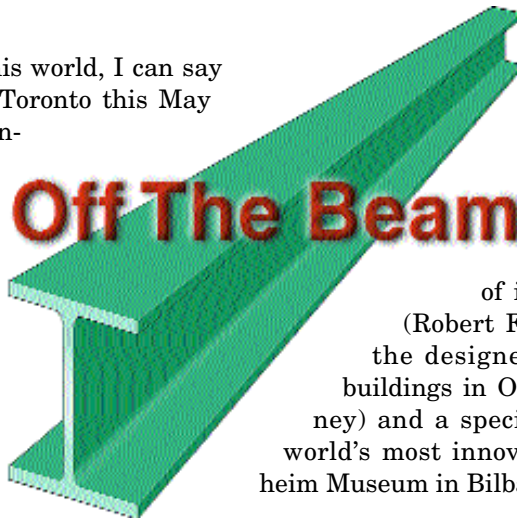


While very little is certain in this world, I can say with confidence that my drive to Toronto this May for the North American Steel Construction Conference will be more pleasant than my last trip this past December. The main purpose of the trip was a vacation, but while I was there, I also planned on meeting with the audio/visual suppliers at the Toronto Convention Center. I was looking forward to a quiet drive and a wonderful vacation.

Unfortunately, Old Man Winter had a different idea.

When we left Chicago that Friday evening, everything looked good—relatively warm temperatures and blue skies. As we travelled through Michigan, however, conditions rapidly changed. The sky darkened and the roads became icy. By the time we reached Port Huron, snow had started to fall. While my wife and I normally look forward to crossing the beautiful Blue Water Bridge, that evening it was not to be. Though we were only four cars back from the toll booth, we were in for a long wait. Icy accumulations, rapid snowfall (more than four inches in less than an hour), and high winds all conspired to shut the bridge down. We waited, and waited, and waited. After 1½ hours, my wife finally prevailed upon me to turn back and find a hotel room for the night. Fortunately, the next morning was beautiful and the rest of our trip was uneventful.

The Toronto Convention Center is one of the nicest meeting facilities I have ever visited and I'm looking forward to a great conference in May.



The Conference kicks off on May 19 with a half-day plenary session. In addition to two of North America's leading design engineers (Stanley Lindsey and Laurie Kennedy) and one of its most innovative fabricators (Robert Freeland), the session includes the designer of the replacement federal buildings in Oklahoma City (Carol Ross Barney) and a special presentation on one of the world's most innovative structures (the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain).

The Plenary session is just the beginning, however. The conference's more than 30 technical sessions are designed to provide practical and useable information for designers, fabricators, erectors and detailers. Topics range from designing low-floor-to-floor-height structures to dealing with crisis on the jobsite.

Even the exhibit hall will be exciting. In addition to more than 125 booths showing the latest product innovations, 10 companies have announced plans to participate in a Detailing Software Demonstration. This is a great opportunity for fabricators and detailers to compare apples to apples since all of the companies will be working on a demonstration project utilizing the same set of drawings.

If you don't already have a copy of the advance program and registration form, either fax me a request at 312/670-5403 or call me at 312/670-5407 and I'll be glad to send one out. Or, you can view the entire advance program and register online at www.aisc.org.

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