



Large Builders Break Off from NAHB... Sixteen of the nation's largest builders have decided to establish a new trade association separate from the National Association of Home Builders, according to *Builder Magazine*. Called the "Leading Builders of America," the new organization said it is "working to ensure that the housing sector continues the process of stabilization and recovery. The group also plans to be active on energy efficiency legislation and other issues of importance to home buyers and the home building industry." Several members of the new organization will retain memberships in NAHB. However, the establishment of the new group indicates the level of friction between the NAHB, whose membership is primarily composed of smaller builders, and the large public builders, who often have a competitive advantage due to their size and access to capital. CEOs of the biggest builders found themselves at odds with NAHB over a tax code provision, which reignited a long-standing rift between them and NAHB officials, according to news reports.

(Source: *Random Lengths*, December 16, 2009)

Popular Composite Wall Charts Available

Updated versions of Random Lengths' popular wall charts showing 10-year histories of lumber and structural panel prices are available at no charge from Random Lengths.

Each 19x25-inch poster-size copy tracks the Random Lengths Framing Lumber Composite Price from January 2000 through December 2009 on one side, and the Structural Panel Composite on the other. Key events affecting the markets during the 10-year period are also shown, with room to update the charts during the next two years.

To receive the free charts, please go to the Random Lengths Web form at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/7Q6528S>, or send your mailing address to Random Lengths either by fax, 800-874-7979, or by e-mail at rlmail@rlpi.com. If you wish to display both the lumber and panel charts, please indicate that you will need two copies. Multiple copies may be ordered.

(Source: *Random Lengths*, December 18, 2009)

Applications Available for OCSA Scholarship Program

OCSA is now accepting applicants for its 2010-2011 Student Scholarship. Two scholarships of \$1,000.00 each will be awarded in May. The awards are available to OCSA employees and dependents of OCSA member firms. Scholarship awards may be used at any accredited college, university or vocational school. The application deadline is April 1. Scholarship posters were mailed to all OCSA members last week for displaying at their businesses. The posters included tear-off cards for those wishing to request an application. In addition to returning the postcards, you may also download the application at www.myocsa.org/documents/OCSA_Scholarship_Application_2010.pdf.

Online Pharmacy Customers warned to be wary of scam

Federal officials are warning consumers about criminals posing as U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and law-enforcement personnel as part of an international extortion scam.

The FDA said the criminals prey on people who previously bought medications over the internet or via "telepharmacies."

In the scam, the criminals claim to be FDA special agents or law-enforcement officials, and tell their victims that their drug purchases were illegal.

They threaten the victims with arrest, deportation or even physical harm unless a fine or fee is paid, with amounts ranging from \$100 to \$250,000.

The agency said sometimes victims also have fraudulent transactions charged to their credit cards. Victims are told to send money by wire transfer, in most cases, to the Dominican Republic.

The agency urges people who receive a suspicious contact to turn down demands for money and call the FDA's office of Criminal Investigations Metro Washington Field Office at 800/521-5783.

(Source: *Columbus Dispatch*)

Member News:

After nearly 40 years in the lumber business John Klipstine, President, of **The Ansonia Lumber Company** retired December 31, 2009. We wish John all the best in his retirement! John's son, Todd is now the contact person for the company.

Cold Weather Safety in the Workplace

Like any unsafe condition on the job, snow and ice accumulations can be eliminated by following some basic safety guidelines:

- Wear shoes or boots with non-slip or non-skid soles.
- Monitor weather conditions by knowing the latest weather updates.
- Don't allow snow or ice to accumulate in work areas. Clear them off immediately, especially if they run off on scaffolds and roofs.
- Always clear all walkways and steps of ice and snow.
- Use anti-slip materials like sand or salt to make walkways and parking lots less slippery.
- Store shovels and gloves in areas known to all personnel.
- Always wear a hard hat when going outdoors. This should protect you from falling objects, as well as impacts caused by slips on slippery surfaces.
- Inspect overhead areas to make sure that snow and ice do not accumulate on them.
- Before using ladders, ensure that they are completely free of ice, snow and other materials that may cause slips or falls.
- Wear proper fall protection when clearing slippery materials on high places. For double protection, consider installing safety rails on such areas.
- Follow proper procedures for safe lifting and shoveling.
- Make sure areas that may have unseen ice or snow, are well-lighted and equipped with directional markings.

If any of you have additional safety tips for dealing with ice and snow accumulations that you practice in your own workplace, please let us know so we can share them with your fellow industry dealers.

Let's make 2010 the safest year yet for our industry!

Americans Losing Their Fix-it Skills

A new survey shows that the United States has become a nation of "nontinkerers", and it has harmed the way we live and work.

In a poll of 1,000 U.S. adults, almost six in 10 said they had never made or built a toy. In addition, twenty-seven percent had not made or built even one item from a list of eight common projects, including furniture and a flower box. The survey from The Foundation of Fabricators and Manufacturers Association also noted that sixty percent of the respondents avoided doing major household repairs themselves.

Some experts worry that the "hands-off" policy on household projects and repairs has kept people from learning valuable skills, leading to a growing shortage of people with hands-on skills in the workplace. The Hudson Institute, a public policy think tank in Washington, predicts the supply of skilled labor in the U.S. will not catch up with the demand until the year 2050 especially as the blue-collar workers reach retirement age.

The lack of hands-on skills may open up a marketing opportunity for building material dealers. Offering workshops in basic techniques such as using hand tools, grouting tile, etc. may be of interest to your homeowners customers, thus drawing them into your store for the workshop and to buy their materials.

(Source: *The Columbus Dispatch*, December 27, 2009)

Calendar of Events

January 13	Coffee with the Expert (Teleconference) Topic: Strategies for Reducing Unemployment Costs Your Office!	March 15-17	NLBMDA Spring Meeting and Legislative Conference Washington, DC
February 27 - March 7	Central Ohio Home & Garden Show Ohio Expo Center, Columbus	March 23	E-Commerce Business (Webinar) Your Office!
March 4-5	Installed Sales Roundtable Cincinnati	May 5-7	OH/KY Roundtable Bowling Green, KY

Special Recognition, Praise and Thanks!

OCSA dedicates this section of *Quick.Net.News* to the **Associate members** that keep our **Active retail members** in business.

These suppliers not only provide the products and services needed by Active members to **operate and serve customers**, but they also recognize the value of “**associating**” for common cause and the good of the industry. Their much needed financial support strengthens the Association and helps underwrite many services and member benefits.

We are grateful for their support and **encourage our Active members** to consider these companies **FIRST** when ordering materials or considering needed services. These companies are in the trenches with you **each and every day, toughing it out together** to satisfy your customers.

Links to members' web sites are provided if available.

[Appalachian Hardwood Lbr Co.](#)

[B & I Wholesale Co.](#)

[Battelle & Battelle, LLP](#)

[Boise Building Materials Distribution](#)

[Building 9 Corp.](#)

[CareWorks](#)

[Cargotec USA Inc., Hiab](#)

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