



UPLIFTING NEWS



NEWS FROM THE WEB SLING & TIE DOWN ASSOCIATION

FALL 2025





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

TREVOR WAYCOTT, STREN-FLEX, LLC

So far, 2025 has been a whirlwind. Running a business is never easy, but with everything going on in the world, from conflict to trade wars and economic uncertainty, this year has been a wait-and-see approach for many. In the U.S., it seems like things are settling down. The stock market has reached new highs after an April slump, and people are leaning towards cautious optimism. Recent trade deals are a positive factor, and there are still many trade negotiations taking place, but will the higher U.S. imposed tariffs prior to these deals cause a resurgence of inflation in the coming months?

Moreover, we are seeing an arms race for Artificial Intelligence (AI). The U.S. is experiencing a surge in AI infrastructure investment, with significant private and public sector commitments aimed at bolstering the nation's AI capabilities. This investment will be focused on expanding data centers, enhancing energy infrastructure, and advancing AI research. Does your company currently use AI?

AI can be helpful for improving internal efficiencies, customer support, product support, and a variety of other things. If you want to learn more about AI and maybe how it could relate to our industry, we will have David Chalk, who is a technology entrepreneur and AI architect, be a Keynote speaker at our Fall Meeting taking place at the downtown Hilton in Toronto, Canada, October 6-8.

The Fall Meeting will return to a regular day schedule with the General Session on Tuesday, followed by meetings for the balance of the day and meetings all day Wednesday. As you may remember, our Spring Meeting in Austin, TX, started a day earlier than usual. We will finish the week with a group tour of Unirope Ltd. on Thursday morning. If you haven't seen a top-notch rigging shop in action, you will not want to miss this. Thank you, Scott Fleming, for organizing the tour, and to Unirope for being willing to open your doors to our membership.

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The Fall Meeting will be bittersweet as I hand the torch to your President Elect, John Ketchum. My two years as your President have been very rewarding, and I'll be forever grateful for the opportunity to lead this great organization. Thank you all for your support. I look forward to continuing to work with the Board of Directors and Executive Committee under John's leadership, as I am sure he will bring a new perspective and great ideas to continue to make this association even better.

Our 2025-2026 Scholarship Awardees have been announced. I want to personally congratulate second-time winner Timothy Philcox, sponsored by Hailide America, and Cecilia Pilgrim, sponsored by Murdock Webbing. Good luck to both of you with your upcoming school year! Thank you to all the members who donated to the Scholarship fund. If you'd like to donate, you can do so at www.wstda.com or when registering for an upcoming meeting.

Before I sign off, I am proud to announce we will be having our first meeting in Europe. The WSTDA Annual Conference is taking place September 28 - October 1, 2026, in Cologne, Germany. I look forward to seeing all of you there!

Trevor Waycott
WSTDA President

WSTDA BOARD NOMINATIONS

**LEAD THE INDUSTRY FORWARD:
NOMINATE YOURSELF FOR THE WSTDA BOARD**

Two Director positions on the Member-elected WSTDA Board of Directors are open for nominations through September 8, 2025. Directorships on the WSTDA Board carry a term of two years.

Serving on an industry trade association's Board of Directors allows you to be part of shaping the future of your field while expanding your professional network. You'll have a direct hand in supporting the establishment of industry standards and driving key initiatives, enhancing both your leadership skills and career connections. Board service offers a rewarding way to give back to the industry.

Trevor Waycott, WSTDA President, has appointed the 2025 Nominating Committee to recruit incumbent and new nominees and report a list of nominees to the Membership prior to the 2025 Fall Meeting elections. Led by chair Gary Distler, Total Tool Supply, the Committee is comprised of Ralph Abato, Doleco USA and Jeff Iden, Cargo Equipment Corp.

According to WSTDA policy, principal and alternate representatives of any Regular or Associate Member organization that is in good standing are eligible to serve on the Board of Directors.

If you would like to nominate yourself for election to the Board of Directors, WSTDA makes available an online form to submit a Board of Directors Application. Applications will be reviewed by the Nominating Committee and must be submitted no later than Monday, September 8, 2025 to be considered for the 2025 election slate.

[DOWNLOAD THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS QUALIFICATION & RESPONSIBILITIES](#)

[APPLY FOR THE WSTDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS](#)



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SAVE THE DATE

2026 Annual Meeting

May 18-20, 2026 | Scottsdale, Arizona

WSTDA STANDARDS: UPDATES & WHAT'S NEXT

ACCESS THE LATEST WSTDA STANDARDS & MANUALS FOR FREE!

WSTDA's Recommended Standards, Test Methods and Operating, Care & Inspection Manuals are always evolving to reflect current industry practices. Here's a quick snapshot of recent activity and upcoming opportunities to contribute:

Recently Published

Several updated standards have recently been revised and published:

- High Performance Yarn Roundslings (RS-1HP) – Revision published in 2024
- Load Binders Used with Chain Tie Downs (T-6) – Revision published in 2024
- Synthetic Webbing for Slings (WB-1) - Revision published in 2024
- Winches Used with Web Tie Downs (T-3) – Revision published in 2023
- Synthetic Sewing Threads For Slings and Tie Downs (TH-1) – Revision published in 2023
- Synthetic Web Tie Downs (T-1) – Revision published in 2022

In Progress

The following standards and manuals are currently under active committee review:

- Synthetic Web Slings (WS-1) – Revisions in progress by Web Sling Technical Committee
- Synthetic Webbing Used for Tie Downs (T-4) – Revisions in progress by Load Securement Technical Committee
- Roundslings (RS-1) – Revisions in progress by Roundsling Technical Committee
- Strength & Elongation Test Method (TM-1) – Revisions in progress by Testing Committee

Coming Soon: Public Comment Periods

Watch for upcoming public comment opportunities for:

- Synthetic Web Slings (WS-1)
- Strength & Elongation Test Method for Sling & Tie Down Webbing (TM-1)
- Synthetic Polyester Roundslings (RS-1)

These projects are progressing toward approval by the Board to make available the revision draft, for public comment. Member and public input during this period is a critical part of the WSTDA consensus process.

Want to Stay Involved? Visit wstda.com/page/standardsreview for full project status and updates.

DOWNLOAD WSTDA STANDARDS & MANUALS FOR FREE

WSTDA 2025 ANNUAL MEETING

BRINGING THE INDUSTRY TOGETHER IN AUSTIN

WSTDA Members gathered this April at The Driskill Hotel in Austin, Texas for the 2025 Annual Meeting, featuring high-value programming, technical collaboration, and networking. Attendees participated in a full schedule of Technical Sessions, Technical Committee meetings, and networking events, reinforcing the Association’s commitment to advancing safety and standards across the industry.

Two standout keynote sessions anchored the agenda. Economist Tom Landstreet kicked off Monday afternoon with a sharp analysis of macroeconomic trends affecting manufacturing and transportation, while Tuesday’s keynote by international trade attorney Yohai Baisburd explored global compliance risks, enforcement priorities, and the shifting regulatory landscape and finally answered the question of what it means to be “Made in the USA”.

Technical Sessions covered a wide range of topics—from innovations in load binder construction in support of improved user safety, to the sharing of informal test data on the residual strength of roundslings. WSTDA Technical Committee meetings gave Member representatives and observers the opportunity to advance standard development and share field experience.

With strong turnout and engaged discussion throughout, the Austin meeting once again demonstrated the strength of WSTDA’s peer-to-peer community. We look forward to continuing the momentum at the 2025 Fall Meeting in Toronto.



Thanks to Our 2025 Annual Meeting Sponsor



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2025 WSTDA FALL MEETING

COLLABORATE, CONTRIBUTE, CONNECT

GAIN VALUABLE INDUSTRY INSIGHTS AND EXPAND YOUR PROFESSIONAL NETWORK:
DON'T MISS YOUR CHANCE TO BE PART OF THE CONVERSATIONS THAT DRIVE OUR INDUSTRY FORWARD.

October 6–8, 2025 | Toronto, Canada

The WSTDA Fall Meeting brings together leaders and technical experts from across the synthetic web sling and tie down industry for three days of focused discussion, collaboration, and progress. Whether you're deeply involved in standards development or simply looking to stay ahead of regulatory and industry trends, this is one of the most valuable Member events of the year.

Why Attend?

- **Shape the Standards.** Participate in Technical Committee meetings that drive the development and revision of WSTDA's Recommended Standards. Your input helps ensure practical, relevant guidance for the field.
- **Stay Informed.** Get first-hand updates on technical initiatives, testing protocols, and safety issues that impact your business during the many Technical Sessions.
- **Build Connections.** The Fall Meeting offers a collegial environment and several events dedicated to networking with manufacturers, suppliers, distributors, trainers and testing professionals.
- **Engage Across Roles.** Attendees range from company leadership to engineering, training, and compliance professionals, making it a well-rounded learning experience for any team.

Optional Tour of Unirole – October 9

Take part in an optional onsite facility tour of WSTDA Member Unirole Ltd. on Thursday, October 9. This behind-the-scenes visit offers a unique opportunity to see production and testing processes firsthand and gain insight into how industry standards are applied in real-world settings.

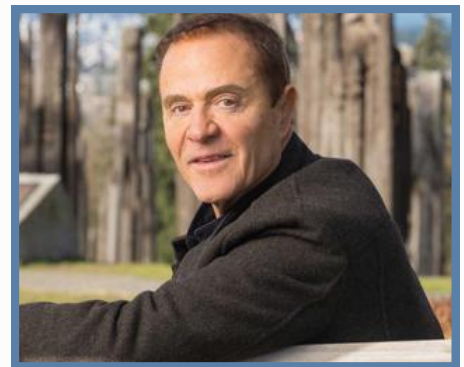
New in 2025: Group Discount!

Companies that register three or more attendees will receive a discounted rate for those additional attendees, making it easier to send a cross-functional team. Bringing more people means deeper engagement, better knowledge transfer, and broader representation in important industry conversations.

Make the Most of Your Membership

The Fall Meeting is a key opportunity to connect what WSTDA is doing at the association level with what's happening inside your organization. It's a chance to bring value back to your company and contribute to the advancement of the industry.

Featured Speaker



David Chalk

Artificial Intelligence / Technology
Keynote Speaker

The Fundamentals of A.I.: Efficiency,
Effectiveness & Ethics

[View Speaker Bio](#)

Hotel Information

Make the most of your Fall Conference experience by staying at our official meeting site, the Hilton Toronto,

Conveniently located in the heart of the city, the Hilton offers a special WSTDA group rate of \$349 CAD/night (single or double).

This rate is available for up to three nights before and after the meeting, based on availability.

Your stay at the conference hotel helps WSTDA keep registration fees low by reducing meeting space costs. Thank you for your support!

Book by September 4, 2025 to secure the discounted rate.

Contact [Cynthia Sanchez](#) for assistance booking your hotel room.

[BOOK NOW](#)



[REGISTER](#)



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WSTDA AWARDS TWO \$3,000 EDUCATION GRANTS

24 APPLICATIONS WERE RECEIVED FROM 17 WSTDA MEMBER COMPANY SPONSORS.



Cecilia DeAngelis Pilgrim, of North Kingstown, Rhode Island, is going into her first year at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (MCPHS) in Boston Massachusetts, pursuing her goal of becoming a Physician Assistant (PA). Pilgrim is sponsored by WSTDA Member **Murdock Webbing Co., Inc.'s Gregory Pilgrim**, who is President and Chief Executive Officer based in Central Falls, Rhode Island.

Pilgrim is an accomplished scholar-athlete and aspiring healthcare professional with a strong foundation in leadership and service. A graduate of Bates College, she captained the varsity women's soccer team for four consecutive years while also conducting scientific research and participating in pre-health academic clubs. Her academic dedication earned her repeated honors on the Dean's List and recognition from the New England Small College Athletic Conference for academic achievement. Pilgrim's leadership shines beyond the classroom and playing field. She mentored teammates, organized community soccer initiatives through the Rosati Leadership Academy, and led youth empowerment conversations during the pandemic with the MOVE Mentorship program. Her ability to foster connections, provide guidance, and adapt her communication style for different audiences reflects a mature, inclusive leadership approach grounded in empathy and collaboration.

Her passion for healthcare solidified while working as a medical assistant at a dermatology clinic, where a chance mentorship with a PA inspired her to pursue that career path. Cecilia has since dedicated herself to gaining clinical experience, shadowing PAs, and engaging deeply with the pre-PA community. Now preparing to enter PA school at MCPHS, she is committed to a future that combines curiosity, compassion, and advocacy in patient care.





Timothy Eric Philcox, of Greenwood, South Carolina, is going into his second year at Anderson University in Anderson, SC, continuing his studies in Biochemistry and Christian Studies. He is earning this scholarship award for a second year in a row. Philcox is sponsored by WSTDA Member **Hailide America, Inc.'s Todd Philcox**, who is Sales Manager based in Alpharetta, Georgia.

Philcox is a dedicated student and campus leader. With a deep interest in environmental issues, he serves as Vice President of the Ecology Club, helping organize meetings, bring in guest speakers, and cultivate a welcoming and engaging community. Timothy's commitment to excellence has been recognized through multiple academic honors, including placement on the Dean's List and receipt of the President's and Denmark Scholarships.

Timothy has a strong background in athletics and team leadership, having spent over a decade as a swimmer, both competing and coaching with the Greenwood YMCA Gator Swim Team and serving as team captain for Greenwood High School. In college, he has continued his love of sports through participation in multiple intramural leagues. His roles as a coach and captain reflect his ability to motivate peers, manage responsibilities, and mentor younger athletes toward personal and team success. In addition to his academic and athletic pursuits, Timothy has shown a longstanding commitment to community service. His volunteer efforts span from leading church Vacation Bible School programs and youth groups to participating in home rebuilding through the Avodah service project. His experience as a YMCA lifeguard further demonstrates his dedication to safety and service. With a foundation built on leadership, compassion, and integrity, Timothy is well-positioned to make a lasting positive impact wherever his future takes him.



Support the WSTDA Scholarship Program

Supporting the WSTDA Scholarship Program is a fulfilling endeavor. Your contribution aids diligent and driven students in achieving their dreams and aspirations. Your donation might just play a role in nurturing the future visionaries and leaders of our world!

Please note that while donations to the WSTDA Scholarship Program are currently not eligible for tax deductions as charitable contributions, they may be potentially deductible as a business expense. We recommend seeking advice from your tax advisor for more information.

click here!



WSTDA SAFETY BULLETIN QR CODES

ARE YOU USING THIS FREE WSTDA MEMBER BENEFIT?

WSTDA launched a **modern and cost-effective** way to distribute WSTDA Safety Bulletins—and we want to make sure you're making the most of it!

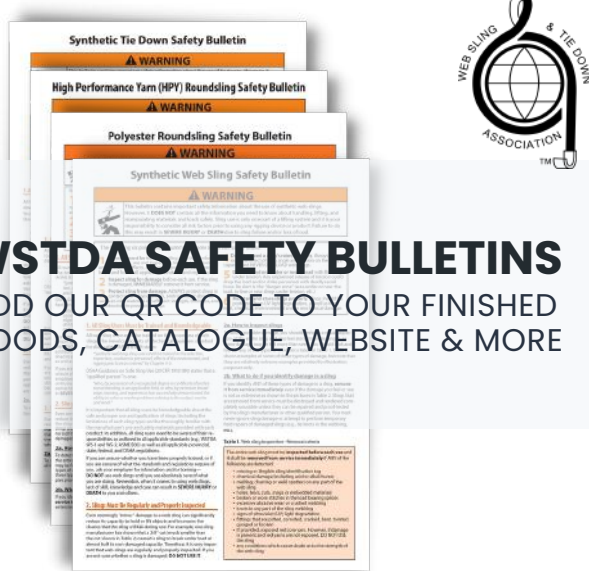
As a **current WSTDA member**, you have **free access** to a unique **QR code** that can be placed on your finished goods, catalogs, website, and more. This QR code gives your customers instant access to WSTDA-copyrighted Safety Bulletins in **English, Spanish, and French—anytime, anywhere!**

- **No cost to you** – It's included with your annual membership dues.
- **No cost to your customers** – They can view/download the bulletins instantly.
- **More ways to share safety information** – Printed Safety Bulletins are still available for purchase, but this QR code offers a convenient digital option to ensure WSTDA safety guidance is always at hand.

Ready to get started?

[Click here](#) to fill out our online form and review the Terms of Use. Once submitted, you'll receive a personalized Terms of Use document to sign, and then we'll send you the QR code in multiple digital formats.

Make sure your customers have instant access to **vital safety information**—sign up for your QR code today!



WSTDA SAFETY BULLETINS
ADD OUR QR CODE TO YOUR FINISHED
GOODS, CATALOGUE, WEBSITE & MORE

COMMERCIAL VEHICLE SAFETY ALLIANCE (CVSA) WSTDA LIAISON UPDATES



Recognizing Excellence: CVSA College Scholarships Awarded

CVSA has awarded \$5,000 scholarships to two exceptional high school graduates, Madyson Daniels and Trey Johnson. Both were recognized for their academic achievements, leadership, commitment to community service, and clear vision for the future. [Learn More](#)

Upcoming Events:

CVSA Annual Conference and Exhibition - September 21-25 2025

Denver, CO

This premier gathering brings together government, enforcement, and industry professionals to shape the future of commercial motor vehicle safety. This event includes technical committee meetings, leadership discussions, and exhibitor opportunities. [Learn More](#)

CVSA/ISWIM Weigh-in-Motion Workshop - September 21, 2025

Denver, CO - In-Person and Virtual

This is a free, one-day workshop exploring weigh-in-motion technology and its applications, co-located within the CVSA Annual Conference and Exhibition. Separate advance registration is required. [Learn More](#)

WSTDA WEBSITE FEATURE: MEMBER PROFILES

WSTDA Member organizations are urged to create their own Member Profile at www.wstda.com. A Member Profile is a concise, informative piece with photos, outlining your business, customers, facilities, personnel, and special activities.

All Regular, Associate, and Affiliate Members are invited to fill out a short form, enabling WSTDA staff to craft a Member Profile for your company. Feel free to include photos. To secure a spot for your company's Member Profile feature, promptly complete and submit the form today.



[Check out existing profiles >>](#)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

WEB SLING TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

CHAIR: ROBERT HANCUFF & CO-CHAIR: FRED AMBLI

We continue to complete review of WS-1. We are now hoping to have the review and final changes completed by end of the year. We are referring to the newest revision of WSTDA RS-1HP standard to ensure that we cover areas we may have overlooked, and to maintain consistency.

Our WSTC regular (four to five times annually) Zoom meeting continues to be beneficial in accelerating our reviews and updates to the standards. We will have one more meeting prior to our meeting in Toronto.

We will have a technical committee meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 7 in Toronto at 3:15 p.m., and encourage you to join us. Our work session during the Fall Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, the 8th, at 10:00 a.m.

The Web Sling Technical Committee welcomes and encourages all recommendations for discussion topics surrounding synthetic web slings and current projects of the Committee. Submit your questions or discussion topic suggestions at any time to:

Bob Hancuff: bhancuff@carolinawebbing.com

Chairman, WSTC

Fred Ambli: fred@liftpro.com

Co-Chair, WSTC

**Do you have a burning question?
Perhaps a long standing debate?
Or an open inquiry from the field?**

Use the QR code to send us your question and we'll ask the experts serving on WSTDA's technical committees to chime in on your question. You may just find an answer in an upcoming issue of Lift & Secure!

ASK THE PROS



TESTING TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

CHAIR: SAM SOCOLOW & CO-CHAIR: TROY RAINES, JR.

The testing technical committee has successfully completed Phase 2 of the Sling Protection Edge Radii Project. The results obtained from the new single-edge plate fixture were particularly noteworthy. In our comparative analysis with data from Phase 1, which utilized a traditional block-style testing fixture, we observed that the data points aligned closely, especially with the 45° pulling configuration. This finding was shared with the General Assembly during our Spring Meeting in Austin, TX.

We are currently finalizing the report associated with this project and will be sending it to the relevant committees to support the ongoing development of the WSTDA standards.

Additionally, we are in the concluding stages of reviewing the TM-1 Strength and Elongation Recommended Test Method for Slings and Tie-Down Webbing. We anticipate that this review will be completed ahead of the Fall Meeting and are optimistic about obtaining approval to submit it for public review.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

LOAD SECUREMENT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE CHAIR: TIM SANDERS

As reported in the Spring 2025 issue, the Load Securement Technical Committee planned and then presented a Technical Session at the 2025 Annual Meeting, “The Evolution of Load Binders: Safety, Innovation, and What Comes Next for WSTDA-T-6.” Committee Chair Tim Sanders and Co-Chair Cary Kronebusch presented data and case studies illustrating the real-world risks of improper use of these high-tension devices. They went on to describe how these risks are driving innovations for better functionality, and the improved safety and comfort of the commercial driver in mind. Examples were shared of the newer drill-operated torque drive mechanism used to tighten and secure chains, which eliminates the need for manual cranking or ratcheting by the driver.

With these new types of load binders on the market, the Committee is presented with the question as to how they should be addressed in existing WSTDA Recommended Standards, specifically WSTDA-T-6. The Committee plans to be proactive in seeking input from users and stakeholders prior to its formal review and discussion, to review real-world case studies on torque-driven load binders and other innovations in the marketplace, and seek consensus on how the standard will evolve. The Committee will then also consider whether it should recommend the development of a new WSTDA Warning Label and/or Safety Bulletin, following the T-6 revision.

In the meantime, the Load Securement Technical Committee is working on revisions to WSTDA-T-4, and expects to present a revision draft to the public in late 2025. The Committee will then commence a review of WSTDA-T-5, Recommended Standard Specification for Interior Van Securement by the end of the year. Watch for notices for specific public comment periods, or review and submit a comment anytime [here](#).

TECHNICAL RESOURCE COMMITTEE CHAIR: JEFF IDEN & CO-CHAIR: RALPH ABATO

The Technical Resource Committee has been busy with Zoom meetings over the past few months. In the past year the committee finished and made accessible the definitions for all standards. This reference document is for the committees to review and use for the harmonization of terms. Recently the TRC approved updated terminology for the copyright statement that will be inserted in all past and future standards.

We also discussed the need for a load binder safety label and the standardization of test record retention. Currently the standards are not consistent with record retention periods and the committee is hoping to come up with a standardized time frame for record retention. We look forward to seeing everyone in Toronto for the 2025 Fall Meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ROUNDSLING TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

CHAIR: GREGORY BABINCHAK & CO-CHAIR: AMANDA MASTERS

It has been a pleasure for me to serve as the WSTDA Roundsling Technical Committee Chair for the last 30 years. This will end following the upcoming Fall Meeting and we will then welcome Mandy Masters to serve this post. A focal interest of mine has simply been to gather about 8 to 10 individuals who would be willing to grind through a list of review topics, one at a time, to allow us to yield guidelines that would be beneficial to both sling manufacturers and to product users. The committee has well exceeded that objective and it has addressed many topics over this period, each topic without a specific born on date, and with most not having a clear black or white best answer. We have typically looked to lay out the pros and cons of each proposed resolution for each matter, and then have worked toward obtaining a consensus group decision.

About the matter of having things come to a suitable end of their term, it may be noted that both the web sling and roundsling committees have also recently initiated reviewing the topic of designating a period of useful life to synthetic slings. Anyone who has performed several product inspections of used slings has come across examples of well-used ones that perhaps may not have clearly exhibited exceeding degradation limits covered in the out of service criteria, but where the product simply looks old and well used. Frankly, it would also not be surprising for us to understand that a small percentage of infrequently used roundslings that were in service when I first joined with WSTDA do remain in service today. Unfortunately, we cannot generally pick up a sling and be able to get a good sense of the full history of its service life. However, if we would assign slings with some form of an in-service date, this could then allow us an extra tool in our inspection arsenal if we were to provide a recommended service period limit for slings in general. This is a perfect example of a topic that could not be addressed solely through scientific means and is best resolved via review by a committee that well represents the industry.

Regarding a topic that has been under review for a much longer period of several years, the roundsling committee is now prepared to end its review on the topic of multi-leg rigging. The committee has now fully gone through affected sections of a draft to the RS-1 standard and is expected to bring the draft update to a vote for approval at the next online meeting in September. The committee has already voted approval covering product design changes in chapter 2, prescribing a downrating of 4 leg bridle slings to a 3-Leg rating. Proposed example illustrations have now been completed. The proposed updates include ones for Chapter 4 covering recommended operating practices that will address slings that are constructed by users in the field. Under the proposed draft, manufacturers will be given a period of one year following the WSTDA final approval of the updated RS-1 standard to complete this change.

With regarding to the Fall Meeting, an ad-hoc group has an upcoming meeting scheduled to address the proposed agenda for the roundsling presentation session.

Have you recently learned a handy new tip that can also help your peers?

Share your tip using the QR code and help us promote knowledge sharing throughout the rigging and load securement industry. You may just find your tip featured in an upcoming issue of Lift & Secure!

TECH TIPS



By the Numbers

As most know, the first published and copyrighted standard by this Association took place in 1978, by a handful of dedicated industry leaders coming from sling fabrication shops, weaving companies and fiber producers. This standard, the WSTDA-WS-1 Synthetic Web Sling Standard, currently in its fifth revision, soon to be sixth, still stands today greatly expanded in technical content since its original edition.

Today, from that one single Technical Committee with its eye singly focused on standardizing web sling and sling webbing strength ratings, has evolved into an internationally recognized manufacturer's trade association, recognized by the Department of Justice as a standards writing organization. WSTDA currently publishes, reviews, and updates eleven standards and three Operating, Care, and Inspection Manuals in addition to four product Safety Bulletins and Warning Labels. Some of which are available in the Spanish language. Single copies of the Standards and Manuals are available free of charge from the www.wstda.com website.

How does all this happen? It's By the Numbers. The Association has five standing Technical Committees: Web Sling, Roundsling, Load Securement, Testing, and the newly formed Sling & Tie Down Protection Committee. Each committee has a Board of Directors appointed Chair. All technical work undertaken by the Association is vested in the appropriately assigned Technical Committee. Technical Committee membership is open to both WSTDA members and non-members for a well-rounded, technically competent committee. Currently, the Web Sling Technical Committee has 24 members, Roundsling: 22, Load Securement: 17, Testing: 15, and Sling and Tie Down Protection: 13. This is how the work gets done. It's by the dedicated, technically competent committee membership whose employers allow their employees time and expense to attend physical in-person meetings and carve out time to attend and take part in the numerous virtual meetings in between the semi-annual meetings.

While all our technical work is carried out by our well-structured Technical Committees, how do we keep on track with our numerous assignments and bring a document ready for publication? That process throughout the work period is carried out primarily by the Association's Executive Director, Kathleen DeMarco, CAE, who attends and takes part in every in-person and virtual meeting and who, along with other staff members, sees that the work and other activities of the Association are carried out in a timely and professional manner.



WSTDA Standards Protected by Copyright Law

WSTDA copyrights its standards and other products, sells these products and occasionally licenses others to reproduce them. On occasion, a WSTDA standard is adopted by a government agency (e.g., OSHA, Dept of Defense) as a regulation. In such case – adoption of a WSTDA standard by a government agency – if someone were to reproduce and sell that standard without a license from WSTDA or without paying WSTDA a royalty, could WSTDA sue that person or firm for copyright infringement?

According to a US District Court decision from California last year, the answer is yes: a standards-writing organization such as WSTDA does not lose the protection afforded its standards by US copyright law if a governmental agency adopts those standards as public law (*National Fire Protection Association, Inc. v. UpCodes, Inc.*, 753 F.Supp.3d 933 (C.D.Cal. 2024)).

Over the last century in the United States, a complex public-private partnership has developed between non-profit, governmental standards development organizations ("SDO"), which are comprised of private industry groups or associations, and government agencies where the SDOs will develop voluntary consensus standards, guidelines, and procedures that set the best practices for installations in certain commercial industries instead of those standards being developed by the government agencies.

Recognizing the value of such standards, federal, state, and local governmental bodies have chosen to incorporate many of the standards by reference ("IBR") into statutes and regulations—that is, to reference a privately authored voluntary consensus standard as relevant to a statute or regulation, without reproducing the standard's actual text into the regulatory text.

Federal, state, and local governments rely on and have endorsed the practice of IBR, instead of verbatim copying of privately authored standards. Today, for example, fire-safety standards published by SDOs are commonly incorporated into state codes across the nation. Some states incorporate these codes wholesale or subject to only minor changes. The plaintiff in this case, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), like WSTDA, is a nonprofit organization and an accredited SDO (Standards Development Organization) which publishes more than 300 voluntary consensus standards.

NFPA's voluntary consensus standards are developed through a rigorous process that includes open proceedings, public notice and opportunity for public comment, consensus decision-making that meet accreditation criteria. NFPA invests tens of millions of dollars annually to create their standards. (WSTDA doesn't spend quite that much, of course.)

Core to its mission of creating voluntary consensus standards, NFPA encourages jurisdictions across the country to incorporate and use its standards. The result is that many NFPA standards have been IBR-ed (Incorporated By Reference) by federal agencies, states, and local governments, including NFPA 70, the National Electrical Code, which has been adopted in all 50 states. Some governmental agencies will IBR NFPA's standards or a portion thereof or may IBR other SDO's codes or standards that reference NFPA's standards.

The primary users of NFPA standards are professionals from the architecture, engineering, and construction ("AEC") industries. Since 2006, NFPA has made its standards, including standards that have been IBR-ed, available online for free, read-only access through its Free Access service.

That format allows anyone to read the text of an NFPA standard but prevents downloading and printing copies that would substitute for NFPA's paid offerings. NFPA's standards that are IBR-ed are also available to the public without charge through multiple channels, including at government offices and libraries.

Thousands of visitors access NFPA's standards, including IBR-ed standards, through its Free Access website each year. Free Access users can access NFPA's standards on their laptops, mobile devices, tablets, or other devices that have a web browser.

NFPA also sells individual editions of print copies of standards for about \$150 or less. Additionally, users may purchase online-access subscriptions through NFPA LiNK.

NFPA LiNK provides subscribers with access to the digital library of NFPA's standards, as well as provides features, including dynamic search that allows users to locate relevant sections across different standards, expert commentary and visual aids, bookmarking and annotation tools, access to situation-based guidance for specific workspaces or equipment, a tool comparing what has changed from a prior edition, and other collaboration tools.

In addition to directly disseminating its standards, NFPA licenses its standards to other publishers and organizations that pay for the rights to distribute or use all or portions of NFPA's standards in their products and services.



For example, NFPA licenses to companies that aggregate standards from different SDOs into digital libraries, along with jurisdiction-specific information and amendments. NFPA also licenses its standards to companies that create checklists, diagrams, programs that flag potential failures to meet standards, and other efficiency tools derived from its standards.

NFPA owns copyrights in all the standards it publishes. NFPA does not authorize its standards to be copied verbatim into statutes or regulations, and the governmental bodies that IBR NFPA's codes respect NFPA's copyright. The defendant in this case, UpCodes, was founded by two brothers to create a profitable company that would make it easier for industry professionals to understand how to comply with state and local building codes.

UpCodes posted NFPA's standards on its website by first acquiring books containing printed copies of NFPA's standards, scanning the printed copies, and converting them into a digitized, website-friendly format that is navigable by chapter and section. (JAF 4, 2521). UpCodes uploaded NFPA's standards to its website.

Unlike NFPA's website, UpCodes's website allows users to view, copy, paste, and print for free content, including NFPA standards that UpCodes has uploaded to its website, without registering for an account. Users can also access advanced search and collaboration tools on UpCodes's website by paying a subscription fee. UpCodes's features available to paid subscribers include search, bookmarking, diagrams, "Code Compare," and "Code Calculators."

NFPA never authorized UpCodes to copy, publish, scan, or distribute its standards, whether IBR-ed or not.

It is undisputed that NFPA owns copyrights in all the standards it publishes, including IBR-ed standards, the court said. It is also undisputed that UpCodes posts NFPA's standards on UpCodes' website without authorization from NFPA. Thus, UpCodes has violated at least one of NFPA's exclusive rights as the copyright owner, the court ruled.

UpCodes argued that once NFPA standards were "incorporated by reference" in government codes, NFPA's copyright was no longer valid because the "Incorporated by Reference" standards became "the law" when federal and state governmental agencies adopted them into law.

Thus, UpCodes argued, NFPA's IBR-ed standards cannot be copyrighted because they are now in the public domain. The court rejected UpCodes's argument, holding that NFPA's copyright was protected even in the case of "IBR-ed" standards (Incorporated by Reference).

Important to this holding was the fact that access to NFPA's standards was readily available (as is also the case with WSTDA standards). There was no evidence, for example, that anyone who wanted to read the NFPA standards had any difficulty doing so through NFPA's free-to-access website.

Because NFPA is a private party and has no authority to make or interpret the law, its copyrighted standards are not in the public domain and are copyrightable, the court concluded. A government body that merely incorporates a standard by reference does not independently create any content, and therefore does not become an 'author' of the standard.

The court also noted that there was no evidence that NFPA eliminated or threatened public access to its IBR-ed standards. Indeed, the record demonstrated that NFPA made its IBR-ed standards readily available to the public without charge through multiple channels, including through its website and at government offices and libraries.

In sum, the court concluded, neither the Copyright Act nor controlling precedent serves to invalidate NFPA's copyright protection when a government body IBRs NFPA's standards.

Finally, the court addressed UpCodes's argument that its reproduction of NFPA standards constituted "fair use" under the copyright law. To constitute "fair use", using a party's copyrighted work must satisfy four conditions: 1) the purpose and character of the use (e.g., criticism of a play or movie), 2) the nature of the copyrighted work, 3) the amount of the copyrighted work used (e.g., quoting a paragraph from a novel, showing a 10-second clip from a movie) and 4) the effect of the use on the value of the copyrighted work. It is up to the party asserting "fair use" to prove the defense.

With respect to the first criterion – purpose/character of use – the court agreed with NFPA that UpCodes's commercial use of NFPA's standards did not satisfy this criterion. UpCodes simply copied NFPA's standards nearly verbatim and wholesale, and then displayed and distributed near identical copies to its users. The court made no determination on the second criterion – the nature of the work (it noted that there is more protection for "creative" work than for purely "factual" work).

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MEMBER NEWS

Lodi Metals Rebrands as Trucking Depot

WSTDA member Lodi Metals has officially rebranded as Trucking Depot. This move reflects the company's mission to be a premier destination for cargo securement and trucking needs. The change includes a new logo, refreshed branding, an updated website, and expanded products and services.

[Learn more >>](#)

Submitted by:
Trucking Depot

www.truckingdepot.com



Ben-Mor Acquires Faucher Industries

WSTDA member Ben-Mor has acquired another member, Faucher Industries. The two companies share similar synergies, and now they are equipped to better serve their markets and customer bases as a single entity. This acquisition allows Ben-Mor to diversify and nurture its presence in North American markets.

[Learn more >>](#)

Submitted by: Ben-Mor

www.ben-mor.com



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Associate Member

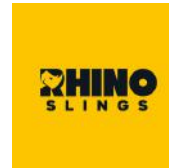


Associate Member



Servicables S.A. de C.V.
Cables de acero, accesorios, estrobo y eslingas de poliéster

Associate Member



Regular Member



Regular Member

YOUR NEWS CAN BE IN OUR SPRING ISSUE

The Member News section focuses on timely updates on WSTDA-Member organizations: company announcements, new employees/promotions, awards given or received, acquisitions/mergers, and the like. Member News is not meant for commercial/ product/service/sales announcements.

Submission Guidelines:

- Limit one submission per company
- Press release/announcement must be in Word format
- Word count limit is 200 words and WSTDA retains the right to edit
- May include a hyperlink to member's website/press release, etc.
- Company logos and photo(s) may also be submitted, but are limited to space availability

Keep an eye on your mailbox on how to submit your news later in 2026!



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