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NCI Building Systems Conference Offers Engineers New Findings in Building for Natural Disasters

October 11th seminar to introduce cutting-edge research for building design and development professionals

HOUSTON (October 4, 2013) – NCI Building Systems will host a one-day conference in Houston, Texas to unveil the latest research on metal construction design. The annual event, taking place October 11, 2013 at the Sheraton North Houston Hotel, will offer presentations from leading researchers and experts in a range of engineering disciplines, also satisfying 7.5 hours of continuing education credit for engineers.

“This conference focuses on the latest developments in the field for engineers involved with metal building products,” said Jerry Hatch, manager of engineering development for NCI Building Systems. “It draws engineers from all over the country, many of whom only get to see each other once a year. So it provides a chance for these professionals to discuss new trends and best practices in a group setting, while also giving them the rare opportunity to speak directly with the researchers.”

The 2013 seminar will feature topics including building design for tornados and earthquakes, design and construction problems, column base testing, as well as upcoming wind load provisions and building code updates. Reflecting a heightened awareness of destruction from recent natural disasters, the seminar composition emphasizes topics related to building weather resistant structures. Hatch, who serves as chairman of the Metal Building Manufacturers Association (MBMA) Technical Committee, says that all engineers in the construction industry, especially those in tornado or hurricane zones, can benefit from the research presented in this seminar.

The conference’s keynote speaker is William Coulbourne, P.E., a national expert in wind and flood mitigation who has been involved in FEMA Mitigation Assessment Teams and natural hazard damage assessments for nearly 20 years. His presentation, “Building Design for Tornados,” will use information from the 2011 tornado season to provide insights on how to design buildings to resist the effects of tornadic winds. Coulbourne contends that the long-held attitude about tornado preparedness is in desperate need of an update.

“After the Tuscaloosa tornado in 2011, the recurring theme played out in the news media was that these events were large and devastating... and that there was really nothing we could do about them,” says Coulbourne. “That troubled me a great deal. Forty years ago, when the building industry was facing a serious earthquake problem, we worked to address it with research and building code improvements. So why, within the structural engineering practice, would we

assume that we can't do anything about tornados? I believe that we can.”

Coulbourne's presentation will share results from numerous investigations and address the strong roof-to-wall and wall-to-foundation connections that can be incorporated in the design phase of all buildings in tornado-prone areas. Coulbourne says that just like buildings constructed in hurricane zones, structures in tornado-prone regions can be built to sustain wind speeds of 110-120 miles per hour, since most devastating tornados fall within that range. But additional research is needed, and he hopes that recent findings can inspire others in the industry to take up the cause.

Given Houston's population size and concentration of the construction industry, it has become a top market for metal buildings. According to the MBMA, Houston and Texas outpace every city and state in the nation – related to dollars spent for steel buildings – by a significant margin. Further, MBMA member companies have historically supplied nearly 40 percent of the low-rise, non-residential market in the U.S., according to McGraw Hill Construction Research.

The 2013 Continuing Education Seminar for Professional Engineers will be held at the Sheraton North Houston (15700 John F. Kennedy Blvd., Houston, TX 77032). The conference will begin at 7 a.m. For more information: <http://www.ncibuildings.com/engineereducation.html>.

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About NCI Building Systems

NCI Building Systems, Inc. (NYSE: NCS) is one of the nation's largest integrated manufacturers and marketers of metal coatings, components and buildings for nonresidential construction in North America. NCI is comprised of 20 brands operating 38 manufacturing facilities across the United States and Mexico, with additional sales and distribution offices throughout the U.S. and Canada. For more information visit www.ncigroup.com.