

SFIA Provides Update to AWCI's Construction Technology Committees

During AWCI's Industry Executives' Conference & Committee Meetings at the end of September, the Steel Framing Industry Association announced it has added 55 new contractor members and that Consolidated Fabricators is the newest manufacturer member.

Relating to the promote of steel framing, SFIA reported producing four new case studies that promote the advantages of cold-formed steel framing in mid-rise construction, and they are looking for additional success stories that can be shared with the market. Project case studies are four-color, four-page reports that are written and produced by SFIA at no cost to the member company.

Also, in 2017, SFIA, ClarkDietrich and AISI co-funded the development of a website, buildsteel.org, to promote steel framing. The site continues to experience high traffic from GCs, contractors and design professionals from around the United States. At the end of 2019, SFIA will assume full control over the site, and future development plans include the continued development of useful educational content, the creation of a Buyer's Guide section to allow for commercial messages for specific products, and a provider directory that will help visitors find and connect with contractors and service providers.

SFIA is involved in fire and life safety on tall mass-timber buildings, and the group is aggressively pursuing an outreach program. To that end SFIA reports that the objective of this initiative is to roll back building code changes that allow the use of combustible wood framing in mid-rise buildings through state and local legislation, and to promote the use of noncombustible framing materials.

In Los Angeles, an ordinance was introduced in June 2019 that establishes a fire district, severely restricting the use of wood framing and cross-laminated timber in very large areas of the city. The ordinance is expected to move through public safety and planning and land use management committees this fall, with a final council vote late this year or in early 2020.

In New Jersey, House and Senate bills have been introduced that require significant measures to mitigate the risks of combustible wood frame construction in mid-rise buildings. The Senate will hear the bill in October, and the House will move on the bill after the November election.

In Philadelphia, a fire district similar to what is currently in place in Chicago and New York is moving through the City Council.

A bill similar to the New Jersey legislation was introduced earlier this year in Massachusetts, and hearings have been initiated. The first was held Sept. 12 with a joint House/Senate Committee hearing.

Work has just begun on coalition development in Colorado.