



**THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER ESTABLISHED TO  
SHARE CONSTRUCTION EXPERTISE & KNOWLEDGE  
WITHIN OUR DIVERSE COMMUNITY**

## "WE ARE AN IN PERSON ORGANIZATION..."

BY WENDY BENNER

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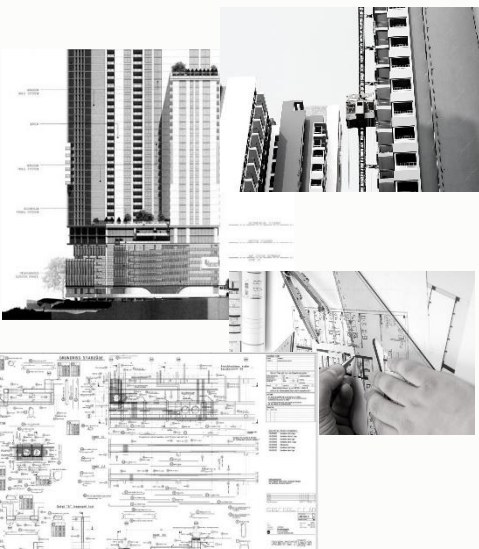
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Recently, at our Board of Directors Meeting, (the very meeting this newsletter was conceptualized, in fact), our fearless leader, Joe Quilici, included the above statement as part of a bigger conversation. Oddly, this benign comment resonated with me in a pretty impactful way, and when thinking about how to initiate our first newsletter correspondence, I knew Joe Q's little snippet had to be the welcome message, so it bears repeating; "we are an in-person organization". Personally, I think this is the basis of what makes Westcon so different from every other trade organization I participate in and it seems the perfect descriptor for why the Board, along with our management team, spends so much time working on strategies to find ways to safely host in person events and stay both inclusive and connected at a time where that has proved challenging, at best.

Let's start with the obvious; WE MISS SEEING YOU. The last two years have resulted in previously incomprehensible changes that have altered the way most of us "do life"; just ruminating on the technology advancements alone can blow your mind. However, with all of the virtual meeting platforms that resulted in the amazing business attire combination of the clothing mullet (formal on the top and comfort on the bottom), at home schooling, quarantine pets, sourdough bread making mastery, instructional webinars on everything from wine tasting to coating specialties, we have an entirely new vernacular for everyday normalcies we had never heard of two long decades, I mean years, ago. Many of us loved the lockdown at first and relished in some time away from the office and obligations. Yet, as time has passed, the desire to see our colleagues, shake hands, and share a meal has increased exponentially and the corresponding value assigned to each of these things has catapulted. The Westcon Board has spent countless hours strategizing how to adopt safe practices that provide us pathways for a return to in-person gatherings and this remains a very fluid, and sometimes challenging, process.

Maybe all these things little musings are at the root of why Joe's statement resonated, maybe it is his passion for every part of this organization or perhaps it is just middle-age sentimentality. Comedic sarcasm aside, I believe that Westcon's diverse population of incredible people, whose willingness to share their vast knowledge in an inclusive environment, makes me miss seeing each of you that much more. We are an in-person organization, however this is not yet an in person world, so let's stay connected until we are able to all safely meet again. This newsletter is our latest attempt to do just that...we hope you embrace it, enjoy it and contribute to it; remember the collective YOU, or us, is what makes Westcon, well, Westcon.



# A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

BY JOE QUILICI

## Westcon – September Meeting Review

The first Westcon fall 2021 meeting started with the familiar networking buzz, and something was different this time, as it was our first hybrid event offering in-person and virtual attendance. I was so excited to see everyone again and catch-up, as well as working on the details of the technology challenges, that I forgot to suggest we do self-introductions.

### Meeting attendees are listed here:

Robert Bateman - Simpson, Gumpertz & Heger Inc.  
Andrew Bates – EmpireWorks

Matt Clark -

Phil Dregger – Technical Roof Services, Inc.

Brandon Kanner – ACT Construction

Joshua Kardon – Joshua Kardon Structural Engineers

Ronald Loar, Professional Engineer

David Mangini – Saarman Construction

Michelle McNamara – Association Maintenance Services, Inc.

Brian Neumann – Neumann, Sloat, Arnold Architects

Richard (Rick) Norris – Norris Consulting Services

Rakesh Peer – EmpireWorks

Joseph (Joe) Quilici – Silicon Valley Civil & Structural Engineers

Meagan Svendsen – Avelar

Gerald Veiluva – Hayashida Architects

Frank Wabiszewski - Avelar

Kate Warner & guest – Kate Warner Construction Lawyers

Henry Wong – Saarman Construction

- The basic building code options in the United States
- Two basic approaches for compliance with Chapter 7A in the California Building Code

“Thank You” again Dr. Quarles for that informational presentation!

“Thanks” also to our Program Committee Chairs Wendy Benner & Bob Hemphill, and our Executive Director’s

Office, Connerly & Associates for setting-up our meetings and programs!

...and “Thank you” to our Board of Directors, Bob Hemphill, Richard Baumann, Jerry Veluva, Brian Neumann, Wendy Benner, Kevin Flynn, Mike Hilliard, Josh Kardon, Bill Mann, Meagan Svendsen, Henry Wong, and advisor Antony Mills for their foresight & leadership!



The meeting presentation titled, “**Wildfire and the Built Environment**”, by *Dr. Stephen Quarles, University of California Cooperative Extension Advisor Emeritus*, presented 4 learning objectives:

- The three basic exposures that buildings threatened by wildfire must resist
- The meaning of a “coupled approach” as related to building survival during wildfires

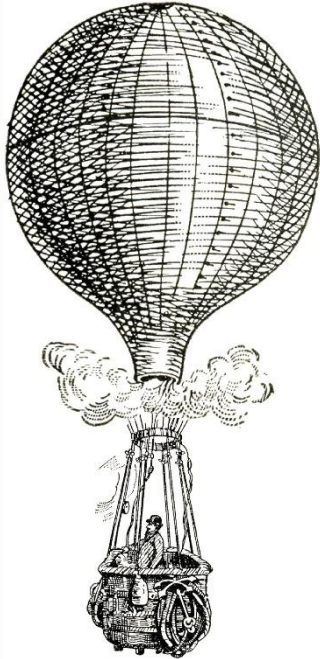


# On the Lighter Side

SUBMITTED BY JOSH KARDON

## The Hot-Air Balloon

A man in a hot-air balloon realized that he was lost. Upon reducing altitude he spotted a man below. He descended a bit more and shouted, "Excuse me. Can you help me? I promised a friend that I would meet him an hour ago but I don't know where I am."



The man below replied, "You are in a hot-air balloon hovering approximately 30 feet above the ground. You are between 37 and 38 degrees north latitude and between 122 and 123 degrees west longitude."

"You must be an engineer" said the balloonist. "I am," replied the man. "How did you know?"

"Well," answered the balloonist, "everything that you told me is technically correct but I have no idea of what to make of your information, and the fact is, I am still lost. Frankly, you've not been of much help so far."

The man below responded, "You must be a manager." "I am," replied the balloonist, "but how did you know?"

"Well," said the man, "you don't know where you are or where you are going. You have risen to where you are due to a large quantity of hot air. You made a promise which you have no idea how to keep, and you expect me to solve your problem. The fact is, you are in exactly the same position that you were before we met, but now, somehow, it's my fault."



**Stay Up to Date with WestCon...**

## JOIN US



For our next meeting on October 20, 2021, at Scott's JLS for **Construction Material Shortages**, a panel presentation moderated by Antony Mills, with representatives from Home Depot, American Woodmark Cabinets, Glidden Paints, Simonton Windows, & Orepac Doors!

**TABLETOP & PANELIST SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE!** ...showcase your company with a tabletop or panelists' meal sponsorship, including microphone time to promote to the group as well as one-on-one trade show type presentations during networking before & after the meeting!  
..... SEE YOU THERE!

## Renew Your Membership Today!

**CLICK HERE** to renew your membership and be a part of everything WestCon has planned in 2022!

## GET PUBLISHED IN THE WESTCON NEWSLETTER!

Submit your articles, white papers, construction and management related writings to [wendyb@awtconstructioninc.com](mailto:wendyb@awtconstructioninc.com) for review and publishing!



Save  
the  
Date!

# JOIN WESTCON FOR OUR NEXT SYMPOSIUM!

**Thursday, April 7, 2022**

**For a preview on the topics and discussions in the Spring, read the following article and be on the lookout for Symposium details to follow.**

## Case Studies: The Perils of Poor Rim Joist Closure Construction

Originally Publication: AVELAR – Lonnie Haughton, Timothy Stokes, and Bobby Whitworth, Jr. Case Studies: *The Perils of Poor Rim Joist Closure Construction* – ©2021

### Introduction

In 1999, renowned building envelope guru Joseph Lstiburek, PhD, PE, of the Building Science Corporation in Westford, MA, published a lengthy study, “Air Pressure and Building Envelopes”, demonstrating that: “Control of air pressure is key to several important performance aspects of the building system.”<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Lstiburek’s informative analysis includes performance comparisons of “well-defined” and “poorly-defined” air-pressure boundaries, including the “wind tunnel effect” produced by “leaky” rim joists (aka, band joists) at multistory buildings. As depicted at Figure 1 below (closely derived from Figure 18 of Dr. Lstiburek’s report), rim joists enclose the semi-conditioned interstitial floor space between the conditioned levels of a building.<sup>2</sup>

At the four sides of a building, these potentially problematic rims are both *parallel* and *perpendicular* to the interstitial floor joists. When air pressure boundaries are not contiguous with building envelope thermal boundaries due to poor rim closure practices, pressure differentials readily can convey warm humid interior air to the colder back side of cladding/sheathing assemblies, causing highly damaging condensation and ensuing decay and degradation.<sup>3</sup>

Despite widespread recognition by modern designers and consultants of the importance of “air barriers”, our firm continues to see litigation claims where cladding subcontractors are being solely faulted for hidden decay, degradation, and fungal growth that instead should have been attributed (in full or in part) to the problematic effects of pressurized interior air leakage caused by poor rim enclosure practices at buildings with both traditional and “open web” (as seen in Photo 1) floor joists.

### **Case Study 1 – Telltale Evidence of Damaging Condensation of Interior Water Vapor**

Consider a large apartment complex in Sacramento, CA with 26 two-story, wood-framed multiunit buildings clad with traditional stucco and fiber-

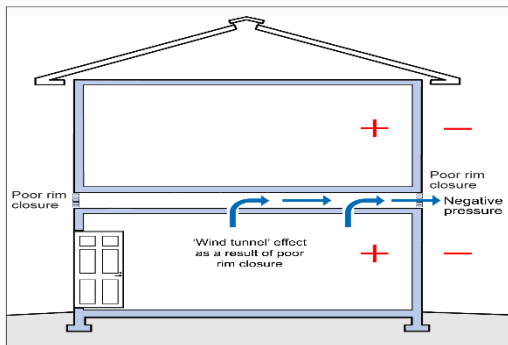


Figure 1 (closely derived from Dr. Lstiburek’s “Air Pressure” report) – When air pressure boundaries are not contiguous with building envelope thermal boundaries, pressure differentials readily can convey warm humid interior air to the colder back side of cladding/sheathing assemblies, causing highly damaging condensation and ensuing decay and degradation.

cement lap siding, at which decay and fungal growth have been found within exterior wall cavities at first-floor units. The ceilings at these lower apartments are attached to the bottom side of the open web floor joists structurally supporting the upper units.

At many of these first-floor apartments, widespread decay and damage were found *within* the cavities of certain exterior walls; however, such damage did not extend above the rim joist transitions to the upper units. For the following reasons, we concluded that these conditions generally resulted from cold-weather vapor condensation, as opposed to the effects of localized rainwater infiltration:

- The pervasive and uniform nature of the damage;
- The primary location (only at the first-floor units) and primary positioning (at *interior* face of the building paper or the engineered wood sheathing panels) of these conditions;
- Water spray testing of the stucco cladding at severely damaged walls produced no interior leakage; and
- As further reviewed below, our investigation revealed grossly deficient rim closure practices that certainly created the discontinuous pressure/thermal boundaries decreed by Dr. Lstiburek.

Per Photos 1 to 3, the stucco cladding at some buildings was backed only with “line wire” – i.e., without any underlying sheathing. As seen at Photo 1 (after removal of loosely laid insulation batts atop the ceiling boards), the thermal boundary at the open rim, perpendicular to the floor joists between the semi-conditioned interstitial air and the inner face of the cold-in-winter stucco plaster, consisted of nothing more than asphaltic building paper, which has minimal insulative properties and does not function as an air barrier.

Upon preliminary investigation, we concluded that the marginal rim closure found at these first-floor units (all of which had only one *parallel* and one *perpendicular* rim – differing from generalized Figure 1) most likely had promoted air pressure differentials that conveyed humid air from the semi-conditioned interstitial spaces above the ceilings down into the cold-in-winter stud bays. We noted the many remnants of fiberglass insulation that remained stuck to the building paper, indicating that it had been excessively wet at times in a manner consistent with water vapor condensation during cold weather.

**Click the link to finish reading the article! [READ MORE](#)**