The U.S. economy certainly has been a roller-coaster ride. There are some regions of the country where the work is more than enough, but other areas or markets where it is not as plentiful. Why just today I saw this headline on the CNN/Money magazine Web site: *Stock squall—Dow, Nasdaq erase most of early gains as continued lack of confidence plagues markets.*

FMI’s *Construction Outlook, Second Quarter 2002 Report* says that “most Americans believe that the economy bottomed out over the winter and is improving this spring.” But it goes on to say that residential construction is unlikely to match the market it saw in 2001, and commercial builders are facing a weak market.

There is a light at the end of the tunnel, however. The report says, “The National Bureau of Economic Research declared that the U.S. economy has been in recession since March 2001 but now asserts that the economy is on the mend, although it has stopped short of declaring an end to the recession.”

Do you feel like your company has been in a recession for well over a year? I don’t think my peers would agree with that. AWCI member contractors are the best in the business, and many of us have been in this business for decades.

My advice to those of you experiencing a bit of a downturn is this: Keep your standards high. Don’t change the way you work just to get a contract. Don’t downsize. In other words, don’t panic. The economy is well on its way to a great recovery, and we will be there for it. Keep your head and your quality standards, and the work will come to you like it always has.