

Dispelling the myths about structural steel and sound transmission.

Sound transmission at a hotel can be tough if you have a noisy neighbor. Many of us have experienced this problem at one time or another, faced with the dilemma of making the complaint call to the front desk or suffering through a restless evening.

The same can be said for the owner of a condominium trying to enjoy a peaceful night at home when the party next door sounds like it's in their own unit. Owners, developers, and architects are thus keenly aware of how important it is to prevent objectionable sound transmission in residential buildings.

A myth exists that a residential building, such as a hotel or condominium, framed in structural steel will be noisier than one framed in concrete or masonry. In fact, it is the characteristics of the separating elements—not the beams and columns—that make or break sound transmission performance. Thus, a successful acoustic design of wall and floor systems between units is what matters.

The August 2006 SteelWise article “Can You Hear Me Now?” (available at www.modernsteel.com) explored

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