

**REVIEW QUESTIONS**

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- 1 Which two types of building occupancies currently use the most metal building systems in the United States? What were the first uses?
- 2 When was the first prefabricated building made? By what company?
- 3 Which company first started to offer standard designs of a factory building?
- 4 Name the prefabricated building best known during World War II.
- 5 Which factors made possible a transition from prefabricated buildings to metal building systems?
- 6 What are the advantages of metal building systems?

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## CHAPTER 2

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# INDUSTRY GROUPS, PUBLICATIONS, AND WEBSITES

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### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

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Metal building systems dominate the low-rise nonresidential building market, as demonstrated in Chap. 1. For dozens, if not hundreds, of manufacturers offering proprietary framing systems, profiles, and materials, a level-field competition is impossible without a common thread of standardization and uniformity. This unifying role has been traditionally handled by the industry organizations and trade associations.

A designer who is seriously involved in specifying metal building systems and who wants to become familiar with common industry practices will at some point need to review the design manuals and specifications promulgated by these groups. The specifier might even wish to follow the latest industry developments by becoming a member of the trade association or by subscribing to some of its publications. Sooner or later the designer will be faced with a question about the availability of a certain metal-building component, or about the feasibility of some nontraditional design approach—the questions that can be answered only by an industry representative. Also, were any disagreements to arise during construction, manufacturers and contractors would probably reference the trade literature to the specifiers to support their position.

For all these reasons, it is important to become familiar with the industry groups and their publications. While our list is not intended to be all-inclusive—in this dynamic industry, new organizations are being formed every year—it should prove helpful to anyone seeking further information about metal building systems.

### 2.2 METAL BUILDING MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION (MBMA)

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#### 2.2.1 The Organization

In the 1950s, the metal building industry was still disorganized and faced a host of problems ranging from building-code and insurance restrictions to union conflicts. The idea that the fledgling industry needed a trade organization was conceived by Wilbur Larkin of Butler Manufacturing Co., who invited his competitors to a meeting. MBMA was founded in Oct. 1, 1956, with 13 charter members. The charter members were Armco Drainage, Behlen Manufacturing, Butler Manufacturing, Carew Steel, Cowin & Company, Inland Steel, Martin Steel, Metallic Building, Pascoe Steel, Soule Steel, Steelcraft Manufacturing, Stran-Steel Corp., and Wonder Building. Wilbur Larkin of Butler Manufacturing was elected MBMA's first chairman.<sup>1</sup> The new group set out to forge the industry consensus on dealing with such common issues as code acceptance, design practices, safety, and insurance.