

Commentary-Dave Pasolli-Western Wood Truss Association of Alberta

Recommendations

When my youngest daughter was going to buy her first used car, she brought me along to check it out. On first appearances it appeared clean and in good condition. But when I checked the oil, it seemed pretty sludgy, so I asked the seller when was the last time they had their oil changed.

They responded that in the time they had owned the car, they had never had it changed. They felt that as long as they kept it topped up it was only a recommendation from the manufacturer to have it changed, not a requirement. They felt that this was just a ploy in order to get more service work for the dealer. We wished them good luck in selling their car.

In the past month I have been involved in 2 discussions revolving around recommendations.

The first was in the development of the auditing practices for the new certifying body for quality control. My thoughts were that if a truss company did not score well on a particular question in the audit that there should be a requirement for the auditor to provide an opportunity for improvement to the company.

Whether you call them recommendations, suggestions, or opportunities for improvement (the wording the Standards Council of Canada favors) they are not necessarily mandatory requirements telling exactly how something should be done but intended to provide the company some guidance and the benefit of making changes.

This was based on my experience reviewing quality management systems and what I have always felt as appreciation from the company for ideas to continually improve their QMS. Usually these are not too specific as I have always found that when pointed in the right direction the company is most likely to arrive at their best solution.

However, it always does make me feel good when the next time I go back and the company has taken steps based on feedback from the QC review. Quite often once the company has thought about the issue, they come up with ideas better than I would have thought of.

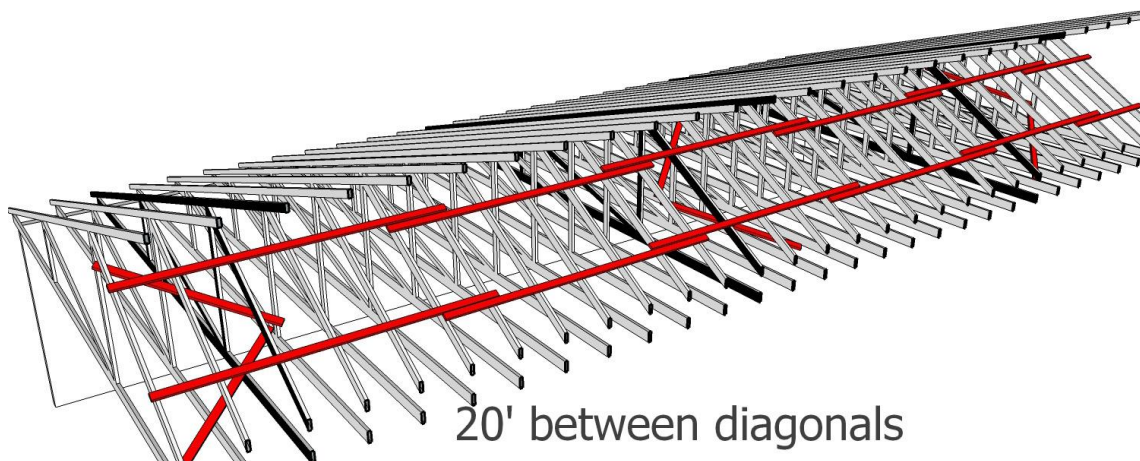
The second case involves an issue that has been around as long as trusses have been made and deals with recommended bracing. As manufacturers of structural elements that

require bracing, we always struggle with where we draw the line when it comes to bracing.

Typically, we have drawn the line after the web bracing, but we realize that not only do the braces for the webs have to be installed but they need to be braced with diagonals. In addition, there must be some thought to temporary bracing during construction and permanent building bracing that falls outside of the scope of a manufacturer.

In order to address this grey area, the industry has always typically relied on recommended guidelines based on a collective history of the best practices of installing wood trusses. You all should be providing these recommendations with every job. These guidelines are general in nature as they are not determined by the specific calculations for the truss designs or web forces for a particular job.

The situation that we were discussing was the requirement for diagonal bracing to restrain continuous lateral restraints.



As part of the condition of the sale the truss company was required to provide an installation inspection for the Engineer of Record, which is becoming more of a common practice these days, but that is a different topic.

In the report they noted that the diagonals were not installed as per the company's recommendation.

Of course, the framing company did not like this as they were going to have to go back and install the diagonals. We have all heard this story before. Claims of they never have done it before and have not had any problems, they were ignorant of the requirement, it was not included in their quote, they did not have to do it for your competition, etc.

In this case the framing company argued their point that if they had bought trusses from another company this would not be a requirement and that it is only a recommendation which they could choose to consider or not and the engineer that was contracted to do an installation review was perhaps being too conservative.

It was brought to the attention of the framing company that ultimately the Structural Engineer of Record that specified the installation review would be the one that could take all factors into account and make a decision.

Of course, what engineer would decide that it was not required after the issue was identified. They would be out on a limb for sure.



Long run of trusses with no diagonals for the CLB

These braces do serve a purpose of resisting the load that is accumulating in the webs in compression. They are not simply for decoration.

It is up to you to decide where you are going to

draw the line as a company. I believe that the software companies do give you the option to provide more information on the diagonal brace spacing on your drawings. Alternatively, you should be providing the general installation recommendations.

BRACING

TOP CHORD TO BE SHEATHED OR MAX. PURLIN SPACING = 2.97 FT.
MAX. UNBRACED BOTTOM CHORD LENGTH = 10.00 FT OR RIGID CEILING DIRECTLY APPLIED.

ALL PITCH BREAKS AND PERIMETER CORNER JOINTS MUST BE LATERALLY RESTRAINED.

1 - 2x4 DRY SPF No.2 LATERAL BRACE(S) AT 1/2 LENGTH OF E-N, G-N. DBS = 20-0-0 . CBF = 108 LBS.

DBS = DIAGONAL BRACE SPACING (MAX). CBF = CUMULATIVE BRACING FORCE (PER BRACE). FASTEN LATERAL BRACE(S) USING (0.122"X3") SPIRAL NAILS : 2 FOR 2x4, 2x5, 3 FOR 2x6, 4 FOR 2x8, 5 FOR 2x10, AND 6 FOR 2x12.

Personally, I don't think it would be a bad idea to include the above information on your drawings, we are not trying to hide anything. If you feel you are going to lose a job because of this, it may be an educational opportunity to demonstrate to your customer that you are working in their best interest by ensuring that things get done correctly.

Customer Education Tips

Ignoring bracing installation recommendations, especially in the context of wood truss manufacturing and construction, can lead to serious consequences. Bracing is critical for structural stability, worker safety, and compliance with building codes. Here's a detailed look at the potential outcomes:

1. Structural Failure

Collapse of the Truss System: Without proper bracing, trusses can buckle, shift, or collapse under their own weight or when subjected to loads like wind or snow.

Damage to Connected Structures: A failing truss system can destabilize other parts of the structure, leading to widespread damage.

2. Safety Hazards

Risk to Workers: During construction, unbraced or improperly braced trusses can fall, posing a serious risk of injury or fatalities to workers.

Post-Construction Risks: Structures with insufficient bracing may fail unexpectedly, endangering occupants and property.

3. Increased Liability

Legal Consequences: Ignoring bracing recommendations can result in negligence claims if failures lead to injuries or damage.

Insurance Issues: Claims may be denied if it's found that bracing was not installed as per the manufacturer's or engineer's specifications.

4. Financial Losses

Repair Costs: A structural failure due to inadequate bracing can lead to costly repairs or complete reconstruction.

Project Delays: Collapses or failures often result in halted projects, increasing labor and material costs.

Fines and Penalties: Regulatory bodies may impose fines for not adhering to industry standards and building codes.

5. Non-Compliance with Building Codes

Building codes often mandate adherence to bracing recommendations. Ignoring these can result in:

Inspection Failures: Structures may not pass inspections, delaying or halting occupancy.

Legal Action: Authorities may require rework or issue stop-work orders.

6. Compromised Structural Integrity

Underperformance: Trusses are designed to work in conjunction with bracing systems. Ignoring these recommendations weakens the entire structure, making it less resilient to environmental stresses.

Decreased Longevity: Without proper bracing, trusses are more likely to deteriorate prematurely due to stress or load imbalances.

7. Damage to Reputation

Professional Credibility: Builders, contractors, or manufacturers who ignore bracing recommendations risk their professional reputation if failures occur.

Loss of Business: Clients may hesitate to work with companies that have a history of ignoring critical guidelines.

8. Potential for Chain Reactions

Progressive Failures: Inadequate bracing can cause a chain reaction, where the failure of one component leads to the collapse of adjacent trusses and other parts of the structure.

Bracing is a critical element in ensuring the safety, functionality, and durability of truss systems. Following installation recommendations from manufacturers and engineers is essential to avoid these risks and uphold the integrity of the project.

When talking with customers my advice is to stick with what is recommended. As soon as you start to talk about “it’s only a recommendation not a requirement” they only hear that you told them not to do it.

If your customer asks the question, does diagonal bracing have to be installed or is it just a recommendation you should be very careful with your answer.

Good advice is always certain to be ignored, but that’s no reason not to give it-Agatha Christie

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 4394 in October 2024, a year-over-year increase of 29%. Canadian housing starts decreased by 11.25% over the same period. Edmonton had another strong month with a 47% increase compared to October 2023, while Calgary was also up 26%. Housing starts in Alberta were up from 3766 in the previous month of September 2024.

Housing Starts Alberta						
	Oct-24	Oct-23	% Change	YTD 2024	YTD 2023	% Change
Alberta	4394	3409	28.89%	37969	28314	34.10%
Edmonton	1437	979	46.78%	14796	10078	46.81%
Calgary	2690	2137	25.88%	20104	16278	23.50%
Red Deer	13	23	-43.48%	327	169	93.49%
Grande Prairie	18	0	#DIV/0!	166	74	124.32%
Lethbridge	25	54	-53.70%	624	202	208.91%
Wood Buffalo	5	1	400.00%	24	22	9.09%
Whitehorse*	N/A	N/A	#VALUE!	N/A	N/A	#VALUE!
Canada	19670	22163	-11.25%	188112	187406	0.38%

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

Housing Starts by Dwelling Type (Centres 10K+)

	OCT-24	OCT-23	YTD-24	YTD-23
Total	4,394	3,409	37,969	28,314
Single	1,395	1,318	12,690	9,896
Semi-detached	332	310	3,108	2,358
Row	743	558	5,349	4,469
Apartment	1,924	1,223	16,822	11,591

On a roll: Housing starts in Alberta

Rob Roach, ATB ECONOMICS / November 18, 2024

[Construction companies in Alberta are planning to build more homes](#), but record population growth means the housing supply is playing catch-up.

With that in mind, today’s data on housing starts* up to October from the [Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation](#) are encouraging.

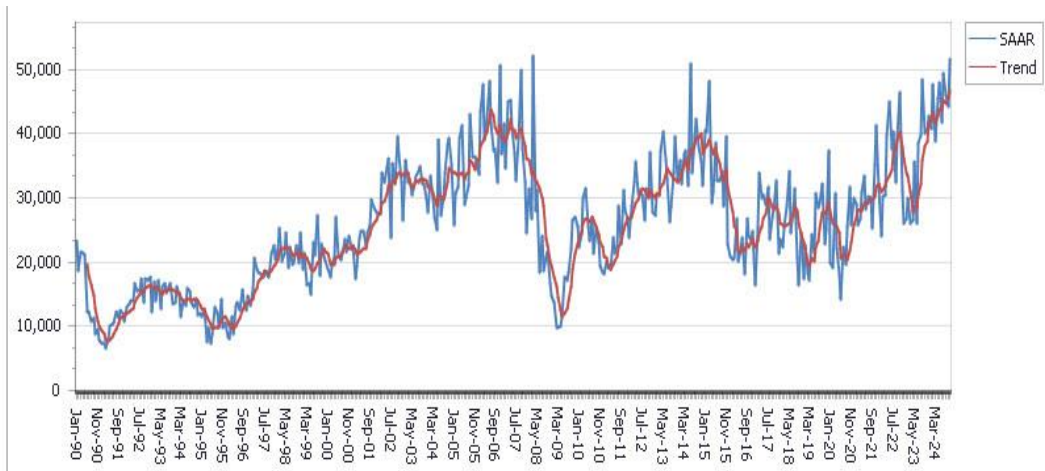
Over 53,000** new housing units were started in October—the highest monthly tally since June 2014 and 28% higher than the previous October.

Our [current forecast](#) is for housing starts in Alberta to total a little over 45,000 this year and next.

New construction is tilted toward the Calgary and Edmonton metro areas at about 82% of all housing starts in Alberta last month compared to about 66% of Alberta’s total population.

Of the two largest metro areas, there were more starts in Calgary at 47% of the provincial total compared to 35% in Edmonton. The trend, however, is strongly upward in both Calgary and Edmonton over the last year.

Alberta’s starts in October accounted for 22% of the national total (versus 12% of the national population) and points to a stronger pace of new construction in the province relative to the country as a whole.



Seasonally Adjusted Total Housing Starts Alberta

An ongoing theme of Alberta's economic story is the need for more housing in the wake of [strong population growth](#).

Even though we expect population growth to moderate, the need for more housing will not go away as it will take time for the supply to catch-up to the demand.

Given the above, it's encouraging that [statistics released yesterday](#) show that both the dollar value of building permits issued in Alberta and the number of new dwellings that will be created are on an upward trend.

The value of residential permits issued in September was 20% higher than the year before while the number of new dwelling units was 28% higher.

Keeping up - More jobs in Alberta for a booming population

In Alberta, the labour market challenge is creating enough jobs to keep pace with the soaring population. That happened last month, as Alberta drove national job gains with a private-sector led 13.2K increase. The unemployment rate fell to a still-elevated 7.3%.

We finally got the increase in construction jobs we've been waiting for and the manufacturing sector chipped in as well. We look for the unemployment rate to fall further next year as population growth slows.

From inflation to geopolitics - Trump takes centre stage

This time last year, inflation was on everyone's mind. Now the Bank of Canada says they're winning the battle and that this is "[good news for Canadians](#)."

So how about a new challenge—a geopolitical one. Donald Trump's victory was much more decisive than the polls indicated.

The question is now whether the rhetoric will be matched by actual policies. We put our [initial thoughts](#) out Wednesday Nov 7. Here's what we're watching on the economic front to end the week:

Tariff watch - Trump has vowed blanket tariffs of at least 10% on all U.S. imports, and much higher for Chinese imports. If implemented, this will hit Canadian exporters of all types, especially if counter tariffs are put in place.

The energy file - Will tariffs be imposed on Canadian oil and gas (over 80% of Alberta's exports to the U.S.)? This would raise U.S. energy costs, something Trump has vowed to lower. In case you think this is a case of polite Canadian wishful thinking, former U.S. Treasury Secretary during Trump's first presidency Steven Mnuchin [said](#) something similar this week on CNN: "I think President Trump clearly understands the impact of inflation, and I think he's going to be very careful." He also noted that previously Trump

granted tariff exemptions “on things that were going to have an impact on U.S. companies.” I would put Canadian energy firmly in that category.

Outside of tariffs, deregulation (“drill, baby, drill”) and tax cuts may increase the relative appeal of drilling in the U.S. At the same time, compared to other nations, Canada is seen as a preferred economic supplier. Could pipeline expansions be back in play?

For **clean energy**, will Trump repeal the Inflation Reduction Act or keep subsidies that are fossil fuel adjacent (like for hydrogen and carbon capture and storage)?

Tax cuts and deficits - Trump has promised to extend his own tax cuts and further reduce corporate taxes, increasing the federal deficit. Corporate America appears to be celebrating and the S&P 500 index has shot up this week to a record high.

Weaker Canadian dollar - Trump’s policies are widely considered inflationary which could slow the pace of Fed easing. This could keep the U.S. dollar stronger against other currencies like the loonie.

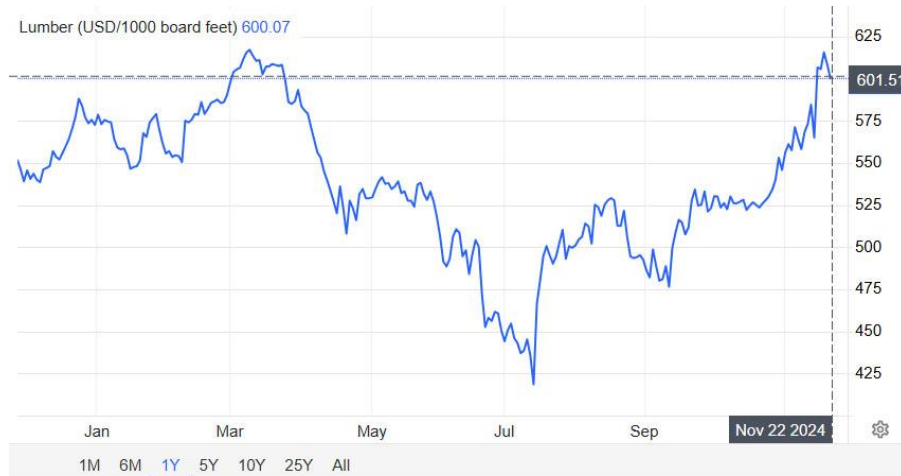
Canadian population - Canada’s federal government has clamped down on its immigration targets and is attempting to reduce the number of temporary residents. Trump, meanwhile, has threatened mass deportations of undocumented migrants. This provides a potential headwind to Canada’s non-permanent resident targets.

What’s next? Canada will need to move quickly to preserve its most important trading relationship and reinforce its role in providing a secure supply of affordable energy, food and many other exports.

We see downside risk if broad-based tariffs are indeed imposed and a trade war escalates. For now we’re leaning slightly lower on GDP growth for Canada and Alberta than our [October forecast](#) based on tariff threats and [lower population growth](#) from new federal immigration targets.

Lumber (USD)

Lumber prices fell to \$600 per thousand board feet after reaching an eight-month high of \$615 in mid-November, reflecting a softened demand outlook for construction materials. US building permits extended their downturn in October dropping by a monthly 0.6%, from the previous month’s 3.1% decline. Housing starts in the U.S. also fell 3.1% in October, below expectations, with the broader trend showing continued challenges, with rising new home inventory and mortgage rates nearing 7%. Rising mortgage rates, now at 6.84%, are further dampening new construction activity, reducing demand for building materials, and potentially driving prices down as competition among developers decreases. This rise aligns with Fed Funds futures reflecting a growing market shift, with fewer investors expecting a rate cut next month, as persistent inflation and signs of economic strength reinforce the case for a hawkish Federal Reserve stance.



[builder-confidence-moves-higher-as-election-uncertainty-is-lifted](#)

[US Housing Starts, Building Permits, and Completions Decline in October - Forest Economic Advisors, LLC](#)

[More logging is proposed to help curb wildfires in the US Pacific Northwest | Financial Post](#)

[US Lumber Industry Set to End Canada's Dominance as Tariffs Take Toll](#)

Unions and Inflation

Unionized industries are striking with greater intensity and successfully negotiating higher wages. The risk to the inflation outlook is through productivity-adjusted wages or unit labour costs. The inertia in union wage settlements, coupled with a bleak near-term outlook for Canadian productivity is one avenue preventing inflation from falling quicker.

For example, a Ford worker with one year seniority will move from \$25.75 to \$46.13 (including the forecasted COLA) by the end of this three-year collective agreement – a wage increase of almost 80% in addition to a \$10,000 bonus.

The Canadian Union of Postal workers want a 24% pay increase over the next four years - higher than the 11.5% increase proposed by employer Canada Post. They are also negotiating issues around benefits, bankable sick leave, job conditions and security.

Quality Control

Building the Same Type of Truss on Different Set-ups.

The dimensional tolerances in TPIC 2019 are pretty tight, however they can certainly be achieved these days with accurate cutting and modern set-up techniques.

G.5.2 Overall truss dimensions

The dimensions of a completed truss if different from those as specified on the Truss Shop Drawing shall not exceed the differences shown in the following table:

Truss Dimensions	Maximum Difference between specified and measured dimensions
Length ≤ 9144 mm (30 feet)	6.4 mm (1/4")
Length > 9144 mm (30 feet)	12.7 mm (1/2")
Overall Height ≤ 1200 mm (4 feet)	3.2 mm (1/8")
Overall Height > 1200 mm (4 feet)	6.4 mm (1/4")
Left Heel/Stub Height	3.2 mm (1/8")
Right Heel/Stub Height	3.2 mm (1/8")
Left Overhang	3.2 mm (1/8")
Right Overhang	3.2 mm (1/8")

These tolerances are of course plus or minus between what is specified and the actual dimension.

When building the same type of truss on a set-up even if your dimensions are not the exact dimension, but are within the tolerance, you have a pretty good chance of every truss made on that set-up to be the same.

However, if you are building the same type of truss on different set-ups there is the potential that the dimensions can still be within tolerance but vary from the truss on the other set-up.

For example: the heel for the same T-1 truss could be plus 1/8" on set-up 1 and minus 1/8" on set-up 2 creating a variation from truss to truss of a 1/4", although they would still be within the TPIC tolerance.

The more complicated the heel or overhang is the more likely there could be a difference. One crew could be easily fitting the lumber in the jig while the other one may be having to force it or even trim the web. This could be a clue.

That is why when doing this type of production, it is important to check the initial truss in both set-ups to determine that they are jugged the same way and that the blocking is the same in both locations. It may take a couple of minutes more than normal.



Truss Builders adjusting a high heel ensuring that it is square

I would recommend that the company develop a practice of checking both set-ups on the first truss in production on the table for dimensional uniformity. This may involve having one lead hand do both set-ups for example. You should also ensure that the same equipment is used for the heel jiggling.

Additionally, when you are doing your internal inspections and you have this type of production it would not hurt to do an inspection on the same type of truss from each set-up.

You also want to check the plate placement on the first trusses, because it would not look good if one crew was upsizing a plate, and the other one was not. If the plates do not align in the finished bundle this is also not a good look.



Plates installed uniformly from truss to truss

It is possible to also run across this situation when you are changing shifts, or the production is interrupted where the jiggling must be reset.

Health and Safety Toolbox

Similarly, to the Quality topic the WWTA would like to give you a monthly item you can discuss when doing your Safety Toolbox meeting. Winter is coming so you should be having a discussion about **Working in Cold Weather**.

I love this topic because I just repeat it from previous years, but it is a topic that should be reviewed with your workers every year.

The WWTA has a poster for this topic that you may want to print out and post for workers. It can be found on the WWTA webpage at: [wwta cold weather poster](#)

Thanks to the guys at Star Building Materials for posing on a very cold day.



Some things to keep in mind:

Frost in the early mornings and in shaded areas can be an unexpected slip and fall hazard, as it may only appear under certain weather conditions. Keep pathways well-lit and sanded.

Shorter daylight hours increase the need for appropriate lighting. - Position lights so they do not create shadows. - Consider scheduling tasks according to the light required. For example, schedule big equipment moves for full daylight hours.

Working at heights poses a higher risk in winter conditions.

- Wind or frost and ice can destabilize supports such as ladders or roofing brackets.
- Snow on rooftops can hide hazards such as skylights or vents. - Workers are more susceptible to cold exposure due to high winds.
- Snow is heavy and adds to the load on roofs or raised surfaces. Consider the maximum load limit of the surface before adding the weight of a worker to that load.

Temperature, wind, level of activity and clothing can all affect how an individual experiences cold. Health effects associated with working in the cold include frostbite and

hypothermia. The following controls can help protect workers from cold weather conditions:

- give workers time to adjust to colder conditions before assigning a full work schedule
- provide enclosures and heating systems where practical and possible
- shield workers from drafts and wind
- use a work/warm-up schedule, limiting the period of outdoor work between warm-ups
- use a buddy system to avoid working alone in very cold weather
- educate workers on signs of over exposure to cold which can result in health problems such as frostbite and hypothermia

One thing I think we also may overlook is driving in winter when discussing the topic.

- Ensure vehicles have appropriate tires for the roads they travel. Snow tires are best for most parts of Alberta in winter. All four tires should match in size, type and speed rating. Check air pressure often – air pressure drops about 1 psi for every 5°C.
- Winterize vehicles. Check exhaust, heating and cooling systems for leaks. Test the battery and replace if necessary. Check lights regularly. Change to winter windshield wipers.
- Equip each vehicle with a winter survival kit.
- Scrape frost from windows to improve visibility.
- Remove snow and ice from vehicles to prevent flying snow and ice from endangering other vehicles on the road.
- Remind workers to activate taillights in inclement weather by turning on headlights. Taillights are not lit with automatic daytime running lights.
- Consider developing a winter driving policy that lists responsibilities and expectations for both the employer and workers.
- Consider developing winter driving procedures to outline how to respond to different situations.
- Check the weather forecast and road reports when planning any travel. If possible, postpone trips when conditions are unsafe.

[Working in extreme cold \(alberta.ca\)](http://alberta.ca)

First Aid for Cold Exposure

When you are exposed to the cold, first aid measures may prevent further heat loss and help the body slowly warm up. Try these ideas.

Remain calm.

Fear or too much activity causes sweating. Sweating can make you feel chilled.

Find shelter.

Get out of the cold, the wind, or the water.

Remove cold, wet clothes.

- Put on dry clothing—made of moisture-wicking fabrics, such as wool, polyester, or nylon (not cotton)—that insulates well. Cover your head.
- If dry clothing is not immediately available, you can try to get warm by making skin-to-skin contact. After removing wet clothes, wrap a blanket or sleeping bag around you and another person and allow body heat to rewarm you.
- Warm up under a heated blanket, if available.

Move around, but don't be so active that you sweat.

Whirl your arms around like a windmill to get your blood moving and warm you up.

Activity makes body heat and improves blood flow. Sweating should be avoided because it cools the body.

Drink warm fluids and eat.

Avoid drinks with caffeine or alcohol. Eat high-energy foods, such as candy.

Do not give food or drink to a person who is acting confused or responding slowly.

Do not use a warm water bath to try to warm up. Taking a warm water bath may cause more problems. Continue to try other methods, and monitor closely.

Do not use tobacco.

Be careful with heaters and fires so you don't get burned.

Be aware that if you (or the person) sit in front of a heater or a fire to warm up, there is a greater chance of getting burned. This is because normal feeling is lost in cold-injured skin, and you may not know when to move away from the heater or fire.

Caring for your face, hands, and feet

If small areas of your body (ears, face, nose, fingers, or toes) are really cold or frozen, try these first aid measures to warm the areas.

Avoid activities that can further damage cold-injured skin.

- Do not rub or massage frozen skin.
- Do not rewarm frozen skin if refreezing is possible. Wait until you reach shelter. The injury will be worse if your skin freezes, thaws, and then refreezes.
- Do not walk on frozen feet if possible. But it is better to walk on frozen feet than to thaw your feet if there is a chance they will refreeze.
- Do not put snow on the area or pack snow around the limb.

Warm small areas of the body.

- Blow warm air onto cold hands.
- Tuck hands or feet inside warm clothing next to bare skin. Place chilled fingers in an armpit.
- Cup cold ears with warm hands.
- Put cold hands, feet, or ears in warm (not hot) water for 15 to 30 minutes. Do not use water above 42°C (108°F).
- Warm towels can be used to warm the genital area but be careful not to burn the skin.
- Use a hot water bottle covered with a cloth or a heating pad on a low setting. Be careful not to burn your skin.

Protect the cold or frozen body part from further cold exposure and bruising.

Pad frozen fingers or toes. Gently wrap fingers or toes in soft, dry material, such as cotton or gauze.

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

Look for me at the Wood Solutions Conference December 3 in Edmonton

Sustainable construction is integral to addressing two of Canada's most significant challenges: housing supply and climate resilience. This year's **Edmonton Wood Solutions Conference**, hosted at the Westin Edmonton December 2 & 3, will dive into these critical questions, exploring:

- How wood construction can help accelerate the delivery of affordable housing projects, and
- Why wood is a vital solution for reducing carbon emissions and achieving Canada's climate goals.

This event offers industry-leading insights, valuable continuing education sessions, an exhibitor showcase, and the opportunity to connect with professionals who are passionate about building a better future. Whether you're an industry veteran interested in exploring

new solutions or just starting out and this is your first wood-focused event, the Wood Solutions Conference is a fantastic chance to build your network and expand your capacity for low-carbon wood design and construction.

<https://woodsolutionsconference.ca/>

STANDATA Update

We had our second meeting Nov. 15 trying to get to a resolution on the requirements for layout and their potential need for authentication.

After our previous meeting I thought there was going to be some direction from Municipal Affairs to limit the requirement for authenticating placement plans, but after this latest meeting they appear to be back on the road to requiring this.

They asked of our industry what the timelines would look like to incorporate sealing layouts and my reply was that we can only guess at this until there is something clearly spelling out their intent in writing.

This led to me responding back to the group that we feel they are not considering the complexity of this requirement, and we are reluctant to provide a response on implementation because the solution may not be acceptable to meet their intent.

I also expressed the results of our industry survey.

In an internal survey of authenticating professionals in our industry 88% of the engineers surveyed responded that in the absence of a SER for the building they believed that by authenticating a placement plan, there is the potential of inadvertently assuming some of the liability of the overall structural design system of the building. 53% responded that they did not feel confident that they could limit their responsibility to the design of the products being supplied when authenticating a metal-plate connected truss or structural composite lumber placement plan. 82% believe there is the potential for confusion regarding field review responsibilities with either other component engineers or the local authority (Safety Codes Officers).

In addition to their concerns for authenticating placement plans 70% of the engineers surveyed indicated that there is a lack of experienced trained personnel and resources to facilitate the requirement of reviewing and authenticating placement plans.

Current Situation

In the meantime, it appears that some Authorities Having Jurisdictions (AHJ's) are interpreting 23-BCB-002 to the letter which means:

It is very specific to layouts for one and two-family dwellings. This is similar to the wording used in the old STANDATA 14-BCV-016 which was from 2017. We encouraged them to align it with the definition of Part 9 buildings, but they kept this terminology. This means that a 3- or 4-unit building may require sealed layouts if the AHJ requests them.

There are also instances where some AHJ's are requesting authentication on a layout for any truss design that indicates it falls in Part 4 in the design information. This could be a floor truss or a truss with a span over 40' for example.

There has also been an instance where an AHJ requested sealed layouts for a separate garage, presumably because it was not a family dwelling. If you run into this there would be an argument for not requiring it because it falls within 9.4.2.1.1) as a simple building with repetitive members. A bit of a tricky situation because a garage could be quite simple or quite complicated. If it had girder trusses for example, they may consider that not to meet the condition of having repetitive members.

So, for now it is important for all companies to have discussions with their members when they see buildings that do not strictly fall within the scope of 23-BCB-002 and inform them that their AHJ may require additional engineering authentication that they may have not seen in the past and what the ramifications to them as a customer are.

On a related topic

Alberta announces online portal to report red tape, home-building delays Nov 13, 2024

Alberta has introduced a new online portal that will allow developers, municipalities and other housing partners to report red tape and unnecessary home-building delays.

The province says the [stop housing delays](#) online portal will help identify areas that are preventing "fast and efficient residential construction."

"The Stop Housing Delays portal will allow Alberta's government to hear directly from developers, municipalities and other partners on where delays are happening in the construction process," said Jason Nixon, minister of community and social services.

"This will help identify and remove barriers, ultimately getting homes built faster and continuing Alberta's record home-building pace."

Nixon says the government will collaborate with a wide range of ministries to find solutions, ranging from minor policy changes to major reforms.

Scott Fash, CEO of BILD Alberta Association, says the red tape and delays typically add around 10 per cent to the cost of building a home.

"Sometimes it might go higher than that depending on the scale of the project," he said. Fash believes any costs saved will be passed on to consumers.

"We have a hyper competitive Industry, our builders compete on a day-to-day basis with each other, and the way they do best from a business perspective is to be able to provide a product to the widest swath of the population possible."

On Wednesday, Nixon acknowledge the majority of building regulations slowing construction are under municipal control.

He says if cities don't react to the province's call for red tape reduction, they risk losing provincial financing.

More from the Federal Government on Affordable Housing

As part of [Canada's Housing Plan](#) and [Budget 2024](#), the Government of Canada announced its intention to develop an industrial strategy for homebuilding. The Industrial Strategy will build on other initiatives including the Housing Design Catalogue – an effort announced in December 2023 to develop standardized designs to simplify approvals for new housing and accelerate the construction process.

The federal government is launching a Prefabricated Housing Industry Design Submission which invites industry to submit existing prefabricated housing designs. It also seeks information on the current products, capabilities, and technologies in the industry – as well as the role of prefabricated and other innovative homebuilding techniques in speeding up the pace of construction – to support the federal government's work in tackling the housing crisis.

WWTA Online Training

As the year is coming to an end it is important that you go into the training change the status from anyone that is not active to inactive before December. Otherwise, you will be charged for their seat in 2025. The current cost per seat is \$35 per active user per year and is invoiced in December.

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?

Do we really have to worry about the Trump tariffs, or do we have to worry about our government making us uncompetitive pursuing their agenda.

[Rona Ambrose on Trump and Competitiveness](#)