

# WELDBEND CORPORATION

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The term “March Madness” usually refers to the college basketball playoffs, and I hope your favorite team did well in their bracket. However, in the Pipe, Valve, and Fitting market, “March Madness” has taken on an entirely new meaning.

The demand for carbon steel fittings and carbon steel flanges over the past several months—especially in March—is something I have not seen in over 40 years. Not only is business brisk, but the volume in the orders has been nothing short of unbelievable. Data centers have certainly energized this market. In addition, scheduled plant turnarounds in the oil industry, along with the ongoing war in the Middle East, have prompted energy companies to consider expanding their production capabilities, particularly given current oil prices.

Overseas, some steel suppliers for seamless pipe are now quoting delivery into the first quarter of 2027. We have also heard that power companies in certain countries have begun limiting energy usage to customers to only 40% of normal levels. At the same time, there are early signs of shipping container shortages, along with increasing costs for container shipments to the United States. Under these conditions, this does not bode well for a smooth and consistent supply of material.

We are already seeing prices firming up for importers, and we have been advised of emerging shortages in not only in the fitting and flange industry, but in many segments of the PVF market.

Here at Weldbend, we are doing everything possible to minimize shortages by replacing older equipment with newer, faster, and more efficient operations, as well as adding equipment to further increase production. We strongly recommend that, if you are working on any large projects, you inform your customers of the very real possibility of material shortages, extended lead times, and the firming up of pricing in the coming weeks. It would behoove our stocking distributors to seriously consider stocking more than your normal levels of product on your shelves during these times.

Also, with this in mind, we are not taking on any new accounts or reestablishing dormant accounts at this time. As always, we are here to support you, our customers. If there is anything further you would like to discuss, please contact your Sales Representative or reach out to me personally. Thank you for your continued business and we look forward to working through this together.

James J. Coulas  
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