

STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE

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TPI/WTCA Letter on FBPE Implementation

TO: All Component Manufacturers Serving the Florida Market

FROM: The TPI Board of Directors and WTCA Board of Directors

DATE: May 28, 2003

RE: TPI and WTCA's Collective Point of View On FBPE Rule 61G15-31.003

As you should already be aware, the new Florida truss regulation 61G15-31.003—"Design of Structures Utilizing Prefabricated Wood Trusses"—became effective on April 30. This is the culmination of diligent, time consuming, difficult and valuable work by TPI and WTCA members, and the Florida Home Builders Association.

In simple terms, here is what we have done for our industry with this new rule:

- The use of a sealed cover or index sheet has overcome a Florida legal hurdle and its use is now clearly defined and easier to implement.
- The use of sealed cover or index sheets free the Truss Design Engineer from endless stamping of drawings which significantly frees up time. This time can then be better spent focused on the truss design process. Every professional engineer that is undertaking truss design in Florida should take advantage of the time savings the use of a sealed cover or index sheet provides.
- The sealed cover or index sheet helps Building Departments by clearly identifying the Structural Engineer of Record when there is one and the Truss Design Engineer; the general loading conditions; the building code and computer program used; and quickly shows an index of all trusses in the package.
- This rule eliminated the proposed statewide requirement to seal a truss placement plan and the cost increase that would have come with implementing this requirement.

The major point that everyone needs to understand is that 61G15-31.003 does not change the way our industry has traditionally undertaken truss design work in Florida, but in fact can simplify and reduce the time expended and expense of the process. At the same time, the change makes it quick and easy for Building Officials to find all the information they need.

Additionally, here is what we have done for our industry with this new rule:

This change created two new definitions that have never been formally used before in the truss industry—a "Truss System" and a "Truss System Engineer." Our industry will continue to function using truss technicians and Truss Design Engineers. Should a Structural Engineer of Record desire to have an engineer undertake the entire truss system design then he/she would employ a Truss System Engineer.

Following is how the rule works from our perspective: 1) when there is a Structural Engineer of Record and 2) when there is only a requirement to provide sealed Truss Design Drawings.

1) When there is a Structural Engineer of Record on the job and that engineer delegates (directly or indirectly) a portion of the design work to an engineer undertaking truss analysis and design work, that engineer will be defined as either a Truss Design Engineer or a Truss System Engineer depending upon the scope of responsibility that is asked for by the Structural Engineer of Record. The work that the Structural Engineer of Record requires to be done must be defined in writing in accordance with Florida regulations found in 61G15-30.005.

When this work is the traditional work that we undertake in our industry, i.e., work defined as requiring a Truss Design Engineer, then the section 5 of 61G15-31.003 applies and the Truss Design Engineer designs the individual structural components. When this work is defined specifically as that requiring a Truss System Engineer, then Section 4 of 61G15-31.003 applies and the Truss System Engineer will design all the trusses that make up the truss system. This will include the applied loading, spacing, truss locations, bracing, connections, etc. applicable to the Truss System.

2) When there is no Structural Engineer of Record on the job and there is still a requirement to provide sealed truss design drawings, there is no change in the way the industry currently undertakes this work—a Truss Design Engineer will provide this information and can now use a cover or index sheet.

In conclusion, 61G15-31.003 does not change the way our industry has traditionally undertaken truss design work in Florida. It has merely added the concept of a Truss System Engineer to the process should a Structural Engineer of Record desire to have an engineer undertake the design of the truss system. Should the request be made of any CM to design the truss system, this can be done and may include an additional cost, since this work falls well beyond our traditional scope of responsibility as designers and manufacturers of single truss components.

Respectfully Yours,

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