

# PLAIN BUILDER

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FALL 2025  
Vol. 1, Issue 1



PREMIERE  
ISSUE

SUPPLIER  
DIRECTORY

**STEP BY STEP:**  
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# Welcome to Plain Builder

**W**elcome to the premiere issue of Plain Builder.

Starting with this issue (Fall 2025) Plain Builder will replace Garage, Shed & Carport Builder in the Shield Wall Media slate of publications. We are not intending to abandon the shed world, but are repositioning to match our core strengths.

Shed and carport publications focus on shed lots, marketing, financing and consumer facing products and services. Our other publications are building and construction related, offering products, services and best practices for the people actually building the structures.

We recognize the consumer facing side is a key part of the process of taking anything to market, but it is not what we do. This minimizes the value Shield Wall Media can bring to the table.

The Anabaptist community is a huge segment of the people actually building sheds, as well as a growing part of the post frame, roll forming, metal roofing and ag construction industry. We estimate the Plain Communities may represent 25% of subscribers for some of our other magazines.

Until Plain Builder there was no magazine specifically catering to the Anabaptist community in construction.

Plain Builder will be about, for and (where possible) written by Plain Community people actively participating in construction and manufacturing for construction.

Your feedback and story ideas are critical to our success and always welcome. If you have a story idea or would like to contribute an article to Plain Builder, contact editor Karen Knapstein at 715-952-1633 or karen@shieldwallmedia.com.

I hope you enjoy the premiere issue of Plain Builder

*Gary Reichert, Publisher*

## Breaktime

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- Rollforming
- NewTech
- Portable
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## Message from the Editor

**W**elcome to the very first edition of Plain Builder Magazine. It's my honor and privilege to bring you stories and news that you find interesting and meaningful.

Welcome to Plain Builder Magazine. Our aim is to provide a useful resource for those working in the building trades within the plain communities. In each issue, we share information about tools, materials, building methods, and ideas that can help support steady, reliable work in construction.

This magazine is meant to serve builders, suppliers, and shop owners by gathering knowledge that is both practical and grounded in experience. We invite readers to contribute so that others may benefit. If you have a project that shows a helpful way of doing things, or a method that makes work safer or more efficient, we would like to include it.

Sharing is simple. You may send in a short description of the work, along with photos if available. If writing is not something you enjoy, we can also conduct an interview by phone or email and prepare the article together.

By contributing, you help provide information that others in

the building trade can put to good use. In this way, the magazine becomes a tool for learning from one another and passing along practical knowledge that strengthens the community.

We look forward to hearing from you and sharing helpful accounts in future issues.

*Karen Knapstein, Editor*  
715-952-1633 • [karen@shieldwallmedia.com](mailto:karen@shieldwallmedia.com)

### Share Your Knowledge

Do you have a project, tool, or method that could be useful to others in the building trade? We welcome contributions from readers. Send a short description—or let us interview you by fax, mail, phone or email—and we'll prepare the article together. Contact the editor to learn more.

**Shield Wall Media**  
ATTN: Plain Builder Editor  
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Iola, WI 54945

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715-952-1633  
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Shield Wall Media supports and recommends the use of commonly accepted safety standards. We recognize, however, that members of some communities are exempt from such standards. To stay true to the members of the Plain Communities and the audience of Plain Builder, you will occasionally see photos in which government-mandated safety standards are not followed. Shield Wall Media does not endorse unsafe practices.

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**Gary Reichert,**  
**Publisher, Shield Wall Media**

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### ON THE COVER:

Drop-down stairs from Dalam Welding allow hands-free passage to second-story building spaces.

Learn more about the stairs on page 6. PHOTO COURTESY OF DALAM WELDING.





### Pub Shed, 10' x 14'

Beachy Barns, Plain City, Ohio

This building is located on a permanent site in a campground. Campers like the Quaker-style bar shed because they can sit at the bar to eat and drink while watching the game on the big screen inside. The 32" overhang of the 6/12-pitched roof protects the 8' long counter from the rain. When the weekend is over, they can park the golf cart inside for security and to protect it from the weather.

#### Materials used:

- Concrete block base
- McElroy Metal Max Rib 29 ga. metal roof
- Duratemp Siding in Dark Gray
- WEH Supply fiberglass slab doors
- Wayne Dalton overhead bar door

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### Drop-down Stairs

Dalam Welding, Topeka, Indiana

Dalam Welding manufactures drop-down attic stairs from lightweight, yet heavy-duty aluminum. The stairs can be installed in houses, garages, barns, barndominiums, shops, or any structure in which there's a need for attic access. They are built at a 45-degree incline so users can carry items up the stairs without holding on to a rung, as would be necessary with a ladder.

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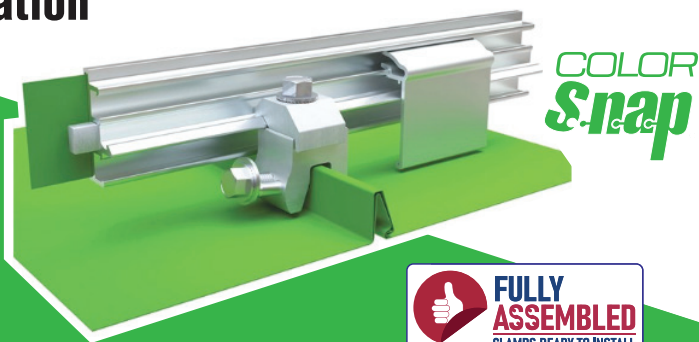
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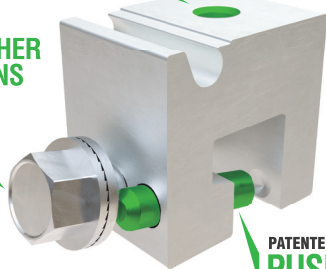


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# Re-roofing & Siding

Esch Repair, Fennimore, Wisconsin

Esch Repair of Fennimore, Wisconsin, replaced the roofing and siding on this riverside home in southwestern Wisconsin. The owner wanted a roof and siding that would hold up to harsh Wisconsin weather, and metal fit the bill for both.

### Materials used:

- Steel Dynamics Weathered Wood, board & batten siding
- Little Harvey's Stacked Stone Ash wainscot
- Windows: Elk Grove Windows, Cuba City, Wisconsin
- Metal Shake roof panels, 28 ga., Hixwood Textured Green (Beckers Beckry Tex), 28 squares
- Flow Vent closure strips



**To have your project or product included in Plain Builder's "What Do You Build?" feature, contact editor Karen Knapstein at 715-952-1633 or [karen@shieldwallmedia.com](mailto:karen@shieldwallmedia.com).**



# The Embark Package

Formwright, LaGrange, Indiana

The Embark Package combines a portable rollforming machine with a trailer and a variety of essential tools and accessories. It is designed to be a comprehensive install setup for the hidden fastener metal roofing and siding contractor. It enables increased jobsite efficiency, flexible scheduling, and less scratching and denting of panels.

Central to the package is the SSQII-B Panel Machine with residential forming rollers. The machine is equipped with a triple overhead reel rack, including arbors, that can accommodate 3 metal coils simultaneously, optimizing on-site material management. The package also includes a gas power pack, allowing for efficient operation without the need for an external power source, making it ideal for remote job sites. Six runout tables are provided for efficient handling of panels as they come off the machine. The machine is operated using the included batch and length controller. Features include up to 50 programed lengths, batch tally, footage totalizer, auto shear & feed sensor, and automatic valley and gable offset.

The Embark Package features a Toolcrest 18' bumper pull trailer designed specifically for the rollforming industry. Constructed on a galvanized steel frame, the trailer has 8,000 lb axles, FRP sides and a 3/4" plywood interior. The double side doors provide easy access for coil loading. The gas power pack is mounted on the tongue protected by a motor cover. The trailer not only protects your rollformer investment, it's also a well-stocked shop on wheels. Inside it has a Flextur organization system with hooks, magnetic strips, shelves, and bins for your tools, brooms, shingle shovels, tool bags, & power tools. The pegboard concept allows you to adapt it to your specific needs.

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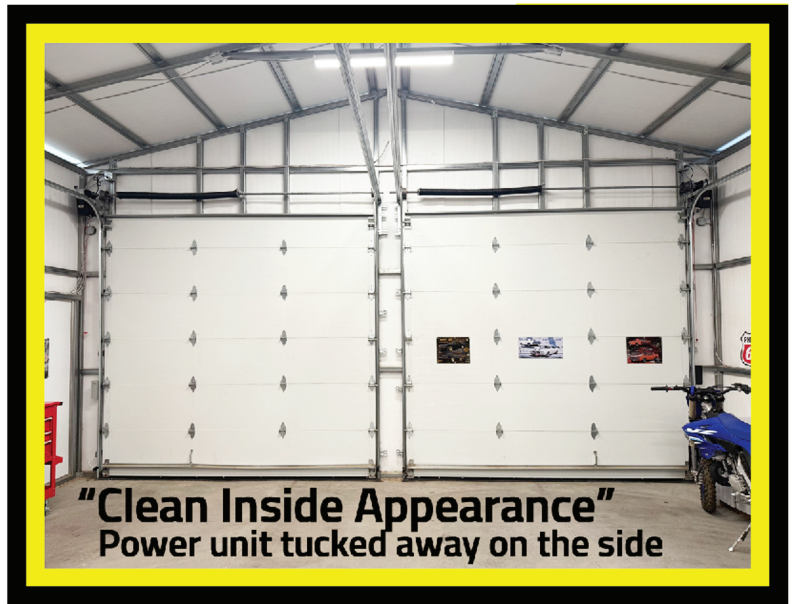
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### Barn Shed, 10' x 14'

Gold Star Buildings,  
Hadley, Pennsylvania

This 10' x 14' metal barn-style shed features beige metal siding with striking red trim and a red roof. Its barn-style roof provides extra headroom, while the sliding door and wooden ramp ensure easy access to equipment and storage. Built for durability and function, this shed offers a secure and weather-resistant solution for this client's swag shop. With added shelves inside, merchandise can be kept organized when events are happening and stored away when needed.

#### Materials used:

- Rolling Ridge Metals metal panels, Bright Red roof, Sahara Tan doors and siding
- Fastgrip, 1 1/2" metal screws
- Gold Star Buildings doors (built in-house)
- rFOIL Reflective Insulation, single bubble
- Aluminum ramp

**Phone: 724-253-2771**



### Chalet Garden Shed, 10' x 20'

Sheds by Fisher, Perry, New York

Sheds by Fisher built this shed on site because the pool fence was installed before the shed was there, creating a unique problem for any shed delivery option. Now, the shed is used for pool equipment storage and is designed to match the homes in this upstate New York neighborhood.

#### Materials used:

- Metal roof in Slate
- Vinyl siding in Moonlit Moss
- Transom dormers
- Insulated windows
- 6' insulated door

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# From Shop to Site

## Tips for Safe and Efficient Shed Delivery

It seems like shed delivery should be simple, right? Just load the shed, drive it, and drop it on the site.

However, it rarely goes quite that easily, does it? That's why you have to have a plan. Develop guidelines that you follow every time, or if some items are not applicable to the current situation, cross them off the list. That way it is harder to have something fall through the cracks. Sam Byler of 123 Buildings dug into his many years of experience to provide tips for smooth and successful shed delivery.

### First Things First – Talk to the Salesperson About the Delivery

When you are setting up the date and time to drop off the shed:

- Verify the address and discuss where on the site they want the shed placed and which way it should face.
- Ask if there will be clearance issues. For example, are there low-hanging tree branches or electrical wires or anything hanging down in the path that your vehicle will need to traverse.
- Find out if there are other obstacles



PHOTO COURTESY OF 123 BUILDINGS

to deal with and what is the best way to approach the property. For example, are neighbors' houses close on both sides, but there is alley access at the back? Is there a fence in the way on one side, but the other is clear? Is the space blocked by fence all the way around? Find out where

the septic is located.

- Get the lay of the land before you show up with the shed.
- Be sure they tell the customer they will need to clear movable obstacles from the pathway to the shed's site. That means toys, vehicles, everything needs to be out of the way.
- Ask the salesperson to obtain photos or videos of the site if access is in question.

### Make a Plan

Based on the conversation you have with the salesperson:

Figure out if anything has to be done before you show up. Does the salesperson need to address some low-hanging wire or branches with the customer to make the site accessible? Will the shed have to be lifted over a fence? What equipment will be needed to do that? Be sure you have it with you.

Specialized equipment used to maneuver sheds into their new homes



*Deliveries are easier if the shed owner clears the pathway to the site.* PHOTO COURTESY OF 123 BUILDINGS

can include mules and tilt trailers, and some trailers even feature side-shift or sliding axles. The wheels move sidewise even when the truck can't. Some haulers even have barn spinners that can slowly rotate the shed so the doors end up in the correct place.

These items can be expensive though; they can cost between 40% to 150% more than they did in the pre-COVID era, depending on the item, so many haulers may have to work with more basic tools.

Haulers starting out may use a basic roller trailer or a slide deck trailer. A push-pull chain can also be used with a winch or truck hitch to move the shed into place.

### Heading Out

Fill your gas tank before you go. It's also a good idea to carry extra fuel with you just in case the unexpected happens. Various situations come up during



PHOTO COURTESY OF 123 BUILDINGS

deliveries Byler said. You may be in unfamiliar territory, and the gas station ends up being far from your location. Another example that has happened to new drivers is that a shed has been loaded on a trailer and when the truck runs out of gas the gas tank is inaccessible.

### Safety Guidelines on the Site

Before you even begin to take the shed off the trailer, tell people, homeowners, renters, neighbors, or bystanders to stay back and keep their kids and pets out of the way.

From the beginning of getting the shed

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*A mule makes the job of maneuvering a shed easier.* PHOTO COURTESY OF CARDINAL MANUFACTURING

off the trailer to the time that the shed is perfectly placed, never get under the building or allow anyone else to do so unless it is tied off or anchored. Sheds can and have fallen off blocks and equipment has failed. A falling shed can injure or kill a person.

### Equipment

Make sure you bring the equipment you need. Pads or mats may be used to protect driveways or yards. Shims, blocks, and levels and tie-down equipment should be in the truck, ready for use.

Keep all your equipment maintained. Where appropriate keep parts greased and ensure the tires have the right amount of air. If your equipment is working right, you are less likely to have problems with deliveries, which in turn is less likely to lead to damage of sheds or equipment, or injury to people.

Remember that you have paid good money for the equipment you have. Spending a small fraction of the cost in maintenance can keep your equipment and your business running smoothly.

### Installation

- Use proper lifting techniques.
- Watch for utilities.
- Once in place, ensure that the shed is level at all four corners and across diagonals.
  - Anchor the shed according to code, weather exposure, and insurance requirements.
  - Inspect the structure with the customer present. Verify door alignment, window function, and that the shed is undamaged.
  - Photos may be taken for your records.

### Other Pointers

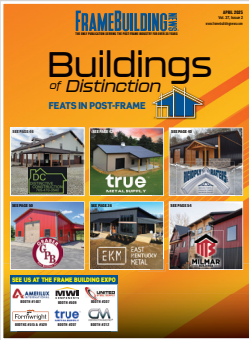
- Ensure that you have all the legal permits you need for the area in which you do business. If something unplanned happens, it will be magnified if you do not have the right permits.

- If a crew is going out to deliver a shed, make sure they are trained, insured, and dressed appropriately. At least one member of the crew should be experienced in site leveling and final positioning.

- Remember that your business is customer service.

“When your days are overloaded, it is easy to forget that you are the last piece of the puzzle,” Byler said. “You are the last interaction the customer has in the process of purchasing their shed. He added, “A smiling face and a helpful attitude to back it up can even soothe a customer who has had a bad experience previously.” **PB**

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 PO Box 255, Iola, WI 54945

# Working with Family

## 12 Ways We Can Work Together and Build Strong Relationships

**F**amilies are the heart of our communities, and the way we live each day—at home and with our neighbors—shapes the strength and harmony of our churches and towns. Here are 12 practical reminders of how families can work together and help maintain healthy relationships at home, at work, and in the community.

### 1 Put Christ at the Center of the Home

A family that begins and ends the day with prayer and devotions is more likely to stay united. For example, reading a short Scripture passage together after breakfast can set the tone for the day, while gathering in the evening to pray for friends, family, and the needs of the community reminds everyone of God's presence and guidance. When Christ is at the center of our homes, we are reminded to live in humility, love, and peace with one another.

### 2 Work Together Daily

Working side by side—whether on the jobsite, in the barn, garden, shop, or kitchen—builds closeness and teaches cooperation. Something as simple as cleaning up after a meal together, stacking firewood, or weeding a garden can be a chance to talk, laugh, and encourage one another. Each task is an opportunity to teach children responsibility, develop good habits, and strengthen the family bond through shared effort.

### 3 Live Peaceably With One Another

Disagreements will come, but how we handle them matters. A husband and wife might not see eye-to-eye on a purchase, or siblings may quarrel over chores, but responding with calm voices, open ears, and quick forgiveness keeps tensions



PHOTO BY RANDY FATH-UNSPLASH

*Shield Wall Media supports and recommends the use of commonly accepted safety standards. We recognize, however, that members of some communities are exempt from such standards. To stay true to the members of the Plain Communities and the audience of Plain Builder, you will occasionally see photos in which government-mandated safety standards are not followed. Shield Wall Media does not endorse those practices.*

from growing. Avoid raising your voice or stirring strife; instead, aim to solve the problem in a way that leaves everyone feeling heard. Peace in the home naturally spills over into the community.

### 4 Keep Home Life in Order

A well-ordered home—with each person understanding their place and responsibility—runs more smoothly and reduces stress. For instance, when children know which chores are theirs and when they should be done, there's less arguing and confusion. Teaching children to respect authority and willingly take part in daily duties builds strong character and gives them a sense of belonging and contribution.

### 5 Be Present and Share Time Together

It's easy to get caught up in work or personal projects, but nothing replaces the warmth of shared time. Eating meals together without phones, taking an evening walk, or reading a devotional as

a family helps deepen relationships. Even short moments, like talking about the day while washing dishes, can build lasting memories when we give one another our full attention.

### 6 Help Your Neighbors Willingly

When someone is sick, expecting a baby, or putting up a new barn, lending a hand strengthens bonds between families. You might spend a Saturday helping a neighbor with fence repairs, or drop off a warm meal to someone recovering from surgery. Helping others without waiting to be asked not only meets a need but also reflects a generous and Christ-like spirit.

### 7 Practice Simplicity in Word and Action

Avoid gossip, pride, or harsh words. If a misunderstanding arises, address it honestly and gently rather than letting it grow. Speak truth in love, and let your words build others up. Choosing kindness over cleverness and humility over self-

promotion fosters trust and keeps relationships strong.

### 8 Respect Elders and Teach Children to Do the Same

Elders have wisdom that comes from years of experience. Sitting with a grandparent to hear how they overcame challenges in their youth, or asking an older neighbor for gardening tips, helps the younger generation appreciate their heritage. Showing respect by listening carefully, offering help, and valuing their advice teaches children that age and experience are worth honoring.

### 9 Support One Another in Life's Milestones

Weddings, births, funerals, and baptisms are moments when families and communities naturally come together. Attending these events, helping set up for a reception, or simply sending a heartfelt

note shows care and solidarity. Your presence—especially in difficult times—reminds others they are not alone.

### 10 Follow the Teachings and Guidance of the Church

The church provides spiritual direction and a foundation for daily living. Participating in church life, respecting its standards, and accepting guidance from its leaders keeps families rooted in shared values. When correction is needed, receiving it with humility sets an example for children and encourages unity in the broader church family.

### 11 Model What You Want Children to Learn

Children learn more from what they see than what they're told. If they see you keeping your word, speaking kindly, working diligently, and treating others with respect, those traits will take root

in their own lives. Even small actions—like thanking a store clerk or helping a stranger—teach powerful lessons about living out faith in daily life.

### 12 Be Grateful and Content

A thankful spirit brings peace into the home. Taking time at dinner to name one thing you're thankful for, or writing thank-you notes as a family, helps children focus on blessings rather than wants. Contentment grows when we serve others instead of chasing more for ourselves, creating a joyful home that becomes a blessing to the whole community.

By practicing these principles daily, families can grow stronger together and be a blessing to the church and the wider community. Healthy relationships don't come from grand gestures, but from countless small acts of faithfulness, love, and shared work over time. **PB**

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# Post-Frame Best Practices

## Tips for Proper Vinyl Window Installation in Post-Frame Construction

**A**.J. Manufacturing, the producer of Harmony™ and Main Street™ vinyl windows — specifically designed for post-frame construction — offers a few essential tips to ensure your window installation provides long-term durability and weather resistance.

### 1. Prepare the Opening

Before installing the window, make sure the rough opening is properly prepped:

- **Level the sill** and confirm that the entire opening is square.
- **Measure the opening** to verify that it's at least ½" larger than the window dimensions. This extra space allows for adjustments during installation and provides room for insulation around the window frame.

### 2. Weatherize the Opening

Proper weatherization is key to a successful install:

- Use weatherization tape and a sill pan system to seal the opening. This step is required by residential building codes in most states and is a best practice for nonresidential buildings as well.
- There are various weatherproofing systems available — always follow the specific product manufacturer's installation guidelines.

### 3. Installing the Window

Once the opening is level, square, and weatherized, you're ready to install the window. There are two acceptable methods:

- **Direct Sill Installation:** You may place the window directly onto the sill if it is perfectly level and flat, without dips (bellies) or humps (crowns). The sill must support the entire bottom edge of the window — both side-to-side and front-to-back — as vinyl frames are prone to expansion and contraction. Unsupported areas can lead to sagging over time.
- **Shimmed Installation:** This is the more common method, especially when working with rough framing. Shims help create a level base and act as the structural foundation of the window. Placement is critical:
  - **Slider Windows:** Use a minimum of three shims — one at each corner and one at the center. About two-thirds of the window's weight is concentrated in the center. For wider sliders (4 feet or more), additional shims between the corners and center provide extra



*Harmony vinyl windows feature EZ-V™ trim and flashing. The EZ-V™ system permits installation into a steel-clad building with a fully trimmed panning frame that accommodates the raised ribs of the building skin. Designed for 1" nominal rib height steel, EZ-V™ reduces labor, is leak-free, paintable, and needs no J-Channel.*  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF AJ MANUFACTURING

support.

- **Double-Hung Windows:** Place shims at each bottom corner. The sashes are supported by springs in the jambs, concentrating the weight at the corners.
- **Mull Units (Two Double-Hungs Joined):** Shim the outer corners and under the mull joint between the windows.

**Important:** Never remove shims after installation. Vinyl windows are not "hung" like older aluminum units — the shims are the foundation. Removing them will compromise the structural integrity of the window, especially under the pressure of thermal expansion and gravity.

## DOS & DON'TS

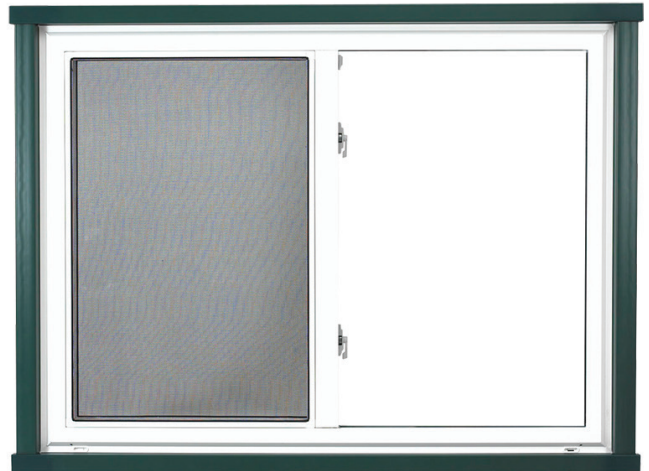
**DON'T HANG** a window.

**DO** fully **SUPPORT** the master frame.

**DO** allow for vinyl window expansion & contraction.

**DO** consider indoor air quality in the building design and humidity control.

**DO** consider trim and flashing systems that are designed for easy leak free installations.



*AJ Manufacturing's EZ-V™ system permits installation into a steel-clad building with a fully trimmed panning frame that accommodates the raised ribs of the building skin.*

PHOTOS COURTESY OF AJ MANUFACTURING

### 4. Securing the Window

- Begin by **securing the bottom** of the window. Make sure it is perfectly level and nail it into place.
- **Check the reveals** by opening the sash about 1/8". You should see an even gap between the sash and the frame across all operating parts. This ensures proper sealing and operation.
- Once aligned, finish nailing the rest of the window. On larger windows, it's generally acceptable to nail every other hole in the nailing flange. For smaller windows, use all available holes, especially if they are spaced far apart.

### 5. Final Checks and Sealing

- After the window is secured, operate it again and recheck

the reveals to confirm nothing shifted during installation.

- Apply **window flashing tape** over the nail fin, following the tape manufacturer's instructions. Proper sealing here is essential for long-term protection.

With these steps completed, you'll have a properly installed window that's built to withstand the elements for years to come. Most importantly, you'll avoid those dreaded post-storm calls about leaks. As the saying goes:

**"If you can't afford to do it right the first time, how will you afford to fix it later?"**

**PB**

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# Power & Control Options

For Plain Community Metal Forming

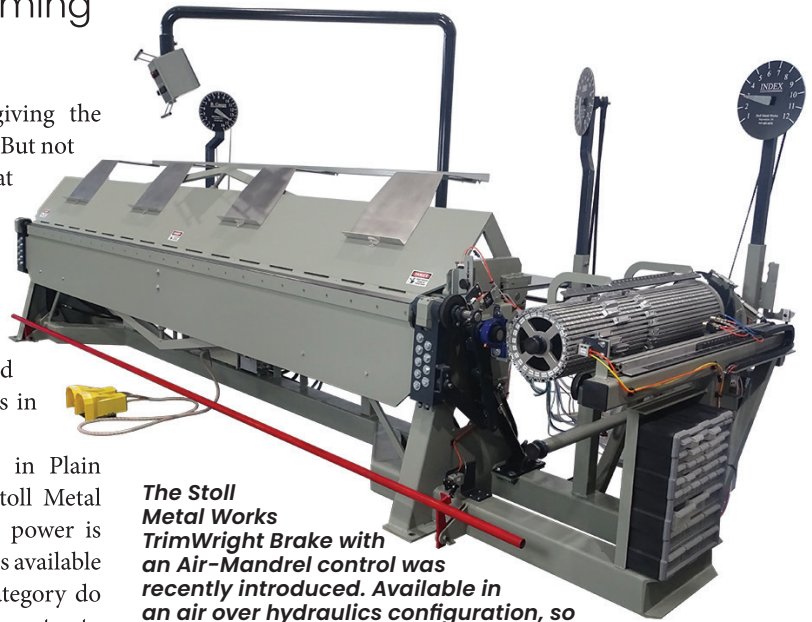
**M**any of us have grown up without giving the presence of electricity a second thought. But not all of America lives that way. Believing that the call to live separately from the world in the New Testament requires a separated lifestyle, the Plain Communities choose to live without many of the modern conveniences that most would deem replaceable. Stoll Metal Works was founded in one of these shops. While we do make more use of power and current technology, serving the power limited options in the Plain Communities has been our company focus.

There are a variety of options available for use in Plain Community shops. The most popular option that Stoll Metal Works offers is the manual trim brake; no external power is needed at all. There is a wide variety of manual machines available on the market. The entry-level trim brakes in this category do not have a back gauge. These machines require the operator to mark each trim piece and manually position the material before clamping. Several manufacturers offer back gauge systems that boost production. These systems range from simple positioning

back gauges to more advanced options that make use of a template system for ease of use and increased productivity.

The next level of equipment is perhaps the most under-developed. The option of a mechanically driven machine

**The Stoll Metal Works coil tipper.** COURTESY OF STOLL METAL WORKS.

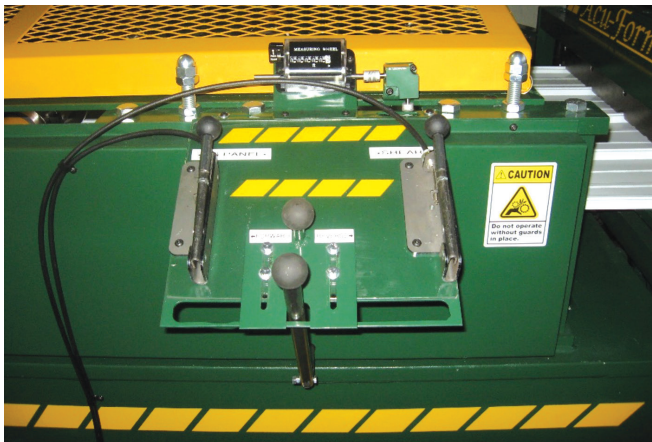


**The Stoll Metal Works TrimWright Brake with an Air-Mandrel control was recently introduced. Available in an air over hydraulics configuration, so DC power is not required. The TrimWright brake series are available in 10' 8" & 12' 6" lengths.** COURTESY OF STOLL METAL WORKS.

starts to bring limitations as to what is available. Equipment such as roll formers or coil up enders are offered by several manufacturers. Also, there is a wide variety of hand tools available that are flex-shaft driven. However, when it comes to a machine such as a trim brake that needs to perform consecutive steps where one step differs from the next, there are very limited options. At Stoll Metal Works we tell customers that this is on our list and that we have ideas but developing this machine hasn't risen to the top of our priorities. One of the challenges with a mechanical trim brake is the need to maintain safety while delivering a satisfactory cycle time.



**The Stoll Metal Works manual trim brake.** COURTESY OF STOLL METAL WORKS.



**In a mechanical setup, levers operate the panel direction and shear.** PHOTO COURTESY OF ACU-FORM

Air Over Hydraulics is an interesting control option. Outside of the Plain Communities, many shop owners do not realize the potential that exists in an air logic control. Combining a mechanical template system with AND, OR, or NOT air-logic blocks is a viable control option for many different types of equipment. There are at least two manufacturers offering air-hydraulic trim brakes.

There are a variety of machine options available from manufacturers in the DC over hydraulics category. Some of these options are computerized and can provide very advanced technology in a DC/hydraulic configuration. Often CNC Trim Folder manufacturers are able to offer equipment that has the hydraulic power pack removed. For shops that have the DC/hydraulic power requirements yet allow an advanced level of technology within those parameters, this can be a very attractive option. Other options in this category have digital technology but with simplified non-graphical interfaces without touchscreens. If



**Star 1 Products Coil Tipper.** PHOTO COURTESY OF STAR 1 PRODUCTS.



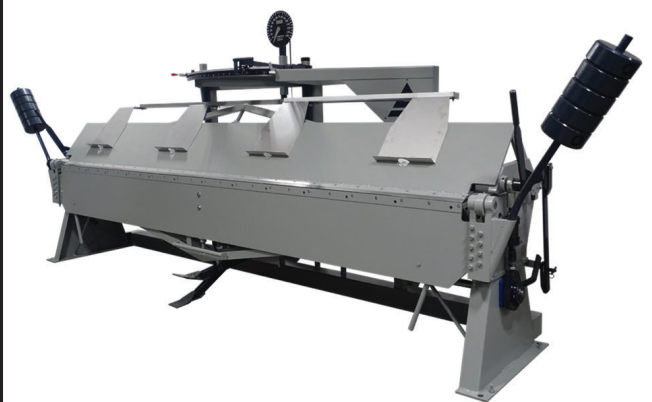
**A low-tech control box from Acu-Form.** PHOTO COURTESY ACU-FORM EQUIPMENT.

a manufacturer does not offer a package that fits a shop's needs, it is worth asking about. Often these controls can be further modified to meet particular community standards.

There are also non-digital controls available for communities who allow DC/hydraulic systems but draw limitations on

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**A gas-powered hemming machine from Acu-Form.** PHOTO COURTESY ACU-FORM EQUIPMENT.

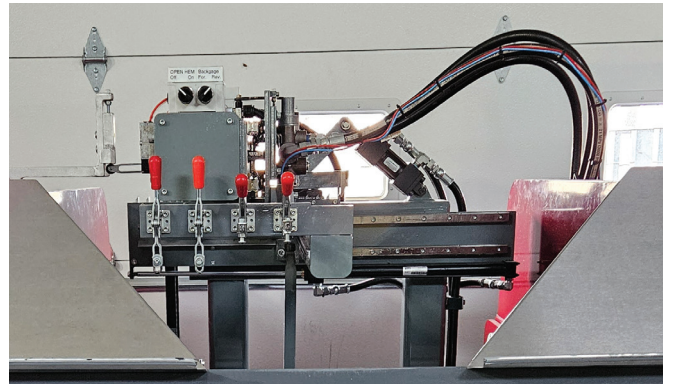


**The template system with pneumatic controls makes bending quick and accurate.**

machinery that has a digital screen and keypad. The Stoll Hydraulic Mandrel is one of these systems. Through a combination of DC relays, mechanical linkages, and a moveable proximity sensor system, a trim brake can have automatic functionality without the need of a PLC or computer to function as a controller.

While manufacturers offer the controls mentioned above on new equipment, another viable option for shop owners to consider is a retrofit machine. At Stoll Metal Works, we offer both of our DC/hydraulic and our air over hydraulic controls as retrofit packages. Other manufacturers also have retrofit options to offer to Plain Community shops. Used 21' folders can often be purchased very economically if one is willing to put some effort into rebuilding the unit. Going the retrofit route also offers the shop owner the option of having a community compliant control on the machine tool brand of his choice.

While a modern shop may be tempted to feel that power limitations would affect business viability, that is not the case. If one is willing to work, is committed to a way of life, and provides a properly manufactured product at a fair price, there is ample opportunity for success. **PB**



**The Star 1 Products air over hydraulics long folder. Shown below: Each template holds the key to creating a different trim profile.** PHOTOS COURTESY OF STAR 1 PRODUCTS.



# Machines Adapted for Plain Community Shops

Over the past 30 years, Metal Rollforming Systems has made roll-forming equipment for many different types of shops. While much of the industry depends on grid-tied electric power, Plain Community shops often take a different path. Because of this, equipment designers have worked hard to create machines that respect these values while still offering dependable performance.

## Alternative Power Options

Instead of electricity from the grid, Plain shops frequently use other power sources. Line shafts powered by diesel or gasoline engines are common, whether installed in the ground, overhead, or connected with cables. Some shops prefer simple stub shafts, allowing them to build their own control systems with the proper speed and power.

Mechanical gearboxes that provide forward and reverse controls are another option, along with hydrostatic drives that make speed control more accurate. In addition, hydraulic or pneumatic systems can be installed with straightforward lever controls, avoiding computer-driven systems unless the customer specifically requests limited automation powered by batteries or generators.

## Mechanical Alternatives to Automation

When automation isn't wanted, practical mechanical solutions are available. Cable clutches and brakes can manage how material feeds into the machine, while shears can operate with a rotary clutch instead of electronic controls.

## Designed to Fit Each Shop

Plain Community shops vary in size and layout, and equipment can be adjusted accordingly. For example, a pre-cut system may need close to 100 feet of space, while a post-cut setup could be arranged in about half that area. Over the years, manufacturers



**An entire roll-forming shop system set up by Metal Rollforming Systems.**

PHOTOS COURTESY OF METAL ROLLFORMING SYSTEMS.

have built a large library of parts and designs, which allows them to customize systems and keep machines straightforward to operate and maintain.

## Feedback From Plain Customers

According to Plain Community customers, these systems are valued for their simplicity, durability, and ease of use. Because many are engineered as complete packages, important parts remain guarded and protected, making

the machines safer and more practical in everyday work.

One of the biggest requests in recent years has been to save labor on trim roll-forming, which can be time-consuming. Many shops are adding hemmers or trim lines to increase productivity while staying within the boundaries of their principles.

## A Notable Trend

Perhaps the most significant trend has been the growth of factory-integrated power systems. In the past, a shop would purchase a line shaft machine and then spend months installing controls for speed and direction. Today, equipment can be delivered with those systems already in place, cutting setup time down to just days.

It's clear that thoughtful design and careful attention to your needs allows modern roll-forming machinery to support your businesses without asking you to compromise your way of life. **PB**

# Why Posts Rot

## And How to Keep Them Standing Strong

■ By Jacob Prater

Putting a post in the ground is something most of us have done at one point or another, and it has been an important aspect of construction since the dawn of time. Whether it is a post for a building or a fence, you might wonder, “Why does it work out well sometimes and not others?” Or more plainly, “Why does that post rot?” The three essential ingredients to making wood rot are oxygen, water, and fungi. Our experience will be our guide in looking at each of these factors that make wood rot.

### The Science Behind Wood Rot

Have you ever seen a post that has rotted from about ground level down maybe 10 or 12 inches, but deeper it was fine and looked fine above ground? Deeper down there isn't enough oxygen, so the process of rotting is much slower. Above the ground line, there isn't enough water (the soil holds water next to the post). But the fungus that eats wood dwells in the soil near the surface. When you see a rotten log in the woods, you may have noticed but not registered a thing or two.

First, you may have noticed that some rotten logs look brown, and some rotten logs look whitish. These are two broad types of fungi at work, which also give us an idea about what the wood is made of. The fungi that leave brown rotten logs are referred to as brown rot fungi, which eat cellulose (a component of wood) and leave lignin (another component) behind. The fungi that leave logs looking whitish are referred to as white rot fungi, which eat lignin and leave cellulose behind.

You may have also noticed that not all logs rot at the same speed or in the same way in the forest. Oak rots from the bark inward (as many types of wood do), but



**Treated post rotted at the ground line.**  
PHOTO BY JACOB PRATER.

birch leaves untouched bark tubes with rotten wood inside them. That birch phenomenon is quite interesting. It turns out that birch bark is waterproof and anti-fungal. In fact, birch bark was—and still is—used to prevent wood from rotting at ground-contact points, especially for cabin beams. Builders simply wrapped beams in birch bark at the ground contact points so the bark touched the ground instead of the wood. (It has to be protected and kept dry for this to work, though.)

Without oxygen, wood may be stable for a long time. I have some slabs from a tamarack log cut in the late 1800s, and they are in fine shape after being reclaimed from where they were embedded in a creek bank for over 100 years below the water table. I know this because the

log still bore the stamp from the now-defunct logging company that cut it so many years ago. When we milled it, the log still had that characteristic Pine-Sol smell that tamarack has!

This preservation due to high moisture and low oxygen is also true of old logs pulled from deep water after sinking during the logging boom of the early U.S. These old-growth logs are often reclaimed and milled for specialty wood products due to their tight growth rings and exceptional durability. Essentially, in that low- or no-oxygen environment, there isn't much present that wants to eat wood. While you can prevent wood from rotting by excluding oxygen in a water-saturated environment, this isn't a useful method for most construction—unless you are building a dock.

For most construction purposes, your best bet to avoid wood rotting is to keep it dry. You've probably seen, and maybe experienced, an old barn slowly caving in. This process usually begins when the roof fails. Once that roof begins to leak, the structure will start to fail and rot wherever water seeps in and wets the wood. With this lesson in mind, you can see how critical the roof is—including overhangs—for keeping a structure standing a long time. Next to the roof, the grading of the building site to shed water away from the base is also important to prevent wood in ground contact from rotting, as it keeps the soil around the structure drier. (Drains and gutters also matter here.)

### Rot-Resistant and Treated Wood

Another way to improve your odds of preventing post rot is to treat the wood or select a species that is naturally rot-resistant. Where I grew up, there was a method to treat the bottom of posts that a friend

in Wisconsin later referred to as the “Tennessee method” (I am from eastern Tennessee). Basically, you would char the bottom of the post in a fire. Posts treated this way were mostly of white oak to start with—tough, durable timber already resistant to water intrusion. (White oak has closed pores, while red oak does not and therefore rots easily.) The char coating covered the outside of the ground-contact portion of the post.

Char is resistant to fungal growth and insect attack. (Those pests can speed up or facilitate fungal entry.) The char may also help seal out moisture to some degree. Charred oak posts like this often lasted a century or more, especially if they had the added protection of a roof. Selecting a rot-resistant wood species can greatly increase the longevity of a post in the ground. Species such as Osage orange, black locust, and white oak are naturally rot-resistant.

Outside of harder-to-source woods such as cypress, redwood, teak, and some tropical species, Osage orange may be one of the most rot-resistant woods available in the Midwest for fence posts. Osage orange, commonly called “hedge” in Kansas, can make what amounts to a 500-year post. Yes, you read that correctly. It will outlast steel and concrete most of the time.

It’s hard to find a straight piece of Osage orange for a pole, but you can find plenty of fence posts from the tree. This tough, durable wood was used by Native peoples for bows and even sparks when you cut it with a chainsaw! Its high density, large silica content, and natural rot-resistant chemicals in the heartwood make hedge, or Osage orange, the king of fence posts where it is available.

Black locust is another inherently rot-resistant species. You are

more likely to find straight trees for poles with this wood, and you may even find commercially available black locust poles. However, it is most common to find it as fence posts. Black locust is dense wood, though not as dense as Osage orange, and it also contains rot-resistant chemicals in its heartwood. A black locust post might last up to 100 years.

The “go-to” in the construction world, however, is treated wood. Southern yellow pine is strong, light, and affordable. When pressure-treated, it gains the added advantage of rot resistance. A pressure-treated post will last five to ten years in the ground without any special treatment.

For most construction purposes, the first line of defense against wood rot is to keep it dry and away from soil contact. If that isn’t entirely possible, then treating the wood (or selecting a rot-resistant species) that will touch soil is the next best step. Beyond this, ensuring the site sheds water—with a roof and proper grading—will go a long way in preserving wood from rot. **PB**

*Jacob Prater is a Soil Scientist and Associate Professor in Wisconsin. His passion is natural resource management along with the wise and effective use of those resources to improve human life.*

## THE CHAIN OF DECAY

There are four links to the chain of decay. Decay fungi need oxygen, a suitable temperature, moisture, and a food source to survive and thrive. To stop decay, at least one of these links needs to be broken. When wood is pressure-treated, the food source link is broken by a chemical preservative to envenom the wood fiber, so decay fungi can’t feed. Oxygen, a suitable temperature, and moisture may still be present, but without fungal activity, there will be no decay. The issue with relying on chemical protection alone is that it doesn’t last. That’s why you see the utilities adding preservative to utility poles every six to eight years. Through weathering, aging, chemical migration, and volatility, the preservative loses its toxicity, making the wood fiber a suitable, desirous food source for the decay fungi. Like pressure treating, a plastic post protector targets the food source link by permanently separating posts from soil and soil-dwelling decay fungi.

—Ken McDonnell,  
Owner, Post Protector



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# One Big Beautiful Bill

## Tax Law Changes Manufacturers Need To know



One of the great things about my position at Shield Wall Media is I am in regular contact with upper management and

C-Suite level people at a lot of construction related companies. One of the bad things is I am in regular contact with upper management and C-Suite level people at

a lot of construction-related companies, and they share questions.

Rarely, I know the answers. Usually, it ends in a research project because if one person in our audience asked a question, many more have the same question and haven't asked. Those questions occasionally become article topics.

The most recent question was about One Big Beautiful Bill (OBBB) and how it affects Qualified Production Property, Bonus Depreciation and Rule 179. I am not nearly qualified to answer that question, but I can research.

I am not an accountant or tax attorney. This is not intended as tax or legal advice. The objective of this article is to provide enough knowledge for you to ask your advisors the right questions.

On July 4, 2025, Congress gave us the One Big Beautiful Bill (OBBB). It made sweeping changes across many areas, but three stand out for manufacturers and builders:

- Bonus Depreciation (Section 168(k))
- Section 179 (Rule 179)
- Qualified Production Property (QPP) (brand-new Section 168(n))

The name isn't just hype. This bill really is huge (about 1,000 pages), and with some planning may be beautiful, because you may be able to expand and grow your business sooner. You can read the entire bill at <https://tinyurl.com/BBB0725>. Here are the changes.

### Bonus Depreciation: 100% is Permanent

"Section 168(k)... is amended... by inserting '100 percent.'" — OBBB text

No more phase-downs. Property acquired after January 19, 2025 can be fully deducted in year one.

What that means for production facilities and shops:

## How to Determine Qualified Production Property (QPP)

QPP is the production-use portion of a nonresidential building — plus the machinery and systems integral to production. Determining what counts is critical, because it sets the size of your deduction.

### Included (Eligible for QPP):

- Production floors: Manufacturing and processing areas.
- Material handling: Aisles, staging, and loading areas integral to production flow.
- Machinery and equipment: Roll formers, CNC lines, presses, welders, conveyor systems.
- Built-in systems serving production: Heavy-duty electrical, dust collection, compressed air, overhead cranes — if they directly support production.

### Excluded (Not QPP):

- Offices, breakrooms, administrative space.
- Sales areas, showrooms, lobbies.
- R&D labs, software development, engineering spaces.
- Parking lots, employee facilities, or lodging.
- Machinery unrelated to production (e.g., office IT systems).

### Key Rules:

- Construction must begin after Jan. 19, 2025 and before Dec. 31, 2028.
- Property must be in service before Jan. 1, 2031.
- If production use ends within 10 years, IRS recapture rules apply.
- Lessors can't claim QPP for space or equipment used by a tenant — the tenant must elect it.

**Pro Tip:** Keep floor plans, equipment layouts, and system drawings on file. The IRS will expect documentation tying production space and machinery directly to the deduction.

- Roll formers, forklifts, CNC machines — all 100% deductible.
- Delivery trucks, trailers, and jobsite equipment — also 100%.
- Software and certain systems — covered too.

**Qualified Production Property**

QPP is new. It allows you to expense the production-use portion of a nonresidential building, instead of depreciating.

The rules:

- Construction must begin between Jan. 19, 2025 and Dec. 31, 2028.
- The building must be in service before Jan. 1, 2031.
- Only production space qualifies. Offices, sales areas, and parking don't.
- Stop using the space for production within 10 years and you may face recapture.

Why it matters:

For a 60,000-square-foot expansion, if 45,000 is production, that portion can be fully expensed in year one. Traditionally, it would have taken 39 years. That's a seismic shift for plant expansions, modular facilities, and automated shops.

**Section 179:  
More Room to Deduct**

OBBB raised the Section 179 limits.

- Maximum deduction: \$2.5 million
- Phase-out starts at \$4 million
- Still tied to taxable income (can't create a loss)

For smaller shops (shed builders, truss yards, roll formers and component manufacturers) this remains a flexible tool. Unlike bonus depreciation, Section 179 lets you choose which assets to expense.

Our audience includes equipment manufacturers, component manufacturers and builders. Here's how OBBB changes the landscape:

- Manufacturers can justify expansions faster. QPP reduces the after-tax cost of new production facilities.
- Builders can help clients design with tax in mind—floor plans that separate production and office space maximizing immediate savings.

Accelerated depreciation and QPP both a benefit manufacturers seeking new production facilities and a potential closing tool, for the builder, in the design build process

When we acquired the Construction Division of F+W Media through Chapter 11, timing deductions and cash flow was critical to survival. OBBB doesn't make decisions for you, but it creates more flexibility allowing you more paths to success. **PB**

**Section 179  
vs. Bonus  
Depreciation**

**Section 179**

- Limit: \$2.5M
- Phase-out: \$4M
- Must have taxable income
- Pick and choose assets

**Bonus Depreciation**

- No dollar cap
- Can create a loss
- Automatic 100% expensing

**Quick Checklist**

- Track contract dates (must be after Jan. 19, 2025).
  - Map out production vs. non-production space for QPP.
  - Verify your state's conformity rules.
  - Decide when to use Section 179 versus bonus depreciation.
- Plan for recapture if you may repurpose space.

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# Producing Felted Metal Building Panels That Lay Flat

**M**etal building panels with felt underlayment applied can look just as good as the panels you produce every day without underlayment. However, it does take some changes in the roll tooling design.

The demand for felt applied metal roof and wall panels is growing. These panels are typically used for controlling condensation build up and occasionally for sound deadening. Many companies have tried to apply underlayment on their existing panel lines and have found it can be



**Fig 1: Panel with underlayment formed with typical standard tooling.**

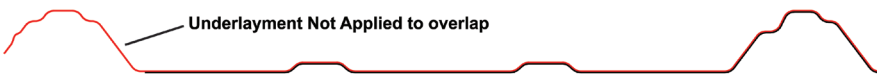
difficult to produce a panel without major cupping. (Ref Fig 1.) Usually the overlap and underlap sides of the panel curl up several inches, causing problems for panel producers because of the appearance of wavy panels after installation. To compensate for this issue, the roll-form line



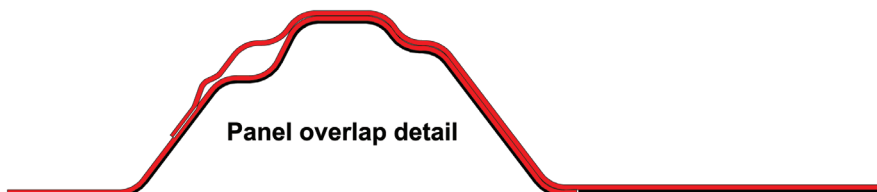
**Fig 4: Ag panel no felt (left) and ag panel with felt applied (right) when formed on specialized combination tooling.**

operators often try to raise the roll tooling to allow for the additional material thickness. However, by raising the tooling it loses the effective over form needed to keep the panel within specifications. To make the process even more difficult, the underlayment is typically not applied to the overlap. (Ref Fig 2 & 3.)

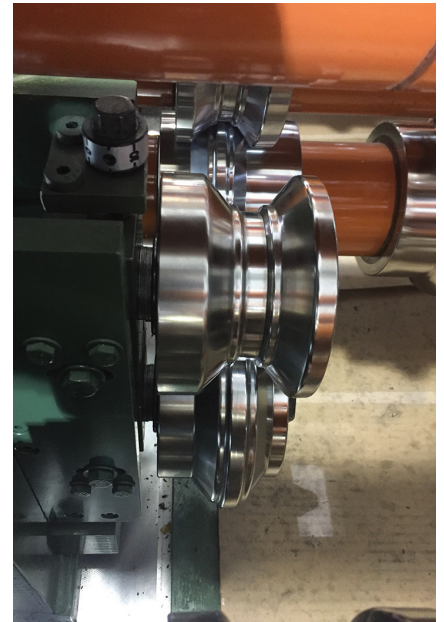
Experienced roll-forming equipment manufacturers have proven it is possible to design roll tooling to run regular building panels and panels with underlayment applied—both meeting the same panel tolerances. (Ref Fig 4.) This does involve additional passes to give independent control and side roll fixtures dedicated to the overlap rib. (Ref Fig 5.) To speed up the adjustment process between running felt and no felt panels, a manufacturer can equip the line with a single point adjustment on the stands. This allows the adjust-



**Fig 2: Profile drawing showing no underlayment applied to overlap.**



**Fig 3: Profile drawing showing detailed panel overlap.**



**Fig 5: Side roll fixture dedicated to the overlap rib.**

ments to be made from the operator side and keep the entire pass of tooling parallel.

When selecting the machine that best meets your needs for producing panels with and without underlayment, make sure the equipment manufacturer has felt underlayment experience and understands your manufacturing process. (Ref Fig 6.) **PB**



**Fig 6: High Speed underlayment fixture and Bradbury BOSS shear.**

# Werner Recalls 20' and 24' Multi-Max Pro Ladders

**O**n August 14, 2025, Werner issued a recall affecting approximately 122,250 of its 20-foot and 24-foot Multi-Max Pro multi-purpose ladders (models ALMP-20IAA and ALMP-24IAA) due to a defective locking mechanism that may jam or fail to fully engage, posing a serious fall hazard.

These ladders, distinctive for their silver bodies, blue tops, blue “Multi-Max Pro” side-rail label, and long black rope along the back, were sold exclusively at Home Depot (in-store and online) between November 2021 and February 2024, retailing for approximately \$200 to \$281.

Werner and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) announced that there have been 18 reported falls, 14 of which resulted in injuries such as bruises, lacerations, head trauma, and fractures to the wrist, leg, and ribs.

For professionals who depend on tall, sturdy ladders every day—whether for roofing, siding, painting, or general construction—this recall is critical. A locked but faulty mechanism can collapse under load, putting workers at risk of serious injury when

handling heavy materials or working on unstable surfaces like roofs.

A sudden collapse from 20 or 24 feet can cause major injury—or worse. Furthermore, workers’ compensation or contractor liability could be triggered by injury incidents involving recalled equipment. **PB**



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# Helpful Tools on the Jobsite

**W**e asked several manufacturers and suppliers for insights on the tools and equipment that will make work easier (and in some cases safer) on the jobsite. Here's what they shared:



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# Sharing Your Story

## Insights for Writing an Effective Press Release

**E**ven if your business does not hire a public relations firm, you can still benefit from learning some basics of media relations. Editors are always looking for good stories. Sharing how you developed a product that solves a problem, how your business has grown, or a milestone you've reached can be valuable news for trade magazines and local publications.

For example, Rural Builder and Frame Building News once covered Wick Buildings' 75,000th structure. The building itself was simple, but the milestone was meaningful. Without a press release, that story may not have reached thousands of readers—and the coverage cost the company nothing.

### What Is a Press Release?

A press release is a short written piece of news that you send to editors. It explains what's happening in your business in a way that is clear and factual. While professionals often write them, you can create one yourself with a bit of guidance.

To be effective, your press release should be easy to read, free of hype, and focused on real information. Editors prefer stories that require little rewriting. If your release is clear and well-prepared, your chances of being published are much higher. (See an example on the next page.)

### Tips for Writing a Press Release

**Start with the basics.** Make sure you answer the questions: who, what, when, and where. Then add details about why the news matters and how it affects your customers or community.

**Keep it simple.** Stick to the facts and avoid sales talk. Use short paragraphs and limit the release to one page if possible.

**Include a quote.** A statement from the business owner or another leader helps add a personal touch.

**Add company information.** End with a short paragraph about your business—what you do, where you're located, and who you serve.

### Sharing and Following Up

Send your press release directly to editors of the publications you'd like to reach. Put the release in the body of the email, not as an attachment, so it's easier to read. Personalize your message instead of sending a group email.

Photos make your story stronger. Include one or two clear, high-quality images along with your press release.

A few days after sending, follow up politely with the editor. Instead of simply asking if they received it, consider offering

## 10 Reasons for a Press Release

Here are 10 practical reasons your company might benefit from writing a press release:

1. **Announce a business milestone** – Such as an anniversary, number of buildings completed, or years in operation.
2. **Introduce a new product or tool** – Highlighting how it solves a problem builders often face.
3. **Share a project completion** – Especially if it's unique, unusually large, or serves the community in a special way.
4. **Expand into a new service area** – Letting customers know where your products or services are now available.
5. **Open a new facility** – Whether it's a new shop, warehouse, or office location.
6. **Highlight safety improvements** – Sharing how your company is making the jobsite safer.
7. **Celebrate employee achievements** – Recognizing years of service, certifications, or promotions.
8. **Participate in community projects** – Showcasing charitable work, barn raisings, or partnerships with local schools.
9. **Form a new partnership** – Announcing a collaboration with another company or supplier.
10. **Promote events** – Trade shows, open houses, training days, or equipment demonstrations.

Each of these reasons gives a company a chance to share meaningful news without turning it into a sales pitch. Editors are always looking for clear, useful stories that show progress, problem-solving, and community value. **PB**

additional details or suggesting a short interview.

### The Benefit of Sharing

Once your story is published, be sure to share the article with your staff, customers, and community. Doing so builds morale, shows appreciation for your team's work, and helps others better understand your business.

You know your products and services better than anyone. By sharing your story, you not only celebrate your own progress—you also contribute to the larger building community. **PB**

## E-Impact Marketing Recognized With Clients on 2025 Inc. 5000 List of Fastest Growing Companies

E-Impact Marketing, a full-service digital marketing company based in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, was included in the 2025 Inc. 5000 list of fastest-growing private companies in America. Listed at #3488, the company joins the Inc. 5000 list for the second year in a row.

In addition to their company's success, E-Impact also celebrates the inclusion of three of their clients: Troyer Post Buildings, New Holland Supply, and Zook Cabins, listed at 4661, 4201, and 2400, respectively.

Founded in 2015 in a backyard office shed, E-Impact's mission from the get-go was to serve its clients by providing meaningful and measurable results via marketing services that work for small businesses. True to their roots, the company has a special focus on the storage shed and portable building industry, but

has since grown to work with new clients in a number of niches.

Today, E-Impact serves clients ranging from pole-barn builders to solar-panel installers to roofing contractors in a three-story office building in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and a second office in Brooklyn, New York.

The Inc. 5000 list, published annually by Inc. Magazine, ranks the fastest-growing privately held companies in the United States based on three-year revenue growth. The list seeks to recognize those companies that embrace and respond effectively to changes in the market and economy. E-Impact has certainly seen those changes over the past decade and embraces challenges as they come in order to help clients grow in any landscape.

For James Charles, co-owner and COO

of E-Impact Marketing, the company's inclusion on the list, "is a testament to our clients, who have trusted us to help their businesses, and to the team members, who work incredibly hard every day to serve our clients and provide measurable value to them. We wouldn't be here without either of those groups."

Charles describes the company's success as an "undeserved blessing" and expresses gratitude to God for what the company has become so far. Looking ahead, he's most energized by the potential he sees in his clients, his team, and the world around him.

"There is so much value to be created in the world. It's exciting to work with companies that create value in so many ways every day, across industries and regions."

**PB**

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# Different Folks, Different Strokes

## Adjusting Your Sales Approach To Fit the Buyer

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The old saying "different strokes for different folks" couldn't be more true when it comes to how folks make buying decisions in the rural construction world. Whether you're talking to a young couple wanting a starter pole barn home, a farmer needing equipment storage, or a homeowner eyeing a new backyard garage, how you sell needs to shift with who you're talking to.

It's not about being slick. It's about being real. Then adjusting, just enough, to build trust and get to the handshake.

### Be Yourself First. Then Read the Room.

Let's start here: If you're not being genuine, none of this matters. You don't need

to become someone you're not. Folks can spot a phony faster than a loose tarp in the wind.

But just like you wouldn't talk to your pastor the same way you talk to your fishing buddy, you've got to read the room. Adjust your tone, your pace, and your approach without changing who you are.

This isn't about acting. It's about understanding. The better you can read people, the better you can serve them. And that's how you earn trust.

Here's a look at the four common types of buyers you're likely to meet in our world.

#### 1. The Quiet Thinker

These folks don't say much at first. That doesn't mean they're not interested. They're just thinking before they speak.

How to spot them:

- Slow to talk, but focused
- They'll listen, but they won't lead the

conversation

- They won't rush into a decision

How to work with them:

- Slow down. Let silence do its job
- Ask simple, open questions
- Give them time. Don't try to close the deal too fast

• Stick to what matters to them, not what you want to sell

Biggest mistake? Mistaking quiet for disinterest. Push too hard, and they'll disappear.

#### 2. The Detail Hound

You'll know this person fast. They want measurements, specs, wind ratings, warranties, and more. They've likely read every product sheet and might know more than you think.

How to spot them:

- They come with a list of questions
- They ask for specifics, not generalities
- They're not swayed by charm. They



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want facts

How to work with them:

- Be ready. Know your stuff
- Keep it clear and organized
- Don't dance around an answer. Be direct

• If you don't know something, say so and get back to them quickly

Biggest mistake? Fudging or guessing. If they catch it, you're done.

### 3. The Heart-First Buyer

These folks lead with trust and gut feeling. They care about the relationship as much as the product. Their barn or shop means something more than just storage.

How to spot them:

- They ask about who's behind the work, not just what you're building
- They respond to stories and people
- They talk about family, legacy, or community impact

How to work with them:

- Be personable. Be kind. Be real
- Share examples and stories of satisfied customers

- Don't rush. Build a connection first
- Make it about why this project matters, not just what it is

Biggest mistake? Treating the sale like a transaction. They need to feel good about who they're buying from.

### 4. The Take-Charge Talker

These folks like to steer the ship. They're confident, quick, and don't want to feel sold to. You'll have a great conversation, but they'll want to keep the reins.

How to spot them:

- They lead the conversation
- They're fast-paced and energetic
- They want options, not instructions

How to work with them:

- Match their energy, but don't overpower them
- Offer clear choices and let them make the call

• Keep it snappy. Don't get bogged down in fine print

- Be confident and to the point

Biggest mistake? Trying to take over. If they feel you're running the show, they'll step away.

### Real Buyers Are a Mix

If only folks stayed neatly in one category, this would be simple. But most customers are a mix.

You might meet a quiet farmer who's also deep into the numbers. Or a talkative homeowner who still wants to know exactly what kind of screws you're using.

The trick isn't to label folks. It's to listen, really listen, and figure out what matters most to them.

### Trust Is Still King

In rural sales, trust is everything. Whether it's a storage barn, a metal shop, a horse shelter, or a garage add-on, people buy from someone they believe in. Period.

Like my friend Ben Gay III says:

"People buy from people they know, like, trust, and with whom they feel safe."

That's not a sales tactic. That's just good business.

So be yourself. Adjust where it helps. Serve people the way they need to be served. That's how you close the deal and keep them coming back.

Let's get out there, work hard, stay honest, and go sell something.

Good selling. Let's GO. **PB**

*Randy Chaffee brings four-plus decades of experience to the post-frame and metal roofing industries. A board member for the Buckeye Frame Builders Association and the National Frame Builders Association, follow his podcast at [facebook.com/BuildingWins](https://facebook.com/BuildingWins). Those with no web access can call (814) 906-0001 at 1 p.m. Eastern on Mondays to listen.*



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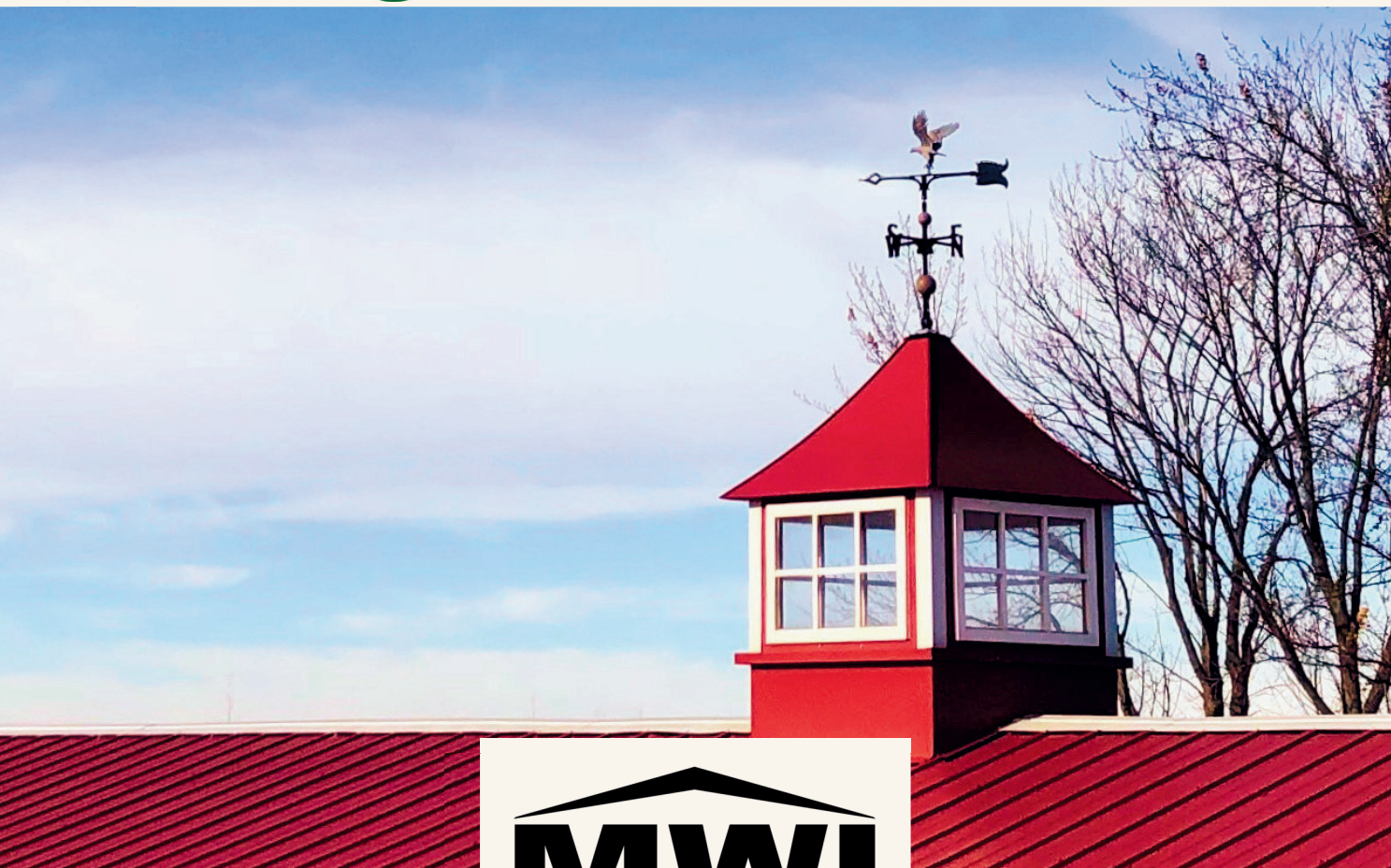
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