

STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE

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Publisher's Message Ten Years of Quality by SBC Staff

"Quality is a picture of your business and business philosophy."

Before diving into this issue's focus on quality control, let's page through the SBC and WOODWORDS archives. Where have we been? How far have we come? In looking back just ten years ago to 1994, it is amazing to discover that everything and nothing has changed in the span of a decade.

In the February 1994 issue of WOODWORDS, WTCA President Lee Vulgaris wrote about his goals to "double the WTCA membership," which meant going from 342 to 684 and increase the industry's total market share during his term. His other goal? Complete the WTCA Quality Assurance (QA) Program. Similarly, Mark Hope, P.E. (Vice President of Engineering for Timber Products Inspection), talked about WTCA's work on the QA program, "...over the past ten years, WTCA has, almost since its inception, focused efforts, time and money on developing and implementing an industry accepted quality assurance program." Hope made a final important point on quality: In order to survive the quality-minded competition and protect existing markets, the industry would have to unite in the creation of an effective quality control program.

Five years later in 1999, the status of the elusive quality assurance program that Vulgaris and Hope spoke of had come into being. In the [November 1999 issue of WOODWORDS](#), Executive Director Kirk Grundahl announced, "We have talked about the quality assurance program within WTCA for a long time and have recently been implementing WTCA QC (a new name for the QA program) as a way of promoting quality control among our membership." WTCA QC not only met the standards Hope outlined, it exceeded them.

We also saw a visible industry trend toward "total quality management," as reported by WTCA President Roger Gibbs in [November 1999](#): "Quality goes beyond how we manufacture and produce our product, how good the lumber looks, how the plates are positioned, etc. Quality is a picture of your business and business philosophy." By 1999, component manufacturers were beginning to recognize that the essence of true quality control meant a commitment to continuous improvement in every aspect of their business.

It is clear that in the span of a decade, one thing has not changed: Quality has remained a primary focus for component manufacturers. What has changed the face of quality control and assurance is how manufacturers measure it. Now we quantify quality not only by inspection data, but also by the number of customer callbacks received and the proficiency of our technicians. Essentially, our definition of "quality control" has expanded to include every department and every position imaginable—total quality management.

You may be curious about the CD polybagged with this issue. Brought to you by the folks at

WTCA, you'll find short video segments on WTCA programs, intended to support you as you work to improve your business. There's even a fun twist, but we aren't giving away any hints. You'll have to pop the CD in and find out for yourself.

We welcome a new column to SBC in this issue: [Code Connection](#). As its title suggests, Code Connection will "connect" you to building code issues as they pertain to component manufacturing, as well as break down certain codes into understandable terms.

Finally, [Hurricane Charley](#) left its devastating mark on Florida's west and south coasts in mid-August. While there was little good news for those who experienced Charley's wrath, photos, reports and eye witness accounts indicate that structures containing pre-fabricated building components [fared exceptionally well in the storm](#). Turn to page 32 for details on component performance.

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