

# MAKO STEEL

Offering Great Service At A Great Value • *By Rhonda Paschal*

**M**ako Steel has been making a name for itself in the steel construction business for 12 years. One of the most notable things this company has done consistently over time is to offer its clients great service at a great value.

To uphold this commitment to its numerous repeat customers and new clients, Mako enhanced its in-house engineering team by bringing on engineer Mike Dale last year. Mako is now licensed to prepare structural drawings in 35 states, an advantage they welcomed shortly after bringing Dale on board.

Over the past year, the company has seen other positive results that have helped in further strengthening its position on the engineering side of the business. The changes, according to Mako President Caesar Wright, "have allowed us to control our engineering schedule 100 percent, which is advantageous to our clientele when it comes to their deadlines." With meeting deadlines of particular importance to Mako and its customers, the enhancements in the engineering arena also ensure that other areas of the business do not go unchecked. "The attention paid to plan check corrections is sometimes overlooked in the industry but we make a point

to stop when we see plan check corrections come through and give that our immediate attention," Wright adds.

Vision and the ability to make the right decisions on building projects and in other areas of the company has helped Mako stay its course over the years. Maintaining manageable growth and investing in its employees have been part of that vision. "The main thing for us is that we've been fortunate to be selective with the projects we engage in when it comes to building contracts," Wright explains. "For the most part, we focus on design-build work and working directly with the end user. We also like working with first-time builders because that gives us the opportunity to share our knowledge on laying out a project effectively and at the same time keeping the construction costs as low as possible."

The company's move into larger quarters in both the Florida and California markets resulted in giving everyone on staff more workspace, boosting morale, and yielding an even more productive team. Mako has gone even further to instill a sense of pride and belonging in its employees. "In 2004, we started an employee stock ownership program (ESOP)," says Wright. "We have a good core group here and we don't see very much turnover. We have a total of 14 employees with an average time of seven or eight years here at Mako. The ESOP gives everyone financial ownership in the company."

For this relatively young company that finds strength in its aggressive and loyal employees, Mako's commitment to customer service is evident in its continuous communication with its clients. These basic necessities of business proved to be priceless in 2004 as Mako's customers stuck with them during a time that tested numerous companies associated with the self-storage industry.

"The biggest challenge for us last year was the rising price of steel," says Wright. "There was a time during that period when we couldn't even guarantee our pricing for two weeks at a time because the numbers associated with steel were changing so rapidly. We credit our clients with being patient with us during the height of the steel shortage and our vendors with being supportive and allocating us what we needed for our ongoing steel construction projects. Fortunately, during that time we did not have any projects that suffered major construction delays."

Even as it looks ahead to its 12<sup>th</sup> year, Mako keeps its clients in mind by examining ways to save the end-user money, working to value-engineer its multilevel and canopy projects, and looking forward to the opportunities the industry offers. "Our industry still remains healthy," says Wright. "Residential growth is on the rise and steel prices have stabilized so I do see a bright future ahead. I hope our future will include the support we've seen over the years from our customers and our vendors."



## QUICK FACTS

**Company:** Mako Steel  
**Founded:** 1993  
**Products:** Steel construction materials

**President:** Caesar Wright  
**Headquarters:** Carlsbad, California,  
 Jacksonville, Florida

For more information about Mako Steel, call (800) 383-4932, or visit [www.makosteel.com](http://www.makosteel.com).

