

Letters

In Favor of Interior-Design Law

Attorney Ed Nagorsky of the National Kitchen & Bath Association — which opposes California SB 1312, the proposed interior-design bill — is forgetting one major thing (*In the News*, 6/08): This bill addresses the issue of protecting the customer. Shouldn't that be our main objective? Our jobs are to provide our clients with the best possible product or service for the money.

There is a clear need for this bill. There are way too many people stating they can do something when they clearly can't. I am sure Mr. Nagorsky would not appreciate it if someone could read an article or take a two-hour seminar and then call himself an attorney. Yet this kind of thing happens all the time in the construction industry, and the ones who suffer are the unsuspecting clients.

Jack Smyer, AIA
Solana Beach, Calif.

Stabilizing Steel Against Buckling

I am not an engineer, just a builder. I have successfully eliminated a few basement posts over the years, but I've never seen it done as described in "Stretching the Span With Steel" (5/08). If the WTs were put in the "T" position, that would be one thing, but when you rotate them to the position used here, you will end up with a tendency for deflection. In the "T" position the web would be under tension. But with an upside-down "T," the web is under compression, which limits its strength because there's no opposing flange to keep it from buckling.

Dale Richardson
Chelsea, Mich.

Author Jordan Truesdell responds: That's a good observation — the stability of the vertical web of the WT was an issue in this design. When the steel is fully stabilized, a

T-shape will have the same capacity regardless of whether the flange is on the top or the bottom; it will fail in bending before buckling occurs. This is the case with a flitch plate beam assembly: The lumber layers stabilize the steel to prevent it from buckling.

In the original plan for this project, I had envisioned a kerf barely larger than the web, which would make the steel fit snugly and stabilize the web. Because the slot was cut larger than originally anticipated, the builder drove shims between the ends of the joists and the steel web, pressing the web against the wood beam so that it would remain stable. This detail should have been mentioned in the article.

It's worth noting that it also would have been possible to use a heavier WT section that would not have required this additional bracing. But for the size used, even if the "T" were inverted, the section would still need to be stabilized. There is a second set of charts in the steel manual that deals with the lateral torsional buckling of "W" sections, though it's referenced less frequently.

In most cases where lumber is connected to steel, the necessary restraint is provided by the lumber connection itself. One of our regular checks for beam stability is to verify that the stabilizing members have enough strength to resist buckling.

One Big Happy Family?

In his June letter, Lance Hudson says that customers are likely to "go looking until they find a cheaper contractor who will do the job with immigrant workers." While that may be true, shouldn't we, in discussions about illegal residents, use the word "immigrants" to describe legal immigrants instead of automatically implying that it refers to people who live here illegally?

This country is founded on and continues to prosper from immigrants — myself included — who came here to seek a better life. It's an injustice to those of us who have followed all of the proper procedures to live here as legal resident aliens to lump illegal residents and legal immigrants into one big happy family.

Don Dunkley
Cool, Calif.

KEEP 'EM COMING!

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