture. If that moisture isn't carried out of the building, it condenses either on the structure or on the crop.

MOISTURE IS THE PRIMARY DRIVER

Unlike animal housing, crop buildings don't contain heat- and gas-producing living occupants. The builder's challenge is nearly always moisture migration. Warm outside air entering a cool interior will condense on cold surfaces. Similarly, crops stored too wet will continue to release moisture that accumulates in the building.

This slow, steady moisture release is why most crop buildings rely on low-velocity, continuous air exchange rather than intermittent, high-volume exhaust.

GENTLE, EVEN AIR MOVEMENT

A typical ventilation strategy for crop storage uses a combination of ridge vents, eave vents, gable vents, and sometimes small mechanical fans. The objective is not to flush air rapidly but to provide smooth, even movement to equalize temperature and humidity throughout the structure.

Hay storage, for example, benefits from large, open volumes that allow warm, moist air from curing bales to rise naturally out of the ridge vent. Potato and onion storage, on the other hand, often requires air duct socks or perforated tubes to distribute air within the commodity pile to maintain uniform conditions and prevent localized spoilage.

PASSIVE SYSTEMS OFTEN DOMINATE

Many crop buildings operate successfully with a primarily passive approach. The stack effect—warm air rising and exiting at the ridge—pulls cooler, drier air from the eaves. Builders must ensure that these intake and exhaust points are sized correctly; a ridge vent that's too narrow or eaves that are too restrictive can cause air stagnation.

When mechanical fans are added, they are usually supplemental rather than central to the system. Their purpose is to stabi-

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lize humidity and temperature during seasonal transitions rather than to manage continual heavy loads.

AVOIDING CONDENSATION DAMAGE

Condensation on purlins and girts is a common builder concern. Drips can ruin hay, encourage mold, or create slick surfaces in commodity bins. Builders can mitigate condensation by specifying vapor retarders, insulated roof assemblies, or reflective barriers. Good ventilation should prevent condensation in the first place, but structural materials and insulation choices must support the system in case of excessive moisture.

OVER-VENTILATION HAS RISKS

In crop buildings, more air is not always better. Some commodities dry out excessively if airflow is too strong or too dry. The ventilation system must balance the crop's needs with the local climate, which may require thermostats, humidistats, or automated controls for precision-crop applications.

VENTILATION REQUIREMENTS IN ANIMAL HOUSING

Livestock housing—whether for cattle, swine, poultry, equine, goats, or sheep—has a different set of demands. Here, the ventilation system protects the health of live animals and the workers who care for them. It also plays a major role in the building's longevity, because humidity and gases in a livestock environment can be highly corrosive.

RAPID REMOVAL OF MOISTURE AND GASES

Animals produce significant amounts of moisture simply by breathing. A single dairy cow exhales gallons of water per day. Manure generates ammonia and other gases continuously. Bedding materials, especially in poultry and swine operations, break down and contribute additional heat, moisture, and dust.

For this reason, high air-exchange rates are mandatory. Builders must design systems that actively pull contaminated air out of the building while maintaining a comfortable environment for the animals inside.

VENTILATION MUST WORK YEAR-ROUND

One of the biggest challenges in livestock housing is winter-

time ventilation. Animals still produce moisture and gases during cold weather, but bringing in enough fresh air without creating drafts is difficult. Builders often turn to:

- Variable-speed fans
- Minimum-ventilation controllers
- Controlled inlets and baffles
- Passive-pressure tubes for young stock
- Curtain sidewalls set to automated minimum openings

These systems keep moisture, ammonia, and CO₂ at safe levels without chilling the animals.

AIR DIRECTION MATTERS AS MUCH AS AIR VOLUME

Good ventilation in livestock buildings isn't just about how much air moves—it's about how it moves. Properly designed inlets draw air from known locations and direct it in predictable patterns across the ceiling or along the sidewalls before it drops into the occupied zone. This prevents drafts while ensuring consistent mixing.

If inlets are undersized, oversized, or obstructed, the system loses control. Animals may experience cold spots, moisture pockets, or areas of poor air quality even if the total cubic feet per minute (cfm) is correct.

DUST AND CORROSIVE ELEMENTS

Livestock environments contain dust from feed, bedding, and animal movement. In poultry barns especially, dust accumulation is significant and can shorten the life of fans, motors, metal components, and heaters.

Ammonia and hydrogen sulfide attack metal fasteners, galvanized coatings, and untreated lumber. Builders often choose coated purlins, plastic-sheathed components, sealed-edge metal panels, or corrosion-resistant fasteners to withstand the environment created by the ventilation system's continuous movement of contaminated air.

MECHANICAL VENTILATION IS STANDARD

Unlike crop buildings, livestock barns rarely function well with passive ventilation alone. Natural ventilation plays a supporting role in curtain-sided dairy barns or open riding arenas, but poultry, swine, and enclosed cattle barns typically rely on mechanical systems. Tunnel ventilation, cross-ventilation, and positive-pressure systems offer control that natural ventilation cannot match.

NATURAL VS. MECHANICAL VENTILATION

Natural ventilation suits many crop buildings and some open-sided animal structures, but its limitations become apparent in more controlled environments.

Natural ventilation performs best when:

- The building has a large volume
- The commodity load changes slowly
- A structure has a broad ridge opening
- The climate is predictable, not extreme

Mechanical ventilation becomes necessary when:

- Animals produce constant moisture and gases
- Air quality must stay within tight ranges
- The building is enclosed or insulated
- Seasonal temperature differences are large
- Fresh-air delivery must be precise

Professional builders should assess each project's environmental loads before recommending one approach or a hybrid of both

WHAT BUILDERS NEED TO KNOW WHEN SPECIFYING FANS

Fans are the workhorses of mechanical ventilation systems, but for agricultural buildings, performance on paper does not always translate to performance in the field. Builders and component specifiers must look beyond advertised airflow numbers and understand how fans behave once they are installed in real buildings with inlets, louvers, dust, moisture, and static pressure.

One of the most common mistakes in fan selection is relying solely on free-air cfm ratings. Agricultural fans rarely operate under free-air conditions. Shutters, bird screens, inlet restrictions, and ductwork all add resistance that reduces delivered airflow. For livestock housing in particular, fans should be evaluated at the static pressures they will actually experience, not at idealized lab conditions. Crop storage applications often operate at lower static pressures, but even there, screens and weather hoods can significantly affect performance.

Durability is another critical factor. Fans in animal housing are exposed to dust, humidity, ammonia, and other corrosive gases on a continuous basis. These conditions affect housings, fasteners,

motors, bearings, and electrical components. Builders should pay close attention to materials, coatings, and motor protection ratings, especially in poultry and swine facilities where corrosion and dust loading are severe. In crop storage buildings, fans may operate seasonally, but they still face moisture, temperature swings, and debris that can reduce efficiency over time.

Energy efficiency matters most in buildings where fans run year-round or for long periods each day. Comparing fans based on airflow per watt provides a more accurate picture of long-term operating cost than horsepower alone. For livestock buildings, staging multiple smaller fans instead of relying on a single large unit allows builders to match airflow more closely to seasonal needs and reduce unnecessary energy use.

Control compatibility is equally important. Fans must work seamlessly with minimum-ventilation controllers, variable-speed drives, thermostats, humidistats, and gas sensors where used. In animal housing, fan performance is inseparable from inlet design and control strategy. A well-sized fan paired with poorly sized or poorly placed inlets will not deliver predictable airflow, regardless of total cfm capacity.

Installation details can also undermine performance if overlooked. Improper sealing around fan housings, obstructed exhaust paths, or insufficient clearance on the discharge side can all reduce effective airflow. Builders should plan fan locations early in the design process so airflow paths are clear, service access is available, and future maintenance does not require disassembly of surrounding components.

Finally, builders should be clear about what fans can and cannot solve. Fans remove contaminated air, but they do not correct fundamental building design problems. Inadequate inlet area, poor insulation, uncontrolled air leakage, or unrealistic stocking densities can overwhelm even well-designed fan systems. When ventilation loads are high, environments are tightly controlled, or systems rely heavily on automation, involving a ventilation specialist or engineer can help ensure fan selection aligns with the building's actual demands.

SEASONAL AND REGIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Both crop and livestock ventilation systems must account for climate. A hay shed in humid Florida behaves differently than one in arid Montana. A swine nursery in Minnesota faces winter challenges a Texas cattle barn doesn't encounter.

Builders must consider:

- Local humidity and temperature swings
- Prevailing winds
- The building's orientation
- Whether heating systems will supplement ventilation
- The building's expected year-round use
- Local pests, insects, snow, or rain that must be excluded from buildings

In livestock buildings, regional cold spells dictate minimum ventilation rates and fan staging. In crop buildings, rapid fall temperature drops or spring warm-up periods often require extra

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Condensation is a common issue in metal roof assemblies, both uninsulated and insulated. Anytime bare metal is exposed to certain atmospheric conditions, moisture can form and drip into the building. CondensStop is designed to manage this moisture at the panel level rather than relying on traditional underlayments.

CondensStop is a factory-applied fleece membrane that is rollformed directly onto the underside of metal roof panels. When condensation forms, the material absorbs moisture, spreads it across its surface, and temporarily holds it until conditions allow it to dry. The goal is not to eliminate moisture generation, but to control where it goes and how it behaves.

The product is commonly used in agricultural post-frame applications, including livestock confinement, equipment storage, lean-tos, and structures that may be insulated later. It can also be used in certain crop storage buildings to manage intermittent roof condensation caused by temperature swings, provided the building is adequately ventilated. It should not be relied on in place of mechanical aeration or drying systems in grain bins or other high-moisture crop storage.

Ventilation remains critical. Ridge vents or ventilated ridge caps are necessary to allow air movement across the underside of the roof so absorbed moisture can evaporate. In some agricultural buildings, passive ventilation is sufficient. However, structures with high moisture loads may require mechanical ventilation.

Livestock buildings and facilities storing hay typically generate significant moisture. Dairies, animal housing, indoor riding arenas, or buildings where water is regularly introduced may overwhelm passive airflow alone. In these cases, fans or other active ventilation systems help move air across the CondensStop surface, accelerating drying and expelling moisture from the building.

CondensStop is one component of an overall moisture-management strategy. Builders need to evaluate building use, moisture generation, and ventilation design to determine whether passive airflow is adequate or if mechanical ventilation is necessary.

attention to avoid condensation events.

MATERIAL CHOICES AND THEIR INTERACTION WITH VENTILATION

Ventilation design doesn't exist in isolation. The materials specified in the building influence how well the system works and how long it lasts.

IN CROP STORAGE

Vapor barriers, insulated roofs, and reflective membranes can help reduce condensation risk. Wood framing performs reliably, but metal components may sweat in certain conditions. Ridge vent design becomes critical: it must be open enough to release warm air yet built to prevent wind-driven rain or snow entry.

Commodity-specific requirements also shape material choice. Potato storage benefits from insulated partition walls and controlled-air plenums; hay sheds rely on large roof overhangs and generous openings to accommodate airflow.

IN ANIMAL HOUSING

The corrosive nature of livestock environments demands durable materials. Builders often specify:

- Hot-dipped galvanized or polymer-coated fasteners
- PVC-lined interior panels
- Plastic-coated lumber or galvanized steel posts
- Corrosion-resistant fan housings
- Insulated, gasketed inlets

Ventilation systems accelerate the movement of corrosive air, so materials must tolerate constant exposure. Other material choices may handle these conditions; check with manufacturers.

QUESTIONS BUILDERS SHOULD ASK CLIENTS

Ventilation design starts with a conversation. Before designing any system, builders should ask clients:

- What commodity or species is being housed?
- What is the expected moisture load?

- How quickly does the load change?
- Will the client manually operate vents, or do they want automation?
- Are heating systems part of the plan?
- How often is the building accessed?
- Is the building multi-purpose?

The answers shape the air-exchange requirements, inlet sizing, fan placement, materials, and long-term maintenance expectations.

TURNING CLIENT ANSWERS INTO A VENTILATION STRATEGY

Once a builder has the client's answers, their job is to turn that information into a workable ventilation plan. The process is straightforward if followed step by step. Start by identifying what is creating the load inside the building. In a crop structure, the load comes mostly from the moisture and

heat released by the commodity and the way outside air interacts with the building shell. In an animal building, you should assume continuous production of moisture, heat, and gases from the animals, manure, and bedding. This first distinction—crop versus livestock—sets the framework for the entire design.

Next, determine how much air the building needs to move. For livestock projects, use standard cfm-per-animal guidelines from manufacturers, universities, or equipment suppliers to estimate minimum winter, mild-weather, and summer air-exchange rates. The numbers are different for calves, finish hogs, layers, broilers, or dairy cows, but the process is the same: multiply the recommended cfm by the number of animals and check it against the building volume to ensure

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you're turning the air often enough. For crop storage, look at the commodity and how it will be stored—bulk piles, bins, bales, crates—and choose a steady, low-volume air-exchange rate that can remove moisture and equalize temperature without drying the product excessively.

After you know the airflow requirement, choose the basic ventilation approach. In a large, open post-frame hay or grain building in a windy region, natural ventilation through ridge and eave openings may be all you need. In an enclosed swine or poultry barn, or any livestock project that relies heavily on mechanical air control, you will want fans, controlled inlets, and staged automation. Hybrid systems also work well in moderate-load buildings, such as naturally ventilated dairy barns with circulation fans or potato storage that uses both passive vents and small exhaust fans.

With your chosen approach in place, lay out the airflow path. Think about where fresh air will enter, how it will move through the building, and where it will exit. In a crop building, you might rely on outside air entering through eaves or gable vents, rising through the interior, and leaving at the ridge. In an animal barn, decide where inlets will be placed, how they will throw air along the ceiling, and how your fans will draw that air out. Your goal is a clean, predict-

able path: fresh air in from known points, across the upper portions of the building, and out through exhaust fans or openings without leaving dead corners.

Once the path is clear, size and place the equipment to match it. With your target cfm calculated, select fans that can deliver that airflow and divide the total between enough units to allow staging throughout the seasons. Several smaller fans give you finer control than one large unit. Then size your inlets or ridge openings so they match the fans and maintain the right static pressure. Incoming air should have enough speed to travel along the ceiling before it drops into the occupied zone. For crop buildings, make sure your ridge opening and eave area are large enough for the footprint and height, adding mechanical fans only if the passive openings cannot keep up with the anticipated moisture load.

It's time to integrate the ventilation design with the building's other systems. In livestock projects, coordinate heaters, controllers, and inlet actuation so minimum-ventilation fans can run without chilling animals. Place heaters so the incoming air can mix and warm before dropping into the animal zone. In crop buildings, look at insulation, vapor barriers, and wall and roof assemblies to be sure the structure will not trap moisture or create chronic condensation.



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When your systems are planned out on paper, choose materials that can withstand the environment your ventilation system will create. In a livestock building, the humid, high-ammonia atmosphere calls for corrosion-resistant fasteners, coated or galvanized components, durable fan housings, and interior surfaces that tolerate constant moisture and air movement. In crop storage, select materials that resist mold, manage seasonal moisture shifts, and allow easy cleaning without needing the same chemical resistance required in confinement barns.

Finally, evaluate your design against how the client will actually use the building. Walk through a typical day with them: how often doors open, how frequently animals or commodities move in and out, what seasonal changes they expect, and who will operate the controls. If the client is unlikely to adjust anything manually, rely more heavily on automatic systems that can maintain minimum ventilation on their own. If the client is more hands-on, you can simplify the equipment but be clear about what needs to be adjusted as seasons change.

By working through these steps in order—identifying the load, calculating airflow, choosing the approach, laying out the air path, sizing and placing equipment, integrating supporting systems, selecting appropriate materials, and matching the plan to real use—you can translate the client's answers into a ventilation system that performs reliably and suits the building's purpose.

WHEN TO BRING IN AN ENGINEER

Most agricultural ventilation systems can be designed by the builder, especially in naturally ventilated structures or post-frame buildings with simple ridge-and-eave airflow. However, there are certain projects where bringing in an engineer is not only wise but often required. Anytime the building shifts from open-air principles to enclosed, high-density, or mechanically dependent ventilation, the margin for acceptable error narrows. Mechanical ventilation systems for swine, poultry, and enclosed cattle barns operate within much tighter tolerances than hay sheds or curtain-sided dairy facilities. When the system must maintain precise airflow rates, static pressure levels, or year-round environmental stability, an engineer's calculations ensure the building functions as intended.

Engineers are particularly valuable when the ventilation load is high or rapidly changing, when animals are densely housed, or when the system includes staged fans, minimum-ventilation controls, complex inlet packages, or tunnel ventilation. Deep-pit barns, mechanically heated calf facilities, and integrated manure-handling systems all rely on predictable pressure and airflow dynamics that are best validated through engineered design. Some lenders, insurers, and permitting authorities also require stamped mechanical drawings for confinement barns because of the life-safety implications related to gas buildup or mechanical failure.

While builders routinely design ventilation for simpler structures, enclosed livestock buildings and high-capacity mechanical systems benefit from engineering support to avoid issues such as

drafts, cold stress, uneven temperatures, inadequate gas dilution, or equipment oversizing. In these cases, the engineer complements the builder's practical experience, ensuring the final design aligns with the building's purpose, the owner's management style, and the environmental demands of the species being housed.

WHY GETTING VENTILATION RIGHT MATTERS

Poor ventilation has consequences that go far beyond comfort. In crop buildings, improper air movement can cause spoilage, mold, condensation drip, and structural rot. In livestock buildings, inadequate air exchange can harm animal health, reduce productivity, increase disease transmission, and corrode structural components.

Good ventilation protects the investment—whether that's a commodity worth thousands or a herd worth hundreds of thousands.

For builders, understanding the unique needs of each building type sets the stage for long-term performance. Ventilation is not a one-size-fits-all component. It is a system shaped by biology, physics, and the realities of agricultural practice. The more a builder understands those differences, the more effectively they can guide clients toward durable, safe, and profitable structures. **RB**

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BY RANDY CHAFFEE, SOURCE ONE MARKETING

Different Folks, Different Strokes

Adjusting Your Sales Approach To Fit the Buyer

If you've spent any time in the post-frame, metal building, or portable structure business, you already know...Selling isn't just about nails and fasteners or quoting square footage. It's about people, and people are different.

The old saying "different strokes for different folks" couldn't be more true when it comes to how folks make buying decisions in the rural construction world. Whether you're talking to a young couple wanting starter pole barn home, a farmer needing equipment storage, or a homeowner eyeing a new backyard garage, how you sell needs to shift with who you're talking to.

It's not about being slick. It's about being real. Then adjusting, just enough, to build trust and get to the handshake.

Be Yourself First.

Then Read the Room.

Let's start here: If you're not being genuine, none of this matters. You don't need to become someone you're not.

Folks can spot a phony faster than a loose tarp in the wind.

But just like you wouldn't talk to your pastor the same way you talk to your fishing buddy, you've got to read the room. Adjust your tone, your pace, and your approach without changing who you are.

This isn't about acting. It's about understanding. The better you can read people, the better you can serve them. And that's how you earn trust.

Here's a look at the four common types of buyers you're likely to meet in our world.

1. The Quiet Thinker

These folks don't say much at first. That doesn't mean they're not interested. They're just thinking before they speak.

How to spot them:

- Slow to talk, but focused
- They'll listen, but they won't lead the conversation

How to work with them:

- Slow down. Let silence do its job
- Ask simple, open questions
- Give them time. Don't try to close the deal too fast

than you think.

How to spot them:

- They come with a list of questions
- They ask for specifics, not generalities
- They're not swayed by charm. They want facts

How to work with them:

- Be ready. Know your stuff
- Keep it clear and organized
- Don't dance around an answer. Be direct

• If you don't know something, say so and get back to them quickly

Biggest mistake? Fudging or guessing.

If they catch it, you're done.



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3. The Heart-First Buyer

These folks lead with trust and gut feeling. They care about the relationship as much as the product. Their barn or shop means something more than just storage.

How to spot them:

- They ask about who's behind the work, not just what you're building

- They respond to stories and people

- They talk about family, legacy, or community impact

How to work with them:

- Be personable. Be kind. Be real
- Share examples and stories of satisfied customers

- Don't rush. Build a connection first
- Make it about why this project matters, not just what it is

Biggest mistake? Treating the sale like a transaction. They need to feel good about who they're buying from.

- Stick to what matters to them, not what you want to sell

Biggest mistake? Mistaking quiet for disinterest. Push too hard, and they'll disappear.

2. The Detail Hound

You'll know this person fast. They want measurements, specs, wind ratings, warranties, and more. They've likely read every product sheet and might know more

4. The Take-Charge Talker

These folks like to steer the ship. They're confident, quick, and don't want to feel sold to. You'll have a great conversation, but they'll want to keep the reins.

How to spot them:

- They lead the conversation
- They're fast-paced and energetic
- They want options, not instructions

How to work with them:

- Match their energy, but don't overpower them
 - Offer clear choices and let them make the call
 - Keep it snappy. Don't get bogged down in fine print
 - Be confident and to the point
- Biggest mistake? Trying to take over.

Real Buyers Are a Mix

If only folks stayed neatly in one category, this would be simple. But most customers are a mix.

You might meet a quiet farmer who's

also deep into the numbers. Or a talkative homeowner who still wants to know exactly what kind of screws you're using.

The trick isn't to label folks. It's to listen, really listen, and figure out what matters most to them.

Trust Is Still King

In rural sales, trust is everything. Whether it's a storage barn, a metal shop, a horse shelter, or a garage add-on, people buy from someone they believe in. Period.

Like my friend Ben Gay III says: "People buy from people they know, like, trust, and with whom they feel safe."

That's not a sales tactic. That's just good business.

So be yourself. Adjust where it helps. Serve people the way they need to be served. That's how you close the deal and keep them coming back.

Let's get out there, work hard, stay honest, and go sell something.

Good selling. Let's GO. **RB**

Randy Chaffee brings four-plus decades of experience to the post-frame and metal roofing industries. Author of #1 Amazon Best Seller "Asphalt and Algorithms," he is a board member for the Buckeye Frame Builders Association and the National Frame Builders Association. Find his podcast at facebook.com/BuildingWins or call (814) 906-0001 at 1 p.m. Eastern on Mondays to listen in.



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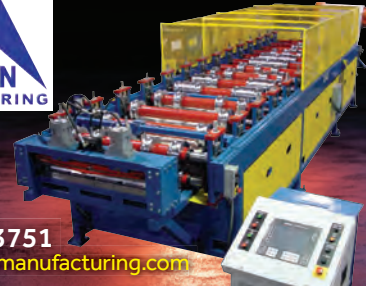
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Much ado about fasteners

MARCH 2004 FLASHBACK

This article first appeared in the March 2004 issue of *Rural Builder*, at a time when builders were being forced to re-think something many had barely given a second thought: fasteners. As the industry began moving away from CCA-treated (Chromated Copper Arsenate) lumber, new copper-heavy treatments like ACQ (Alkaline Copper Quaternary) and copper azole created unexpected corrosion problems—and suddenly, using “whatever fastener was on the truck” wasn’t good enough anymore.

Builders, manufacturers, and code officials weighed in on why fastener selection had become critical to the long-term performance of post-frame buildings. From hot-dipped galvanized coatings to stainless steel alternatives, this flashback article breaks down what works, what doesn’t, and why compatibility between wood treatments and fasteners matters.

Why It Still Matters Today

More than 20 years later, the lesson hasn’t changed: fasteners may be small, but they play an outsized role in building longevity. Treated lumber chemistry continues to evolve, moisture exposure remains a constant challenge, and corrosion-related failures are still among the most expensive problems to fix after construction is complete.

Editor’s Note (2026)

Today’s builders face even more material choices, tighter code requirements, and higher customer expectations than they did in 2004. Yet the core takeaway remains the same—fastener selection should be intentional, not automatic. In 2026, best practices increasingly include matching fasteners to specific wood treatments, using manufacturer-tested assemblies, and documenting fastener choices as part of the overall building system. The message from 2004 still holds: get the fasteners right, and the rest of the structure has a much better chance of standing the test of time.

Fasteners are to the building package as referees are to a typical athletic event — you know they are doing a good job when you don’t notice them. Recently, when a *Rural Builder* editor asked a builder what type of fasteners he used on a project, the builder responded “Don’t remember, irrelevant.”

But if you happen to be a builder who doesn’t give fasteners a second thought, listen up. Because of the ever-changing world of wood treatments, choosing the right fastener for your post-frame building is more important than ever.

“Fasteners have never been more critical than they are now,” says Maze Nails marketing director Kim Pohl. “Before, builders may have been able to get away with using a typical postframe fastener, but now, what worked with CCA is probably not going to work and last with the new treated lumber. People have to step up and use a good, top-performing fastener.”

It looks more and more as if CCA, the lumber treatment of choice for years, will become less and less available for use with post-frame buildings. The Environmental Protection Agency has seemingly approved the use of CCA with nail-laminated columns, and 4x6s may get an official EPA blessing. But even if lumber suppliers continue to treat products with CCA, it appears that at least one product will need to be treated with one of the alternatives: skirtboards.

The top two candidates to replace CCA, copper azole and alkaline copper quat, both contain higher levels of copper than CCA. Copper, as a more noble, cathodic metal, can be expected to corrode a less noble, anodic metal like zinc, the coating for conventional G-60 electro-galvanized fasteners.

Fastener manufacturers have reported rapid corrosion when standard fasteners are placed in wood treated with copper-

heavy chemicals — some tests have shown the alternative treatments to be twice as corrosive as CCA. But safer, albeit more expensive, fastener alternatives exist, and are being promoted by both fastener companies and chemical manufacturers.

“The key to corrosion protection is understanding the alternative pressure-treated woods on the market, and which fastener products are suitable for each type of wood treatment,” says Mark Crawford of Simpson Strong-Tie.

Stainless steel and bronze are closer to copper on the galvanic scale, and therefore less corrosive in contact with the alternative treatments. But bronze (and copper) fasteners are not readily available in the construction industry, and stainless products cost considerably more than galvanized. Stainless steel fasteners and connectors are required for permanent wood foundations below grade, with type 304 and 316 the recommended grades to use.

Hot-dipped galvanized fasteners, which come with a considerably heavier coat of protective zinc, will likely prove to be the most popular choice for builders. There are two main processes used to hot-dip galvanize parts, continuous hot-dip galvanizing and batch or post hot-dip galvanizing. Continuous hot-dip galva-



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nizing is generally used to galvanize steel coils at various speeds on lighter gauge steel. Batch hot-dip galvanizing is generally used to galvanize heavier individual parts not capable of being fabricated from galvanized steel coils, and can be used to galvanize fasteners and anchors as well. The parts are dipped into molten zinc for a longer period than with the continuous method, usually resulting in a thicker coating and more protection against corrosion.

Hot-dip galvanizing provides fasteners with between 40 and 80 microns of coating, according to Tom Langill, technical

director of the American Galvanizers Association, compared to about 5 microns of coating with the electro-galvanizing process (25 microns is equal to 1 mil).

“It’s a fairly thick coating in terms of corrosion protection, that’s what gives hot-dipped galvanized parts longevity,” says Langill. “When you look long term, the amount of zinc determines the life of the coating. Obviously, you shouldn’t put too much zinc on a part, it still has to be able to work as a fastener.”

Hot-dipped galvanized fasteners should meet ASTM-A153 specifications. A153 requires fasteners to be coated with a minimum of 1 ounce of zinc per square foot of surface area (about 1.7 mils). By comparison, a G-60 coating would have 0.60 ounces per square foot of surface area. The result is a more consistent and thicker coating applied to the carbon steel metal from which fasteners are manufactured.

Hot-dipped galvanized fasteners should not be confused with hot-galvanized fasteners. Hot-galvanized fasteners are coated by sprinkling zinc chips on cold steel fasteners in a barrel, then rotating the hot barrel in a furnace to melt and distribute the zinc. The melting zinc washes off on the nails, but the zinc is not uniformly distributed.

Langill, who is chairman of the subcommittee that makes changes to A153, building fasteners says the committee has been asked to include other processes, like hot galvanizing, in A153. The committee has discussed it, and will likely discuss it again in May. “In terms of corrosion protection, (hot-dipped and hot galvanizing) may be pretty similar,” says Langill. “I don’t know what the uniformity and repeatability is with hot galvanizing.”

Other methods for applying zinc coatings to fasteners include mechanical plating, where fasteners are rolled with zinc dust, glass, and water in a barrel, and electro-galvanizing, where an electric current deposits zinc anodes onto the surface of the fasteners.

Huck DeVenzio of Arch Wood Protection, which manufactures both CCA and copper azole, says the technical committee of the International Code Council, unprompted by the three chemical companies, has approved an amendment to the model codes that will require fasteners used with treated wood to meet A153. The amendment will be voted on by full membership at ICC’s spring meeting, and is expected to pass.

Jay Levy of Ideal Building Fasteners stresses A153 is only a specification for a galvanizing process and zinc thickness, and is not the same as actual testing of fasteners’ performance in an ACQ or copper azole atmosphere. Levy also says that when taking the total building package into account, fasteners with advanced levels of corrosion resistance may account for only a small percentage of the total fasteners used.

“The builders I’ve talked to, these guys said to me that most of the lumber they use above ground is untreated, unless it’s a high moisture environment,” he says. “Most of the fasteners are going into untreated lumber. ACQ may only come into play on the skirtboard.”

In that case, Levy advises builders to use 300 series stainless steel fasteners around the skirtboard, even though it would require pre-drilling holes. “It makes more sense to spend a small fraction of his time and money to ensure there are no problems,” he says.

Whether using hot-dipped galvanized or stainless steel products, both fasteners and connectors must be of the same metal type and have the same coating and finish. Also, aluminum should never be used in direct contact with the new copper-heavy treatments.

Chemical manufacturer Osmose maintains a list of hardware manufacturers with products recommended for use with ACQ treated wood.

Builders are advised to contact fastener suppliers for their recommendations regarding proper fasteners for use with ACQ and copper azole. **RB**



Frame Building Expo Schedule at a Glance

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24th

4-7 PM Registration

5-8 PM NFBA Certification Testing

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25th

7 AM-5 PM Registration

7-8:30 AM Breakfast

8-9 AM Educational Breakout Sessions

- BUSINESS MANAGEMENT: *Coaching for Success*, Eric Miner – Blunier Buildings
- SALES AND MARKETING: *Building Barndos: Opportunity or Headache?* Paul & Emily Marshall – Mr. Post Frame
- SAFETY AND TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE: *Using Reflective Technologies to Improve the Thermal Performance of Your Building Envelope*, Monty Millspaugh - Reflective Insulation Manufacturers Association (RIMA)

9-9:15 AM Break

9:15-10:15 AM Educational Breakout Sessions

- BUSINESS MANAGEMENT: *Strategic Planning: Building Your Bench Strength*, Ed Krow - Ed Krow LLC
- SALES AND MARKETING: *Why Your Barndo Clients are Burning Out: Practical Processes to Master the Barndominium Cycle*, Olivia Berg - Back Forty Buildings, and Emily Marshall - Mr. Post Frame
- SAFETY AND TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE: *Safety Best Practices & NFBA Resources That Can Help*
 - ♦ Gary Auman - Moderator
 - ♦ Todd Meinhold – H&D Quality Builders
 - ♦ Perry Lynch – Walters Buildings
 - ♦ Dave Underwood – FBI Buildings

10:15-10:45 AM Break

10:45 AM-12:45 PM KEYNOTE SPEAKER AND MEMBERSHIP MEETING

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION: *The Good, The Bad, & The Ugly: An Economic Update*, Dr. Anirban Basu - Chairman and CEO of Sage Policy Group (SPG), one of the Mid-Atlantic region's leading economic consultants.

1-5 PM EXPO OPEN

EXPO FLOOR ACTIVITIES

1:30-3:00 PM Shed Building Demo – Part 1

5-7 PM Women in Post Frame Meet N' Greet

8 PM-12 AM Plyco Reception

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26th

7 AM-5 PM Registration

7-8:30 AM Breakfast

8-9:00 AM Educational Breakout Sessions

- BUSINESS MANAGEMENT: *The Loyalty Crisis: Why Good Workers Leave & How to Make them Stay*, Lisa Ryan - Grategy
- SALES AND MARKETING: *The 5 Pillars of Empathy: Driving Growth & Collaboration in the Frame Building Industry*, Jevon Wooden - BrightMind Consulting Group
- SAFETY AND TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE: *The 3-Hour Firewall*, Tim Royer - Timber Tech Engineering

9-9:10 AM Break

9:10-10:10 AM Educational Breakout Sessions

- BUSINESS MANAGEMENT: *Leadership - Part 1*, Pete McDowell & Peg Buehrle - ActionCoach
- SALES AND MARKETING: *How Executive Presence and Relationship Intelligence Drive Sales Excellence*, Jevon Wooden - BrightMind Consulting Group

- SAFETY AND TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE: *Sealed & Certified: The Real Deal on Spray Foam for Post-Frame Construction*, Mike Dyna - X Spray Jones and Paul Marshall - Mr. Post Frame

10:10-10:20 AM Break

10:20-11:20 AM Educational Breakout Sessions

- BUSINESS MANAGEMENT: *Leadership - Part 2*, Pete McDowell & Peg Buehrle - ActionCoach
- SALES AND MARKETING: *7 Critical Brand Management Strategies You Shouldn't Ignore*
- SAFETY AND TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE: *The AI-Powered Builder: How Smart Tech is Reshaping Construction and Business*, Kevin Fox - Foxwerx Group

11:20-11:45 AM Break

11:45 AM-1:15 PM Awards Luncheon (ticketed event)

12-4:30 PM EXPO OPEN

EXPO FLOOR ACTIVITIES

2-3 PM Shed Building Demo – Part 2

5-7 PM Christians in Construction Reception

7-10 PM Expo Social and Foundation Auction

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27th

8-10:30 AM Registration

8:30-10 AM Continental Breakfast

8:30 AM-12:30 PM EXPO OPEN

EXPO FLOOR ACTIVITIES

11-11:45 AM Nail-Driving Competition

12:00 PM Grand Prize Drawing



NFBA Announces Event Details

The big news at this time, of course, is the industry is gearing up for Frame Building Expo, which will be held in Oklahoma City, February 25-27, 2026.

Over three days, the event will bring together builders, suppliers, manufacturers, designers, and engineers to share knowledge, explore new products, and build business relationships.

Attendees can take part in educational breakout sessions in areas such as business management, sales and marketing, technical topics, and safety.

The Expo floor features more than 150 exhibiting companies offering tools, materials, and innovations specifically for post-frame buildings.

There are also practical demonstrations, competitions (such as nail-driving), and networking receptions.

It's both an educational forum and a marketplace, helping industry stakeholders stay current on trends, technology, and regulation while making meaningful connections.

Show Location and Hotel

The 58th Annual NFBA Post Frame Expo will be held at the Oklahoma City Convention Center and Omni Hotel.

- Oklahoma City Convention Center
100 Mick Cornett Dr.
Oklahoma City, OK 73109-1101
- Omni Oklahoma City Hotel
100 Oklahoma City Blvd
Oklahoma City, OK 73109

The Room rate will be \$229 (single and double occupancy), \$249 (triple occupancy) and \$269 (quadruple occupancy) + taxes (currently 14.12%). Your Guest Room Rate includes complimentary deluxe WiFi in guest rooms and public spaces.

Rooms will be available at the Group Rate three days pre- and post-conference dates based on availability.

Book Your Room Online at <https://bookings.omnihotels.com/event/oklahoma-city/2026-nfba-conference-expo>

Room Block Closing Date: Friday, January 23, 2026 at 5 PM CT

Parking in Oklahoma City:

There is a parking garage and surface lot available at the Oklahoma City Convention Center. The current cost of parking is \$10 per vehicle. The Omni hotel also offers valet parking.

Register online at <https://www.nfba.org/aws/NFBA/pt/sp/building-expo>


Fax: Complete a separate registration form for each employee and fax all forms together to 937-278-0317.


Mail: Complete a separate registration form for each employee and mail them together to: NFBA, 7250 Poe Ave. Ste. 410, Dayton, OH 45414.

Phone: Get personalized support by calling 800-557-6957


Program Changes and Cancellations:

NFBA reserves the right to substitute speakers or to cancel and reschedule events due to any unforeseen circumstances. If NFBA must cancel a show, registrants will receive a full credit or refund of their paid registration fee. No refunds will be made for lodging, airfare, or any related expenses. **RB**







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■ **COMBILIFT'S 100,000TH FORKLIFT RAISES €100,000 FOR GLOBAL CHILDREN'S CHARITY**

Monaghan, Ireland – 22nd December 2025

Global materials overseeing leader Combilift has celebrated a major manufacturing milestone by transforming its 100,000th forklift into a powerful force for good, raising and donating €100,000 (about \$116,535 USD) to the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund to support children in crisis worldwide.

To mark the production of its 100,000th forklift, Combilift launched its largest-ever worldwide competition, offering the exclusive 100,000th "Golden Prize" multidirectional Combi-CBE. All proceeds raised were donated to UNICEF Ireland's Children's Emergency Fund.

The campaign generated €56,500 (\$65,842USD) in ticket sales, and at a check presentation ceremony, Combilift announced it had topped up the total contribution to an impressive €100,000, underlining the company's long-standing commitment to corporate social responsibility.

Speaking at the handover, Combilift CEO and Co-Founder Martin McVicar said:

"This campaign was designed not only to celebrate a major manufacturing achievement for Combilift, but also to make a meaningful difference beyond

the factory floor. By supporting UNICEF, we are supporting one of the world's most effective humanitarian organizations and helping children who need it most."

The check was formally presented by Martin McVicar to Owen Buckley, UNICEF Ireland's Head of Corporate Partnerships, and Michaela Plunkett, Business Development Manager, in Monaghan.

Owen Buckley welcomed the donation, saying:

"As we enter the winter season, our priority is ensuring children affected by war and natural disasters have access to warm clothing, safe shelter and continued education. This generous contribution from Combilift will help UNICEF respond quickly to urgent needs."

The winning ticket was purchased by Karen Farrell, who travelled to Combilift's headquarters in Monaghan to receive the one-of-a-kind 100,000th Combi-CBE "Golden Forklift."

Reacting to her win, Karen Farrell said:

"I was absolutely delighted when I heard I had won, as I'm never lucky. My dad shared the competition details and bought a ticket to support UNICEF because it's a children's charity that helps children all over the world, so winning the forklift was an incredible bonus."

The Golden Forklift was first unveiled at the IMHX Exhibition in the UK before embarking on a European trade show tour, attracting strong international interest and reflecting Combilift's global cus-

tomer base and shared commitment to positive social impact.

For more information, please visit: <https://combilift.com/win-a-truck/>

UNICEF does not endorse any company, brand, product or service.

■ **MFM BUILDING PRODUCTS TO CELEBRATE 65TH ANNIVERSARY**

Coshocton, Ohio – MFM Building Products, a manufacturer of a full envelope of waterproofing and weather barrier products for the building industry, will be celebrating the company's 65th Anniversary in 2026.

MFM Building Products was founded in 1961 in Coshocton, Ohio. Initially, the company manufactured products used for wrapping underground pipe to protect from water penetration and pipe contents becoming contaminated. Over the years, MFM expanded this technology to develop sealing and waterproofing products for use within the building envelope. In July 2017, MFM became a 100% employee-owned ESOP company that still holds true to its original core values.

Today, MFM manufactures a wide array of self-adhered weather barrier products that include low-slope roofing membranes, roofing underlayments, window and door flashing tapes, multi-purpose waterproofing membranes, specialized waterproofing tapes, and HVAC duct and

pipe wrap. These exterior, waterproofing membranes are self-adhering and self-sealing for ease of installation and complete waterproofing protection.

MFM products are manufactured in the United States and sold through an extensive distributor network around the globe. The company’s products qualify for the Buy American Act (BAA) and Build America Buy American Act (BABAA).

According to Tony Reis, President, “MFM can offer our customers a complete

envelope of waterproofing solutions – everything from the rooftop to the foundation. This single-source option gives our customers several competitive advantages.”

For more information concerning MFM Building Products, please contact the company at:



MFM Building Products

525 Orange Street, Coshocton, OH 43812
 Phone: 800-882-7663 | Fax: 740-622-6161
 www.mfmbp.com

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Let’s Show Off Great Rural Buildings
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BY KATHLEEN RILEY

Every year, we look forward to one of our favorite issues of *Rural Builder: The Rural Builder Source Book*. It’s our chance to celebrate the buildings that make this industry special—and the builders behind them.

The Source Book brings together stand-out rural projects from across the country. Agricultural buildings, equine facilities, shops, churches, commercial spaces, storage buildings—we want to see them all. If you’re proud of a project, chances are it has something to teach, inspire, or spark an idea for another builder.

When you submit a project, you’re doing more than sharing photos. You’re helping us tell the real stories of rural construction, how challenges were solved, how clients’ needs were met, and how thoughtful design and quality materials come together in the field.

Being selected also gives your business meaningful visibility. Featured projects receive national exposure in *Rural Builder*,

reaching builders, suppliers, engineers, and decision-makers throughout the industry. You’ll also receive an “As Seen in the *Rural Builder* Source Book” digital badge to use on your website, proposals, and social media.

We make it easy to participate. Submissions include basic company and project details, a list of key materials and systems, and clear, high-quality photos. If your project is selected, you’ll have the opportunity to review the layout before publication—and we’ll provide high-resolution digital files of your published pages for your own marketing use.

All contributors receive a complimentary subscription to *Rural Builder* (or an extension if you’re already a subscriber), so you’ll have the issue your project appears in to share with your team and customers.

The *Rural Builder* Source Book is built by builders, for builders. If you’ve completed a project you’re proud of, we’d love to see it—and share it with the rest of the industry.



Questions or ready to submit? Visit the *Rural Builder* submission page: <https://ruralbuildermagazine.com/rural-builder-source-book-project-submission-form/> Contact editor Kathleen Riley at kathleen@shieldwallmedia.com.



TerraNova Equestrian Center

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Set on 225 acres in Myakka City, Florida, TerraNova Equestrian Center expanded its world-class, multidiscipline competition facility following strong early success. Opened in 2020, TerraNova hosts national and international events across eventing, hunter-jumper, dressage, and driving, combining top-tier competition with a family-friendly atmosphere.

B&D Builders, an Amish-based firm from Pennsylvania known for high-quality equine facilities, was selected to complete the fall expansion after constructing the original phase. The project included two luxury competition barns, each with 136 custom-built stalls, high ceilings for airflow, integrated speaker systems, and aisleway TVs—designed to enhance com-

fort for both horses and competitors. A new open-air pavilion with judges' and announcers' booths and a show office. "We want to provide the best experience possible to everyone who comes through the gate," said TerraNova President Hannah Herrig Ketelboeter. "B&D has been integral to delivering the quality buildings that support a truly world-class experience."

The expansion underscores TerraNova's commitment to thoughtful design, craftsmanship, and long-term growth as one of Florida's premier equestrian venues. **RB**

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THE DETAILS:

B&D Builders: General Contractor/Primary Builder Daniel Glick daniel.glick@banddbuilders.com

Mid-Atlantic Timber Frames: Design and Construction Timber frame building Sam Ebersol samuel.ebersol@matflc.com

Vintage Millwork & Restoration: Shutters, column wraps, stall front panels, garage doors. All interior and exterior entry doors and garage doors, driveway gates, supplied mahogany timbers on the porches, tackroom Island components, saddleracks, bridlehooks, pot rack. Some of the doors include the TN logo, an engraved horse head. Amos Fisher amos.fisher@vintage-mr.com

Blackwood Equestrian Stalls: Stall Manufacturer initial phase - 24 custom stalls Expansion - additional 270 stalls fronts, sliding doors and windows Scott Trump scott.trump@masteelfab.com

Vintage Wood & Forged Iron: Hand forged chandeliers, railings, handrails. 2 double tier chandeliers, 1 triple tier chandelier, railings for central staircase and handrails for entry stairs. Emanuel Glick emanuel.glick@banddbuilders.com

Rosie The Riveter says:

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