

Commentary-Dave Pasolli-Western Wood Truss Association of Alberta

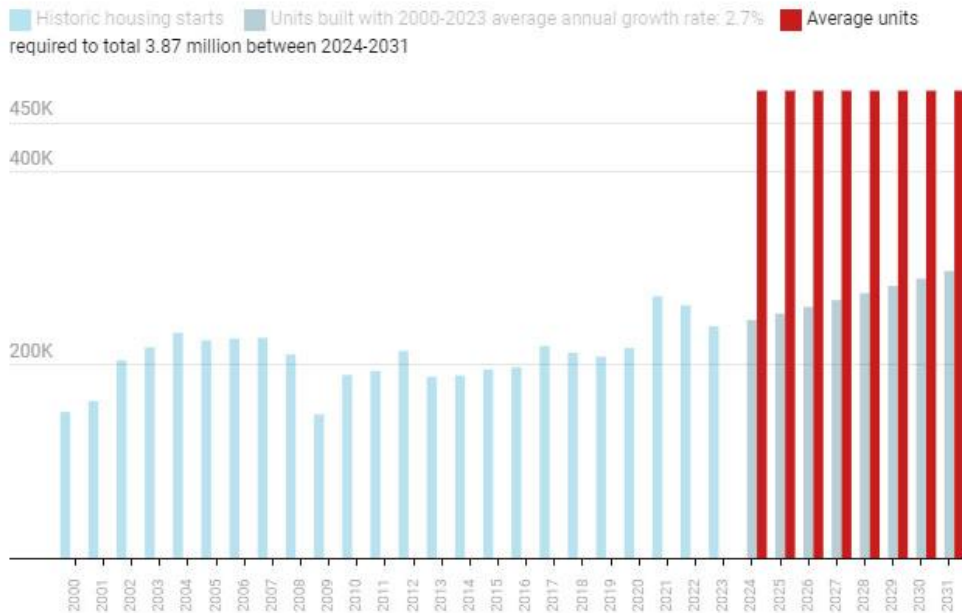
3.9 Million Homes in the Next 7 Years

In April the federal government announced Canada’s most recent housing plan. It seeks to build two million net residential units by 2031, in addition to the 1.87 million units that CMHC forecasts will be built regardless during the same time.

It is not going to be cheap to achieve this goal. The federal government plans to spend approximately \$60 billion through various programs and strategies. When added to provincial funding it is probably more than \$80 billion that the taxpayers are going to commit.

While I am skeptical this goal will be achieved, I am confident that the money will be spent. A large chunk of this money comes from the National Housing Strategy which is a 10-year plan introduced in 2017, so a lot of this money is no-doubt already spent with no noticeable increases in the last 8 years.

Residential housing starts vs. those required to meet federal housing goals



I am not a graph statistician but the pattern to achieve this goal in the above graph does look a little adjacent to impossible. Over halfway through 2024 I am pretty sure that we are not going to meet this year’s target as CMHC projects that starts in the country will

actually decline a bit due to higher mortgage rates in the first part of the year, even with the feds allocating \$8.5 billion in this year's budget to address housing affordability.

The average starts between 2000 and 2023 was only 208,939, so to build 3.9 billion would need to see starts increase to 487,740 units.

Remember that all this funding is supposed to be for the increase in units as CMHC estimates that 1.87 million homes are going to be built anyway in the time period.

Of course, with any government funding there are always strings attached, and when it comes to housing, they are most likely strings that do not make it more affordable.

Just last night on the news there was a politician from Jasper talking about how the town could be rebuilt after the recent fire with increased density and to higher environmental standards. As Jasper homeowners lease land from the Crown, I can just imagine what the new parameters that revolve around Parks Canada rules of how and even if residents can rebuild. Heat pumps for everyone.

Getting the Government out of the Business of Regulating and Encouraging Housing

In my opinion getting the government more involved in any industry will only distort the market, not improve it. Although regulated through building codes for public safety the housing market continues to be a free market economic system based on supply and demand. One of the central principles of a free market is the concept of voluntary exchange, which is defined as any transaction in which two parties freely trade goods or services.

While politicians love to stand at a podium announcing how they have invested in a new affordable housing project with our tax money they are creating policies and new taxes that are doing more harm than good.

Trudeau's decision to increase the capital gains inclusion rate for individuals from 50 per cent to 67 per cent on gains above \$250,000, and for businesses on all gains, demonstrates his failure to understand the complexity of markets.

The large real estate developments Trudeau needs to increase the housing stock largely depend on residential property developers' ability to [assemble land on major thoroughfares](#). Because the mom-and-pop shops that would ordinarily sell their land to assemblers will now face a higher capital-gains tax hit, they will become reluctant to sell unless compensated by higher prices, making many developments financially unviable.

Moreover, the new housing that does get built will be costlier than otherwise, putting it further out of reach for an increasing number of home-seekers.

The capital gains hike will deter investment across the board. In housing it will act as an all-purpose house-construction killer. Fearing high taxes upon an eventual sale, shopkeepers will less often convert the attic above their store into a rental unit; homeowners will think twice about adding a granny flat. With less incentive to sell, many who had considered disposing of underused second homes will keep them off the market.

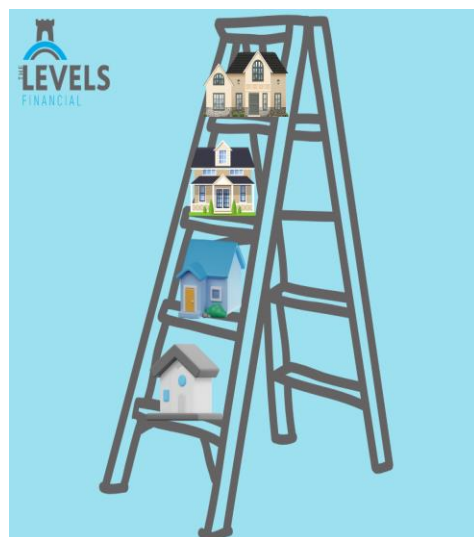
Trudeau has even been [chipping away at Canadians' one great incentive](#) for home ownership — the capital gains tax exemption for primary residences. Entrepreneurs short on funds but handy with a hammer have long enhanced the housing stock by buying dilapidated houses as primary residences, upgrading or subdividing them to make them marketable for their neighbourhoods, then re-selling them and repeating the process in new homes.

These sweat-equity builders, now deemed “house-flippers” by CRA, are treated worse than other businesses: They are denied not only the capital gains exemption if their upgrade proves profitable but also the ability to claim deductions in real estate downturns that see their homes sold at a loss.

Trudeau has also targeted would-be homeowners who planned to finance their home purchase by renting out rooms via Airbnb. Under his [Fall Economic Statement](#), homeowners could be [denied all tax deductions](#) associated with their short-term rentals, making them unviable for homeowners, along with any dream of affording a home.

These government programs are so focused on new units while totally ignoring the traditional property ladder. In North America the property ladder has worked by young people getting on the first rung of the ladder and eventually moving up it as their life situation changes. As people move up the ladder it creates opportunities for new young people to take a step on the ladder.

With all the focus on the low rung of the ladder and affordability there will be less resources of materials and labour for the higher rungs of the ladder and the lower rung will become overloaded.



A point could be made that the best way to free up actual affordable housing is to have people that are already on the lower rung of the property ladder move up a step and unleash the existing units to new buyers.

These units are of course going to be more affordable than newly built units with all the strings attached as a condition of funding.

Recently in Calgary there has been a big push to convert office buildings to residential units with incentives from the City of Calgary. The mayor and all the usual suspects were there when the funding was announced to convert the Barron Building. The conversion was estimated to cost about \$55 million and would provide 118 residential units. Now that figure has doubled to more than \$115 million which means the average cost for each unit would be about \$850,000 and therefore must sell for close to \$1 million. Nice to know that the taxpayers of Calgary have subsidized these units to the tune of \$8.5 million. Kind of like the government giving a rebate to someone buying a \$70,000 Tesla.

In March Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland toured a new building in Victoria offering micro-apartments and said it was illustrative of the homes that her government is getting built for “low-and middle-income Canadians” thanks to the Apartment Construction Loan Program.

Freeland came to Hudson House because its builders benefited from a \$100 million loan from the Apartment Construction Loan Program. Touted as one of the key planks of the Trudeau government’s pledge to build “more homes, faster,” the program offers low-cost loans to builders who meet certain benchmarks for **energy efficiency** and affordability.

What the deputy prime minister did not mention is that Hudson House will be renting its 227 units at rates considered high even by the wildly inflated standards of Coastal B.C.

Two-bedroom units at Hudson House start at about \$3,300 per month. The lowest priced one-bedroom unit is advertised at \$2,410 per month.

The absolute lowest priced Hudson House unit being advertised is their A2 Studio Apartment, a micro-unit of just **330 square feet** — about the size of two parking spots. The A2 starts at \$1,680 per month so it technically meets the affordability requirements of the program.

Rent Controls

Whenever there is a discussion on affordability there are always those socialists that go on and on about how the government must implement rent controls.

A real-life experiment in what happens when government does get out of the way has played out in Argentina, where a radical libertarian, and possibly one of my new favorite politicians, Javier Milei, recently came to power. A month after he repealed a law that employed rent controls to prevent “rent gouging” in Buenos Aires, the supply of available apartments doubled, and rents dropped 20 per cent. Landlords and tenants now freely negotiate rents on terms and in currencies of their choice, without benefit of government guardianship, and both thrive.

By slashing government spending and deregulating the economy, Milei also dramatically lowered interest rates, creating a boon for homeowners. “Argentines flock to banks as Milei awakens mortgage market,” the Buenos Aires Times reported last month. Argentina’s banks are now processing tens of thousands of loans to potential homeowners who believe Milei’s deregulation will keep interest rates down and home-owning affordable.

Argentina solved its housing crisis when it realized it had too little housing because it had too much government. Is the road we are going down in Canada?

What they can do is get out of the way of the free market and instead of spending billions of dollars collect less of it.

In a recent article by Trevor Tombe, he stated that governments levied nearly \$25 billion on residential buildings in 2022 or about 13.5 percent of the cost of a new home. This does not even include the hidden taxes that accumulate through the supply chain which may exceed another \$4.8 billion that home buyers must pay.

The harder Trudeau tries to boost housing, the worse the results. If he truly wants to boost it, he should stop trying. Nothing hinders those who would provide housing to those who need it more than government does.

If you have an idea for a commentary or would like to submit your own commentary for a future newsletter please let me know at dave@wwta.ab.ca

Economic Update

Housing Starts

In Alberta, urban housing starts totaled 4352 in July 2024, a year-over-year increase of 29%. Canadian housing starts increased by 10% over the same period. Edmonton had another strong month with a 9.24% increase compared to July 2023, and Calgary was also up by 52%. Housing starts in Alberta were up from 3791 the previous month of June 2024.

Western Wood Truss Association of Alberta August 2024

Housing Starts Alberta						
	Jul-24	Jul-23	% Change	YTD 2024	YTD 2023	% Change
Alberta	4352	3372	29.06%	25861	17386	48.75%
Edmonton	1608	1472	9.24%	10056	6544	53.67%
Calgary	2471	1621	52.44%	13649	9727	40.32%
Red Deer	16	10	60.00%	294	105	180.00%
Grande Prairie	11	3	266.67%	122	44	177.27%
Lethbridge	12	30	-60.00%	301	109	176.15%
Wood Buffalo	1	6	-83.33%	13	19	-31.58%
Whitehorse*	N/A	N/A	#VALUE!	N/A	N/A	#VALUE!
Canada	22572	20531	9.94%	132823	123684	7.39%

*Whitehorse Starts are for the quarter, statistics are not available monthly.

Housing Starts by Dwelling Type (Centres 10K+)

	JUL-24	JUL-23	YTD-24	YTD-23
Total	4,352	3,372	25,861	17,386
Single	1,469	1,147	8,418	6,278
Semi-detached	386	292	2,178	1,550
Row	481	377	3,448	2,830
Apartment	2,016	1,556	11,817	6,728

Building momentum - A solid trend in Alberta home start-ATB

Home construction is on a role in Alberta. July housing starts, released Aug 16th, clocked in at 50,600 (annualized, seasonally adjusted)—the highest level since March 2015. That’s not a one-off observation. The trend has been positive since mid-2023, with the six-month moving average reaching its highest level since the building boom of 2006-07.

Last month, Calgary CMA led with 29,100 annualized starts—it’s third highest month since at least 1990 (earliest comparable data). This is good news given that the [city’s population grew a staggering 6%](#) last year. Starts in Edmonton also advanced, hitting an annualized 18,500.

Back in [June](#), we noted that stronger home construction was one of the factors expected to push Alberta’s GDP growth ahead of the national average. The data since we made that call, which have shown Alberta separate itself from the provincial pack, have been

firmly supportive.

Many more homes still need to be built in response to record migration. But under challenging circumstances—labour constraints, higher interest rates, and increased costs—builders have stepped up to the plate.

Up and up: Resale home price trends in Calgary and Edmonton

Rob Roach, ATB ECONOMICS / August 21, 2024

It's often the case that the story told by an economic indicator doesn't change that much from one reading to the next. That is the case at the moment with benchmark resale home prices in Canada.*

It was essentially the same story in July (for which we just got [new data](#)) as in June with year-over-year (y/y) benchmark prices continuing to *increase* in Calgary and Edmonton and *decrease* in Toronto.

Although prices were up in cities such as St. Johns, Montreal, Winnipeg, and Saskatoon, pullbacks in a number of key Ontario and BC markets pulled the national benchmark down by 4% compared to July 2023.

In Calgary, the benchmark price in July came in at \$580,200 (+8% y/y)—**the 47th y/y increase in a row!**

It was \$391,300 (+7% y/y) in Edmonton—**the 10th consecutive y/y improvement.**

Toronto's benchmark was much higher than Calgary's and Edmonton's in absolute terms at \$1.1 million, but fell for the 4th reading in a row, down 5% y/y.

Another notoriously high-price market—Vancouver—saw its benchmark fall on a y/y basis for the first time since last summer. At a whopping \$1.2 million, it was nonetheless down 1% y/y.

Although the overall story is the same—rising prices in Calgary and Edmonton combined with pullbacks in key markets in Ontario and BC—its three main themes remain important to the broader economic story unfolding in Alberta and Canada.

First, housing markets are **local**. Trends in the Canadian economy do not always apply to specific parts of the country. In this case, the national resale home price benchmark is waning, but waxing in numerous other markets, including here in Alberta.

Second, demographics matter. While home prices are affected by a wide range of factors, the increasing levels in Calgary and Edmonton point to strong population growth and the accompanying economic boost it provides. This boost is evident in the construction sector with [housing starts](#) on the rise in Calgary and Edmonton.

Third, the price gap has narrowed, but remains wide. Although benchmark prices have been rising in Calgary and Edmonton, actual prices remain significantly below higher-priced markets such as Vancouver and Toronto and will continue to help draw residents to Alberta and retain those already here.

US Housing Starts Fall in July

On August 16, the US Census Bureau reported that privately-owned housing starts in July were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate (SAAR) of 1,238,000. This is 6.8% below the revised June estimate of 1,329,000 and 16.0% below the July 2023 rate of 1,473,000. Single-family housing starts were at a rate of 851,000; this is 14.1% below the revised June figure of 991,000. The rate for buildings with five units or more was 363,000.

Lumber

[Canada's major freight railroads at full stop as officials scramble | AP News](#)

Minister Ng denounces U.S. increase in softwood lumber duties

Trade Minister Mary Ng has expressed deep disappointment over the U.S. Department of Commerce's [decision to increase duties](#) on Canadian softwood lumber from 8.05 per cent to 14.54 per cent.

“Baseless and unfair U.S. duties on softwood lumber unjustifiably harm consumers and producers on both sides of the border,” Ng stated, emphasizing that the new rates would further burden U.S. consumers and make housing less affordable. She stressed the need for a lasting resolution to the long-standing trade dispute and affirmed Canada’s commitment to defending its softwood lumber industry through all available legal avenues, including NAFTA, the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, and the WTO.

The new duty rate, announced on August 13, 2024, will apply retroactively to 2022 exports and future shipments. B.C. ministers have also criticized the increase, highlighting its negative impact on both Canadian and American interests. [Read Ng’s full statement.](#)

Lumber prices remained near \$530 per thousand board feet in August, hovering at an eleven-week high as fears of a US recession eased following positive economic data, while expectations of interest rate cuts in September bolstered the demand outlook. The weakening US dollar has made lumber more affordable for foreign buyers, driving increased international demand and contributing to the upward trend in prices. Adding to this optimistic scenario, Canadian housing starts surged to their highest level in over a year, signaling stronger demand for wood and construction materials.

[Lumber production, shipments, and stocks by species, monthly \(statcan.gc.ca\)](#)



AFPA calls for sustainable forest management after Jasper’s devastation

July 31, 2024 By Jason Krips, Alberta Forest Products Association president

Like everyone else in Alberta, the forest industry was saddened by what happened in Jasper. Our industry has held our annual conference in the park for longer than anyone can remember. The people of Jasper are the best hosts in the world and it is agonizing to see what has happened to their community.

There is a conversation to be had and a way forward. Just the other day, I was looking at an [opinion piece that our association penned in the Edmonton Journal in October 2017](#). Here is an excerpt from that piece: “If you ask a professional forester where the next devastating fire might happen, they’d probably point to Hinton and Jasper. That’s because a massive pine beetle epidemic has killed much of the pine in Jasper National Park and is surging towards Hinton.”

The article proceeded to talk about the value of managing our forests sustainably. We know that younger forests are more resilient and that the key is achieving a healthy mix of young and old forests. It offered constructive solutions, like identifying and harvesting at-risk pine stands and regenerating them with younger forests. This is a concrete step we can take to safeguard our communities and environment.

There is a perception that our forests will be the same forever if we leave them untouched. Alberta’s forests age and die. Just like people, when trees are young and vibrant, they are less susceptible to pests like the mountain pine beetle. The risk of fire in younger stands is also lower. As trees age, their “immune systems” begin to weaken, and the risk of fire and pest infestation goes up. Sadly, in Jasper, this risk became reality.

We know that Indigenous communities have lived on these lands from time immemorial and have knowledge that is highly valuable, but underutilized. We know that our foresters are on the land every day and supplement their practical experience with a strong scientific and educational foundation. And we know communities that are in the forest connect to the land base in an intimate way.

What we should not do is impose top-down solutions that apply to very different land bases. One frustration I hear frequently in our industry and communities is that federal policy on items like management of our national parks or protection of species at risk is top-down, hard to implement at the ground level, and focused on single values that do not recognize the interconnected web of ecosystem services that forests provide.

It is also often predicated on the assumption that we can leave our forests unmanaged. That's not to say that this policy isn't well-intentioned. We all share the same goal of healthy landscapes within parks and thriving wildlife species. If this is the goal, the way to get there inevitably leads through conversations at the community level and more active management of our forests supported by a more complete understanding of the ecological values that can be achieved through sustainable forest management.

If we don't have this conversation now, we risk another Jasper. Forests that are unmanaged will continue to age and to build up fuel. And when that fuel gets a spark from lightning or an unextinguished campfire, we will relive the nightmare of Jasper again.

As an industry that lives in forest communities and is deeply tied to the land base, we are ready to have this conversation. The future of communities we love depends on it.

Canadian Construction Price Indices Rise in Q2

Statistics Canada (StatCan) recently released its Construction Price Indices for Q2. Residential building construction costs **increased 0.8%** in Q2, following a 1.0% increase in Q1. Non-residential building construction costs rose 1.1% in Q2, following a 1.0% increase in Q1.

The growth in residential building construction costs continued to abate in Q2, while non-residential building constructions costs accelerated slightly.

Year-over-year, construction costs for residential buildings in the 11-census metropolitan area (CMA) composite rose 4.2% in Q2, while non-residential building construction costs saw an increase of 4.3%.

Skilled labor shortages and the resulting increases in labor rates, interest rate pressure, and building code updates were all reported as key factors impacting the construction sector in Q2, StatsCan said.

[Building construction price indexes, percentage change, quarterly \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www.statcan.gc.ca)

TMX - Moving Canadian export values-ATB

The Trans Mountain Expansion (TMX) came online in May, and we're starting to see an impact on the production and export numbers.

As we [reported](#) Aug. 7, Alberta recorded the highest June on record for oil production, up 7.6% y/y. The next day, Statistics Canada reported that Canada swung from a trade deficit to surplus in June.

A major contributor? Oil exports. Canadian crude oil exports leaped 13.3%, mostly due to higher volumes. More exports are finding their way to Asian markets, as [reported](#) by Statistics Canada:

“The higher exported volumes were driven in part by higher exports of crude oil to Asian countries. The rise in exports destined to this part of the world reflects increased deliveries of crude oil from Western Canada via the Trans Mountain pipeline, whose expansion was recently completed.”

The Bank of Canada has also talked about this as a key driver of their outlook. From its July [Monetary Policy Report](#):

“Export growth is expected to rise to 6.25% on average over the second half of 2024. This increase is led by oil exports, as new capacity is created by the Trans Mountain Expansion pipeline.”

Improved transportation capacity expands exports and is productivity enhancing. Further, when new markets can be reached, Canadian producers receive better pricing over time with lower volatility. This boosts national incomes.

As for our outlook, oil production is one of two major drivers (along with residential activity) pushing our forecast for Alberta real GDP growth ahead of the national average in 2024.

Quality Control

Floor Trusses and Plating

I know that we tend to use the same internal truss inspection regardless of if it is a 4X2 floor truss or roof truss, but it is important that you know that there are some differences that you must take into consideration.

In TPIC 2019 Appendix G it states:

G.4.1.4.2 Lumber on flat (narrow face plating)

The truss designer shall provide a minimum 5% reserve capacity in grip for each member to allow for ineffective teeth. This requirement may be met by limiting the grip JSI to **0.95** in each member. The required number of effective teeth in each member shown on truss shop drawings or in lists shall be calculated according to Clause 7. This means that in the manufacturing process, the average number of effective teeth for both sides of the joint in any member shall never be less than the required number of teeth specified on the shop drawing. When averaging the effective teeth on both sides no one side shall have less than 85% of the specified effective teeth required.

G.4.2.1.2 Lumber on flat:

During the truss manufacturing process, plates shall be positioned according to the Truss Shop Drawing and should be placed within the 3.2 mm (1/8") plate placement translation tolerance. In no case shall the positioning decrease the number of effective teeth in any member to less than the minimum number required for that member. Due to relative ease of locating plates parallel to and near the edge of lumber, **no allowance for rotational misplacement is required.**

G.4.2.2.2 Lumber on flat

The truss designer shall use a minimum plate placement translation tolerance of 3.2 mm (1/8") parallel and perpendicular to the plate axis. The designer shall select a plate size and placement for each joint that resists the lateral forces in each member. The plate shall then be shifted by 3.2 mm (1/8") up, down, left, right, up and to the left, up and to the right, down and to the left, and down and to the right, and shall be checked to verify that a JSI of 0.95 is not exceeded in any member.

G.4.2.3.2 Lumber on flat

Due to relative ease of locating plates parallel to and near the edge of lumber, **no allowance for rotational misplacement is required.**

So basically, when plating lumber on flat in a 4X2 floor truss the tolerance for plates is limited to 1/8" and no rotation is allowed in manufacturing.

Although it is not specified in TPIC in the dimension tolerances it is also good practice to limit the height tolerance to 1/8" and there should be no more than 1/8" difference when the height is measured at the bearing and at the mid-point of the truss.

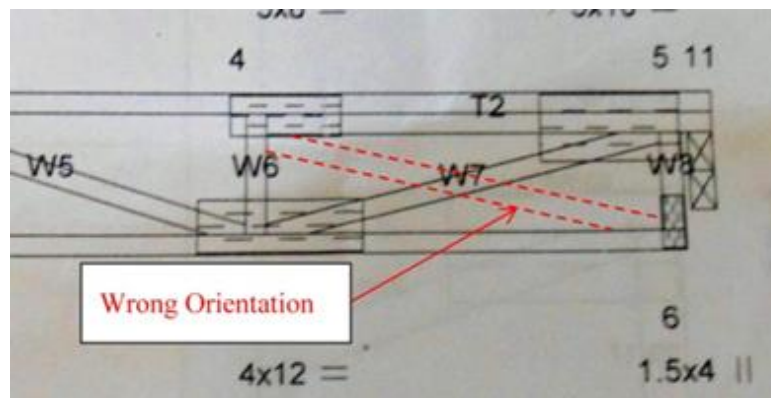
Common Defects in Floor Trusses

Plates Overhanging



If the top or bottom chord overhangs the lumber it can deform when pressing creating ineffective teeth. If it is angled it will could overhang, remember the tolerance for being rotated is zero.

Wrong Web Orientation



Because in floor trusses we are dealing with boxes it is possible to place the web in the wrong orientation because it will fit.

Misaligned top and bottom chords at the splice



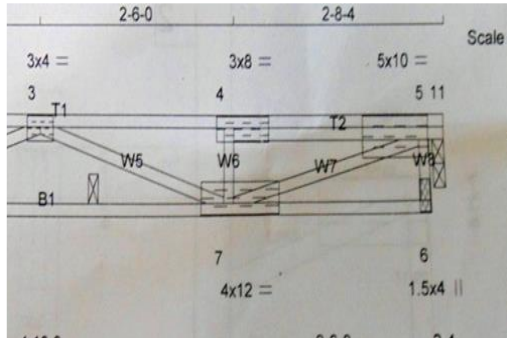
If the chords are splices so that they are shifted this will cause a problem with plate embedment for the webs.

Gaps at joints



Although it is not specifically stated in TPIC the gap between members shall not exceed 1/16"

Plates shifted the wrong direction



Again, because the truss is square it is easy to shift the plate in the wrong direction, just like roof trusses joint details are helpful ensuring that plates are placed properly.

Ineffective teeth due to wane in splices or web to chord connections



Careful attention must be given to ineffective teeth both on the splices and web to chord connections, it is important that you have the joint details with minimum effective teeth required. Quite often on floor trusses the number of required teeth is a high percentage of the actual teeth required.

Consistent Plate alignment from truss to truss.

It is always a good indication of attention to detail when you can look from truss to truss and see that all the plates are aligned.



Handling and Storage



It is important that banding is only done at the vertical webs to ensure that there is no deformation in dimension at mid panel. Also, a company should have a requirement regarding how high floor trusses should be stacked to prevent them from tipping.

Other issues to consider that I don't have pictures of.

Try to use the longest lumber available to avoid splices, if you use FJ lumber ensure that you are aware of quality requirements for plating at finger joints.

Avoid splices in the middle of the truss, especially if there is a center chase.

If connectors have to be removed, you pretty much have to remove the lumber as it may not be possible to upsize a new plate to a size that doubles the required teeth. You may be able to swap the direction of the chord that is affected. If a plate is misplaced make sure that you catch it before the truss is pressed.

Make sure that you have a process to clearly mark the chords to ensure that they are used in the proper location. They should be marked top and bottom.

Health and Safety Toolbox

Pinch Points

A pinch point is any point where a body part can be caught between two objects coming together. Generally people associate pinch point hazards with power presses, conveyors and other moving equipment, but really a pinch point can exist anywhere. For example, a pinch point is created between a closing door and its jamb or between materials being unloaded and the surface they are being placed onto. Nipping your fingers with a pair of pliers would be considered a pinch point injury. Pinch point injuries can be as minor as a bruise or as serious as an amputation, or even death.

Common Pinch Points in a Wood Truss Manufacturing Plant

1. Conveyors:

Description: Conveyors are used to move materials and finished trusses around the plant. The belts, rollers, and pulleys associated with conveyors can create pinch points.

Risks: Workers can get fingers, hands, or clothing caught in the moving parts, leading to serious injuries. In a truss plant the highest risk areas are outfeed rollers, before and after the finishing press.



2. Presses and Jigs:

Description: Presses are used to assemble trusses, and jigs hold the components in place during assembly.

Risks: The operation of these machines involves moving parts that can easily trap fingers or hands, especially during adjustments or maintenance. These parts such as pop-up ejector arms move very quickly. Never operate a press without safety stops operating.



3. Saws and Cutting Equipment:

Description: Saws are used to cut wood to the required dimensions for trusses.

Risks: The blades and moving components of saws pose significant pinch point hazards, particularly during blade changes or cleaning. There are also pinch points when handling the lumber and between stops.



4. Stackers:

Description: These machines stack and unstack wood trusses and components.

Risks: The moving arms and mechanisms of these machines can create pinch points, particularly when workers are positioning materials.



5. Handling Materials:

Description: Lumber has to be moved around the plant and this can pose hazards by using carts or other equipment.

Risks: Rollers or carts can create pinch points for both hands and feet when positioning materials. Strapping lumber can also create hazards.

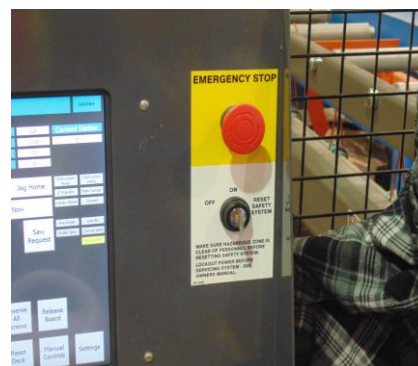


Mitigating Pinch Point Hazards

Like all things health and safety, it comes down to identifying the hazards for every task and then coming up with controls to address the hazard. Controls can be either engineering, administrative, or personal protective equipment.

1. Engineering Controls:

- **Machine Guards:** Install guards on all machinery to physically prevent access to pinch points. Ensure that these guards are properly maintained and not removed during operation.
- **Emergency Stop Mechanisms:** Equip machines with easily accessible emergency stop buttons to quickly halt operations if a pinch point hazard arises.
- **Automated Systems:** Where possible, use automated material handling systems to reduce the need for manual intervention, thereby reducing exposure to pinch points.



2. **Administrative Controls:**

- **Training:** Provide comprehensive training for all workers on the identification of pinch points and safe work practices. Ensure that new employees and contractors are thoroughly briefed before beginning work.
- **Signage:** Clearly label all known pinch points with appropriate warning signs to remind workers of the hazards.
- **Safe Work Procedures:** Develop and enforce procedures that require machines to be de-energized and locked out before any maintenance or adjustments are made.



3. **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):**

- **Gloves:** Provide workers with appropriate gloves that offer protection without compromising dexterity.
- **Safety Boots:** Ensure that all workers wear steel-toed boots to protect against foot injuries from falling objects or contact with pinch points.



4. **Regular Inspections and Maintenance:**

- **Routine Checks:** Conduct regular inspections of all equipment to identify and address potential pinch points. Ensure that guards are in place and machinery is functioning correctly.
- **Preventive Maintenance:** Implement a preventive maintenance program to keep all equipment in good working order, reducing the likelihood of malfunction that could create new pinch points.

So, take time to go through your Hazard Assessments and make sure that all pinch points are identified for each task.

Never deactivate a safety bar while the machinery is in use like the picture to the right!

[Pinch Points.pdf \(safetyevolution.com\)](https://www.safetyevolution.com/Pinch%20Points.pdf)



The Alberta Government has a new format OHS eNews you can subscribe to with all kinds of good material at: <https://ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/>

News and Events

The Western Wood Truss Association would like to welcome a new member in August.



Darmac Framing Solutions
291231 Westland Drive
Rocky View County
(403) 274-1143

STANDATA

After all the confusion over the last couple of months, Alberta Municipal Affairs has published the following clarification STANDATA

[23-BCB-002 Roof truss layout for one-and tow-family dwellings \(alberta.ca\)](#)

The industry is continuing to engage for a more permanent solution over the next couple of months.

In order to better understand the concerns of Professionals authenticating placement plans a 10-question survey has been sent out to engineers employed or supplying services to our membership. If you have someone that would be interested in taking the survey please let me know.

Alberta turns the spotlight on productivity

Alberta's government is sponsoring the University of Calgary's School of Public Policy to host Canada's Productivity Summit on **Oct. 16 and 17** at the BMO Centre in Calgary. The two-day summit will bring together academia, business leaders, policymakers, leading commentators and influential voices with a range of insights and viewpoints to shine a light on Canada's productivity challenge and shape solutions.

“This is about collaborating on the challenges our economy faces. Higher productivity means better jobs, bigger paycheques, more opportunities and increased affordability. But, Canada’s productivity growth has lagged our closest competitors. This summit will gather some of the best minds out there to better define this problem and propose solutions.”

Nate Horner, President of Treasury Board and Finance

[Canada’s Productivity Summit](#)

**The BUILDEX Alberta Conference Program Is Now Live!
October 23-24 Calgary Alberta**

[BUILDEX Alberta \(informaconnect.com\)](#)

WWTA Online Training

With the provincial building codes now coming into force and referencing TPIC 2019 there have been several inquiries and sign-ups about our online training courses from outside of Alberta now that truss plants are starting to implement their QMS systems and determining that training of their workers is crucial to being in compliance.

If you have not yet taken a look at the WWTA online training program I would encourage you to, as no doubt you will be hiring new workers in the near future and it is a good method to get them productive earlier and safer. If you want an overview of the program go to the WWTA website at: <http://www.wwta.ab.ca/truss-training-online.html>

Did You Know?

Interesting Fact... Russian inflation surges

As more central banks look to pivot to lower interest rates amid easing inflation pressures, Russia is going the other way. Driven by wartime spending and a shrinking labour force, the [economy is overheating and price pressures are building](#). Inflation has spiked above 9% and last week Russia’s central bank hiked its policy rate from 16% to 18%.

[Argentina under a new government: what are the big economic challenges? - Economics Observatory](#)