If you had a question about structural steel design or construction, what would you do? For example, if you wanted to know where to get information on shape availability, or wanted to know how to determine steel tonnage costs on an “as erected” basis, who would you ask?

What if you wanted to know what kind of finish you could expect for Architecturally Exposed Structural Steel (AESS) that has been galvanized? Or if you wanted to know if steel-framed buildings qualify as “restrained” for fire protection code requirements?

You could thumb through old Modern Steel Construction articles, check out papers published in Engineering Journal, or perhaps post the question to an on-line list serve.

Or, if you were really savvy, you might have known that for much of its nearly four score years of existence, AISC has provided technical assistance to designers and fabricators. However, the service wasn’t something that was publicized, promoted or fully staffed.

Fortunately, that has all changed. With its grand opening on July 2, AISC’s Steel Solutions Center provides a one-stop shop for help with preliminary design, cost information, marketing data and technical assistance. Currently staffed by five engineers, but supported by both AISC’s engineering and marketing departments, the Steel Solutions Center should prove to be a great resource for everyone involved in the design, construction, fabrication and development of structural steel-framed buildings.

Now, if you want to know the average cost for a three-story, steel, braced frame office building in Peoria there is just one phone number to remember: 312/670-2400. Or if you want to know if weep holes should be used at the bottoms of Hollow Structural Section (HSS) columns, there is a handy email address for submitting questions: solutions@aiscmail.com. And if you want to know what procedure should be followed when assessing steel that has been exposed to a fire, you can simply fax 312/670-5403.

Of course, AISC’s dissemination of information about steel design and construction doesn’t stop with the Steel Solutions Center. Other useful tools include:

- *Engineering Journal* and the EJ CD-ROM—A one-year subscription to Engineering Journal costs just $35, while a CD-ROM containing more than 120 issues costs only $150.
- AISC’s Website—www.aisc.org contains a myriad of useful items, including free downloads of a wide range of AISC documents and an extensive list of frequently asked questions.
- AISC’s online chats—Upcoming topics include: structural bolting, coatings, joists, the new Manual and galvanizing. Plus, edited transcripts of are available on AISC’s website.
- North American Steel Construction Conference—The premier structural engineering and fabrication conference is scheduled for April 24-27, 2002, in Seattle.