

Commentary-Dave Pasolli-Western Wood Truss Association of Alberta

### **Softwood Lumber Saga Continues**

On September 1, 2023, Canada announced that it is challenging the final results of the U.S. Department of Commerce's fourth administrative reviews of the U.S. anti-dumping and countervailing duty orders on softwood lumber products from Canada. The challenge of the results related to the countervailing duty order will proceed through Chapter 10 of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA), while the challenge of the results pertaining to the anti-dumping duty order will proceed through the U.S. Court of International Trade.

Sept. 1, 2023, the Honourable Mary Ng, Minister of Export Promotion, International Trade and Economic Development, issued the following statement regarding the U.S. fourth administrative reviews on softwood lumber from Canada.

“Canada is a world leader in softwood lumber and has a vast industry creating good, well-paying jobs for thousands of Canadians and supporting communities across our country.

“For years, the United States has imposed unfair, unjust and illegal duties on Canadian softwood lumber, hurting Canadian industry and creating rising housing costs in both our countries.

“Current U.S. softwood lumber duties have subjected most Canadian softwood lumber exports to the new combined duty rate of 7.99%.

“Canada is launching challenges to the latest U.S. countervailing duty determination under (CUSMA) Chapter 10 and to the latest U.S. anti-dumping duty determination before the U.S. Court of International Trade.

“At every opportunity, I have raised the issue of unjustified U.S. duties on Canadian softwood lumber with my U.S. counterpart Katherine Tai, United States Trade Representative, and the need for both countries to find a mutually acceptable resolution to this dispute.

“Canada continues to remain ready and willing to discuss a negotiated outcome to the dispute that provides the stability and predictability the sector needs to ensure its continued growth and success.”

<b>Fourth Administrative Review Final Results</b>			
<b>Company</b>	<b>Final anti-dumping duty rate</b>	<b>Final countervailing duty rate</b>	<b>Combined final duty rates</b>
Canfor Corporation	5.25%	1.36%	6.61%
West Fraser Mills Ltd.	6.96%	2.19%	9.15%
J.D. Irving Ltd.	6.20% 0	1.72%	7.92%
All Others	6.20%*	1.79%	7.99%

\*On August 31, 2023, the U.S. Department of Commerce amended the fourth administrative review anti-dumping duty rates due to ministerial errors.

Honestly, despite the aggressive rhetoric I can't see the situation changing any time soon.

**Top facts to understand about the softwood lumber dispute**

The softwood lumber industry is a vital component of the Canadian and US economy. Both countries have been trading lumber since the 1800s, but it hasn't been without its share of problems. The softwood lumber dispute is one of the longest and most important trade disputes between the United States and Canada, affecting the lumber industry to the present day.

To understand the importance and the implications of this complex issue, let's look at some key facts and concerns surrounding the dispute.

Canada is one of the largest lumber producers and exporters in the world. The lumber industry creates thousands of jobs directly, as well as indirectly, in the engineering, transportation and construction sector. Around 80% of the Canadian timber production is intended for export, making it a vital aspect of Canadian economy.

On the other hand, due to the size of the market, the US is heavily dependent on the import of timber from Canada, as domestic supplies are insufficient to meet customer needs. Softwood lumber (cedar, Douglas fir, pine, spruce) is extensively used throughout North America in building constructions, furniture, interior and exterior woodwork, etc.

### **The essence of the dispute**

The softwood lumber issue centers around the competition between Canadian and US lumber companies, and the problems arising from the differences in their respective forestry management principles.

The dispute was set in motion when the US lumber industry objected to the low Canadian stumpage rates and transportation costs, perceived by the US as an unfair advantage. US producers contended that Canada was subsidizing its lumber industry by allocating timber in a non-competitive manner.

A stumpage rate is the price a company must pay to the landowner in order to harvest timber from a certain area. This price was initially set based on the number of trees harvested (price per stump).

Today, the price is determined based on quantity units, such as cubic meters, board feet or tons. First, the trees are assessed to determine the volume of timber to be harvested. Once this is done, a certain stumpage rate (\$/volume) is applied to this amount of timber.

In Canada, forest areas are mainly located on land, owned by the federal or provincial governments (Crown land). The provinces lease these areas to forest companies for the purpose of timber harvesting. The stumpage rates are defined by law, using a variety of administrative instruments.

Harvesting is managed by means of long-term contracts called tenures. These tenures usually involve 20-year concessions, with the possibility of renewal.

In contrast to Canada, in the United States a large portion of the land under forests is privately owned (70%). Wood from the private sector is sold on the open market through different buyer/seller agreements. Stumpage fees are determined on competitive auctions.

In other words, the fees charged to harvest the timber in the US are dictated by the market, rather than the law.

The above difference in timber acquisition costs was the spark that ignited the softwood lumber dispute. Namely, Canadian stumpage fees (based on labor, transportation costs, etc.) are significantly lower than the prices in the US.

The US views Canada's way of setting stumpage fees as subsidization. The US lumber coalition claims that unlike the domestic action-based timber sale, Canada's administrative pricing concept doesn't reflect the market value of the goods.

By harvesting timber on Crown land at artificially low rates, Canadian companies are actually taking advantage of subsidies, which is an unfair practice and should therefore be subject to trade remedy laws. These laws envision the imposition of a countervailing (anti-subsidy) duty on this type of foreign goods as a way to compensate for the subsidy and restore the price to match market rates.

As a more recent development, USA also made “dumping” allegations, claiming that the price of Canadian lumber on the US market is lower than the cost of production or the selling price in Canada. As a result of this dumping, the lumber companies have acquired a larger share of the US lumber market.

The Canadian government defends its forest management system, challenging the subsidy claim itself, as well as the allegation that the lumber should be subject to a countervailing duty on those grounds.

Since the wood is used in a wide range of industries, it doesn't qualify as a subsidy under US law, which stipulates that countervailable subsidies must be specific to a certain industry. According to Canada, the actions of the US are driven by protectionism, rather than unfair practices.

### **Chronological overview of the softwood lumber dispute**

- In 1981, the US lumber industry urged the Department of Commerce to investigate Canadian stumpage programs and impose a countervailing duty on the grounds of unfair subsidization of their lumber exports.
- In 1983, the DoC ruled that the stumpage programs weren't specific to a single industry and hence not countervailable. This was the one lone victory for Canada in this 40-year dispute but it was short-lived.
- In 1986, the lumber industry demanded another investigation by the DoC. This time, the Department found that stumpage programs did, in fact, meet the specificity test. To avoid a dispute, the countries agreed to sign a Memorandum of Understanding. Under the MoU, Canada imposed a 15% export tax on lumber destined for the USA.
- In 1991, Canada decided to withdraw from the MoU, which prompted the US government to impose provisional duties on imported Canadian lumber.
- In 1996, the dispute was temporarily settled with the 5-year Softwood Lumber Agreement, which limited the duty-free export of Canadian lumber to 14.7 million board feet per year.

- After the agreement expired in 2001, the countries failed to settle for a new agreement.
- In 2006, Canada and the US reached a tentative agreement known as the 2006 Softwood Lumber Agreement (SLA). Under the SLA, the States agreed to refund \$5 billion in duties collected in the previous 4 years, and to refrain from initiating trade actions or imposing new tariffs.
- Since the SLA came into effect, the USA and Canada have had several arbitrations involving residual issues from the dispute and the SLA itself. The Agreement [expired in October 2015](#).

### **The Current Situation**

Since then, the U.S. has periodically imposed countervailing duties and anti-dumping duties on Canadian softwood lumber imports. In the latest round of the trade dispute, Canadian producers have been paying U.S. lumber duties since April 2017, leading to a decline in Canada's market share for softwood lumber in the U.S., falling from 33% in 2016 to 26% in 2022. The 2006 Softwood Agreement capped Canada's market share in the U.S. at 34%, but the U.S. timber industry has lobbied for a revised system that would include quotas to limit Canada's market share to 20%.

Canadian lumber companies have gained a foothold in the United States during this trade battle that has defied repeated attempts at a long-lasting resolution.

Canadian-based companies now control 35 per cent of sawmill capacity for softwood in the U.S. South, based on data compiled by Forest Economic Advisors.

Welcome to the complex, arcane and strange world of the softwood industry, where major Canadian producers have taken a detour around U.S. tariff barriers. The geographical diversification strategy means Canadian companies are gaining greater access to timber in the U.S.

This combined with supply constraints for wood fibre in Canada, especially in British Columbia, means that the major companies are not investing in Canada.

Amid Canadian timber constraints, sawmills located in Canada have seen their share of U.S. lumber consumption steadily eroded, falling to 26 per cent last year, compared with nearly 33 per cent in 2016. The U.S. timber industry has lobbied for a revised system that would include quotas to limit Canada's market share to 20%.





# Western Wood Truss Association of Alberta

## September 2023

The Canadian crusade in the U.S. – snapping up sawmills and building new ones – has emerged as a surprising trend in the trade war. It stands in sharp contrast to 2006, when Canadian-owned sawmills in the U.S. barely registered on the forestry map.

Powerful lobbyists, led by the U.S. Lumber Coalition, have been able to persuade the Biden administration so far to avoid softwood negotiations with Canada, said David MacNaughton, Canada’s former ambassador to the U.S. “In Congress, they will say it’s all about protecting rural jobs,” he said.

For Canadian producers, it has often felt like fighting a losing battle against the U.S. lumber industry, even though international trade panels have repeatedly ruled in favour of Canada as a fair-trading partner. Canada’s softwood producers say they have paid more than \$8 billion in lumber duties to the U.S. from 2017 to 2022.

The upshot is that the U.S. Lumber Coalition still has the backing of many influential U.S. senators and members of the House of Representatives. The U.S. National Association of Home Builders, however, mounted a campaign to draw attention to record-high lumber prices in 2021 in a bid to shift political sentiment.

“U.S. producers have been using their trade laws opportunistically to basically make it more expensive for U.S. consumers to buy lumber,” said Ms. Yurkovich, former president of the BC Lumber Trade Council and former CEO at the BC Council of Forest Industries.

“Housing affordability is at its worst level in more than a decade and the increase in lumber costs in 2020 and 2021 easily added \$50,000 or more to the cost of building a new single-family home,” said NAHB’s Chief Economist Robert Dietz. “With builder sentiment strengthening, NAHB is forecasting gains for the pace of single-family construction during the second half of 2023 and the start of 2024. Reliable access to softwood lumber is critical to meet the anticipated demand for residential construction, which will improve housing affordability while also creating jobs and bringing down inflation.”

The economic impact of the residential construction is significant. The construction of 1,000 single-family homes sustains approximately 2,900 jobs and generates almost \$328 million in economic activity for the overall economy. Furthermore, with more than 40% of consumer inflation attributable to shelter (housing) inflation, additional housing supply is needed to reduce inflationary pressure.

The bad news is that U.S. homebuilders have, at best, been weak voices in the softwood lumber dispute in the past, and that the current administration does not seem to understand or care that the cost of “America first” policies will be borne in large measure

# Western Wood Truss Association of Alberta September 2023

by U.S. consumers. In the case of softwood lumber, costly and protracted litigation seems the likely outcome yet again.

[Waiving the GST was just a start. These 3 ideas could help get more housing built in Canada | CBC News](#)

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](mailto:dave@wwta.ab.ca)

## Economic Update

In Alberta, urban housing starts totaled 3337 in August 2023, a year-over-year decrease of 11.69%. Canadian housing starts decreased by 7.9% over the same period. Edmonton was up 31.46% compared to last August, and Calgary was up by 42.13%. Total starts in Alberta were up slightly from 3290 in the previous month of July.

Housing Starts Alberta						
	Aug-23	Aug-22	% Change	YTD 2023	YTD 2022	% Change
Alberta	3337	2812	18.67%	20641	23374	-11.69%
Edmonton	1471	1119	31.46%	8015	9682	-17.22%
Calgary	1680	1182	42.13%	11407	11186	1.98%
Red Deer	18	13	38.46%	123	100	23.00%
Grande Prairie	19	21	-9.52%	63	148	-57.43%
Lethbridge	7	224	-96.88%	116	692	-83.24%
Wood Buffalo	2	12	-83.33%	21	93	-77.42%
Whitehorse*	N/A	N/A	#VALUE!	N/A	N/A	#VALUE!
Canada	19439	20787	-6.48%	143195	155481	-7.90%

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

### Housing Starts by Dwelling Type (Centres 10K+)

	AUG-23	AUG-22	YTD-23	YTD-22
Total	3,337	2,812	20,641	23,374
Single	1,091	1,290	7,344	9,576
Semi-detached	234	236	1,773	1,811
Row	568	350	3,383	2,828
Apartment	1,444	936	8,141	9,159

## US Housing Starts Fall While Permits and Completions Climb in August

The US Census Bureau on Sept. 23 reported that privately-owned housing starts in August were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate (SAAR) of 1,283,000. This is 11.3% below the revised July estimate of 1,447,000 and 14.8% below the August 2022 rate of 1,505,000. Single-family housing starts were at a rate of 941,000; this is 4.3% above the revised July figure of 983,000. The August rate for units in buildings with five units or more was 334,000.

Building permits are the forward-looking portion of the report, and in August, privately-owned housing units authorized by building permits were at a SAAR of 1,543,000. This is 6.9% above the revised July rate of 1,443,000 but 2.7% below the August 2022 rate of 1,586,000. Single-family authorizations were at a rate of 949,000; this is 2.0% above the revised July figure of 930,000. Authorizations of units in buildings with five units or more were at a rate of 535,000.

Privately-owned housing completions in August were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,406,000. This is 5.3% above the revised July estimate of 1,335,000 and 3.8% below the August 2022 rate of 1,355,000. Single-family housing completions were at a rate of 961,000; this is 6.6% below the revised July rate of 1,029,000. The rate for units in buildings with five units or more was 433,000.

On Sept. 18, the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index (HMI) reported that builder sentiment in the market for newly built single-family homes **declined 5 points** in September to a reading of 45. This follows a 6-point drop in August.

## Lumber

Lumber prices dropped below \$500 USD per thousand feet benchmark, hovering around the lowest level since the end of May, due to indications of subdued demand. The latest data revealed a decrease in US softwood lumber imports from Europe, which amounted to 428 million board feet (mmbf) during the second quarter, 30% less than the record-setting volume of 610 mmbf in the first quarter and 12% down from the same period last year.

European exports to the US are expected to sustain a downward trajectory throughout at least the third quarter, falling short of the 2022 record levels, amid elevated interest rates, declining production, and seasonal effects. Additionally, North American shipments to offshore destinations continued to show signs of weakness. Elsewhere, concerns persisted about a constrained supply because of the impact of Canadian wildfires.





### West Fraser to Acquire Spray Lake Sawmills

West Fraser Timber announced Sept. 7 that it has entered into an agreement to acquire Spray Lake Sawmills located in Cochrane, Alberta subject to certain post-closing adjustments. The transaction is anticipated to close later this year following completion of Canadian regulatory reviews and satisfaction of customary conditions.

Spray Lake Sawmills produces treated wood products, dimensional lumber and a variety of innovative wood residuals and biproducts. It has an annual lumber capacity of 155 million board feet and holds two Forest Management Agreements granted by the Government of Alberta with a total annual allowable cut of approximately 500,000 m<sup>3</sup>.

“We are excited to welcome Spray Lake Sawmills to the West Fraser family,” said Ray Ferris, president and CEO of West Fraser. “Spray Lake Sawmills has an experienced, dedicated group of employees who we will look to further the legacy of this proud mill. With its solid safety performance, and focus on sustainability and community, the mill is an ideal fit for West Fraser.”

The CDN\$140 million acquisition enables West Fraser to grow its footprint in Southern Alberta and expand its Canadian treated wood business, while providing access to a high-quality timber supply.

### Ahead of the crowd: Alberta's economy heading into 2024

*Mark Parsons, ATB ECONOMICS | September 19, 2023*

In the past year, Alberta’s economy has weathered the inflation storm better than most. Strong population growth and a revitalised energy sector will continue to put Alberta's economy ahead of the crowd even as it slows in the face of higher interest rates.

Consumer spending, employment and population growth have been stronger than expected in our previous quarterly outlook. Our forecast is for real GDP growth in Alberta of 2.7% in 2023, up from 2.4% in June. However, with interest rates now looking to be “higher for longer” we have lowered our growth forecast for 2024 to 2.0% from 2.2%.

Alberta's economy has weathered formidable storms, including the tumultuous oil price crash of 2014-15, market access hurdles in 2019, and the unprecedented challenges of the 2020 pandemic. The province's economy has recovered and is now firmly in expansion mode.

As we approach the final months of the year, [ATB's latest economic forecast](#) examines the pivotal factors affecting our economy.

### **Population growth surges**

Alberta is experiencing record levels of net international migration and near-record gains from interprovincial migration. Over 200,000 residents have been added to our population since last summer. ATB has revised its 2023 population growth forecast to 4.5%, marking the highest rate since 1981. Population growth is expected to moderate next year but remain relatively strong and continue to support consumer spending and housing demand while increasing the labour supply.

### **Energy sector comeback**

Alberta's largest sector has experienced a remarkable turnaround from the COVID lows. Rising energy investment and production is a major factor driving Alberta's real GDP growth ahead of the national average this year and next. Other growth areas over the medium term include aviation, tourism, technology, food manufacturing, biofuels, petrochemicals, hydrogen, and investments in emissions reduction.

### **Wounded from the inflation fight, but not down**

The Bank of Canada's 4.75 point increase in interest rates since March 2022 is one of the most aggressive hiking cycles since the 1990s. Although we expect the Bank will take a pause for the remainder of this year and start lowering rates next year, more significant impacts will likely be felt in 2024.

### **Hotter summer prices - inflation picks up in August**

Canada's annual inflation rate accelerated to 4.0% last month (vs. 3.3% in July), fueled by gasoline prices. While an uptick was expected, the reading still came in 0.2 points higher than the consensus estimate.

The Bank of Canada has been focused on ‘core’ inflation readings that strip out the impacts of more volatile items. Two of the measures (trim and median) went in the wrong direction, nudging up on a year over year basis to around 4%.

Mortgage costs continued to add to inflation, rising 30.9% year-over-year.

On a more positive note, food inflation eased to the lowest it has been since February 2022 (albeit still high at 6.8%).

In Alberta, higher energy prices pushed inflation from 2.9% to 4.3%—its first move above the national average since June 2022. Gasoline added to Alberta’s inflation rate, along with a much smaller decline in natural gas prices. For the second straight month, electricity prices more than doubled year-over-year, reflecting strong demand and the impact of rebates lowering prices in August 2022. Excluding energy prices, annual inflation was a milder 3.5%, down from 3.8% in July. Outside the energy basket, there was a notable increase in prices for rented accommodation while food inflation eased.

So far this year, Alberta’s annual inflation rate has averaged 3.5% compared to 4.2% nationally.

### **Alberta jobs - summer sizzle**

*This was a strong report for Alberta. Employment growth accelerated last month, pushing the unemployment rate lower. Alberta continues to outperform the rest of the country in job growth.*

Alberta employment picked up steam in August, rising 17,700 following two consecutive 10,000+ gains. This is the largest one-month increase since January.

The details were strong. Full-time jobs (+24,800) offset part-time losses, with the private sector leading (+22,100). Goods-producing industries led the way (+11,800), with improvements in construction, manufacturing, and oil and gas/forestry/mining employment.

Compared to the same month last year, employment is up 4.1% (+99,100)—well above the 2.5% national gain. Alberta has exceeded national employment growth, on a year-over-year basis, every month since April 2022.

Moving beyond monthly variations, the trend so far this year has been positive. Employment rose 3.5% in the first eight months of the year over the same time last year, entirely in full-time (+4.4%) positions. Growth has been concentrated in the private sector (+4.8%).

With jobs outpacing entry into the labour force last month, the unemployment rate fell back to 5.7%—where it was in May and June.

## Turbulence

Alberta's economy has been on a faster track, although it hasn't been without its share of bumps along the way. Economic activity has been disrupted by wildfires in May and June, while strikes at the West Coast ports in July hampered trade with Asia. The agriculture sector has faced tougher conditions due to significantly drier-than-normal weather in certain regions.

## Quality Control

### Metal Connector Plates and Rust

In the CSA S349:20 Certification requirements for manufacturers of metal-plate-connected wood trusses it states in section 8.1 “Lumber and plates shall be stored in a way to protect against the elements.”

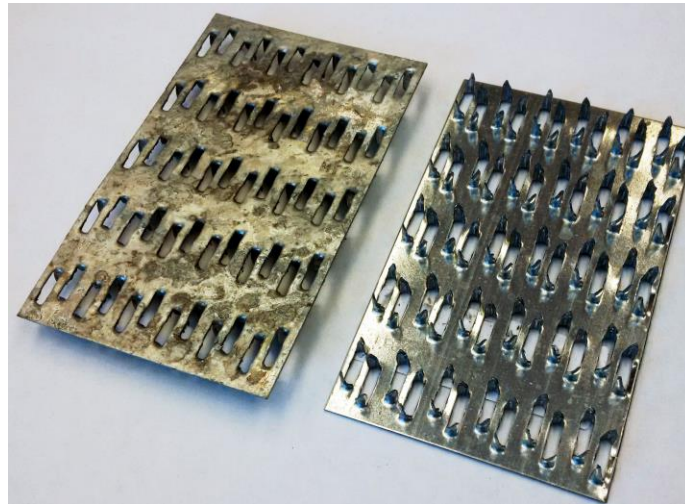
In our Alberta Q.C. audit instrument we have a question worth 10 points that asks that the auditor should observe how metal plates are stored and note if there is any exposure to elements that can affect the plates. The auditor may award a range of the total points allowable based on their observation. If the auditor observes red-rusted plates on finished trusses, no points can be awarded. (Note: White patches on plates indicate zinc oxide which will not reduce plate capacity.)



*Good inside plate storage*



So, if you store all your plates inside this is an easy question to answer. However, if you store connector plates outside there must be a closer investigation.



If you store plates outside, I recommend that you have a written process in your Quality Control Manual to ensure that rusted plates are not used for the fabrication of trusses. You should also ensure that you provide training for your assembly crew on recognizing rust on plates and what to do about it.

You should also ensure that the boxes of plates stored outside are inspected regularly for signs of water in contact with the plates or if they are covered in snow. In addition, you should ensure that your inventory is rotated so that plates exposure is limited.

It does take some considerable exposure to create rusted plates prior to use, I have been trying to rust some in a bucket of water with bleach in my backyard for 2 months and haven't noticed any yet.



It is more likely that plates rust after they have been pressed and the trusses remain exposed to the elements in your yard or at the jobsite. If they rust while in your yard because the contractor did not take the trusses for months, that is still your responsibility, so keep them covered. If they sit in your yard for an extended period of time they should be examined for rust development before shipping and replace if required.

*In the picture above only, some plates show indication of rust indicated that they may have been exposed to corrosive conditions prior to installation.*



Generally, the galvanizing does a pretty good job inhibiting rust, and most of the instances I have seen with rusting plates are the result of them being exposed to corrosive elements or instances of high humidity.



*Plates exposed to weather withdrawing but showing no signs of rust*

Moisture in barns for example comes from humidity in the ventilation air and condensation on cold surfaces. It also comes from livestock when they exhale, pant or sweat, or from the ground in farm buildings with dirt floors. Moisture is evaporated from manure and wet floor surfaces inside the building. Corrosive agents like ammonia are found in confined livestock environments. Ammonia gas combines with moisture and becomes ammonium hydroxide, a chemical that attacks most metal surfaces.

Dust is common in many farm buildings. Dust provides a surface on which acids and gases can react. This significantly accelerates the rate of corrosion on any metal surface.

If you are supplying a job where these conditions will occur, you should have a discussion with the customer about the proper ventilation or separation of the trusses from the conditions.

For more information on trusses in corrosive environments check out the link from the Western Wood Truss Association of B.C.

[MEMO \(wwtabc.com\)](http://www.wwtabc.com)

## Health and Safety Toolbox

### Compressed Air and Nailers

This month for a safety topic let's take a look at compressed air and nail guns.

Compressed air tools are commonly used in many truss plants. Many workers take them for granted, ignoring the hazards involved in their use. Compressed air is not "just air." Its a focused stream of air driven at a high velocity, which can cause serious injury or death to its operator or persons in the immediate area.

Fooling around with compressed air can be lethal. In one case, a blast of air playfully directed behind a worker startled him and caused him to fall against a moving piece of machinery. A misdirected blast of compressed air can "pop" an eyeball from its socket, rupture an eardrum or cause a brain hemorrhage. Directed at the mouth, it can rupture the lungs and intestines. If used to blow dust or dirt off clothing or body parts, it can cause bubbles of air to enter the blood stream, even through a layer of clothing, and inflate and rupture body organs.

There has been more than one truss plant I have visited where there is a collection of nails in the roof or wall from the night shift.

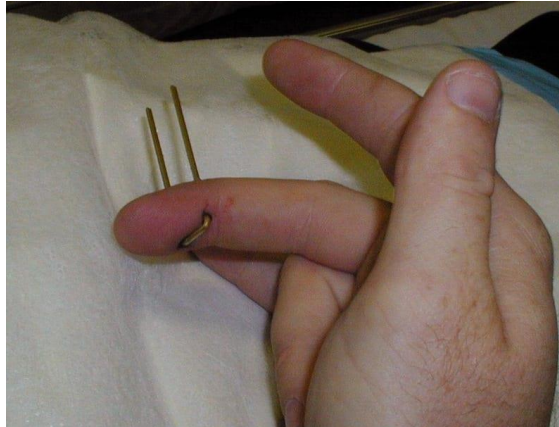
These hazards are in addition to the hazard of shooting a staple or nail. Also, to be considered is the tripping hazard of the hoses.



A hazard assessment and control measures may look something like this:

### 1. Puncture Injuries:

- *Potential Hazard:* Accidental discharge of nails or staples can result in puncture injuries to users and bystanders.
- *Control Measures:*
  - Ensure proper training for users on the safe operation of the nail gun.
  - Use safety mechanisms such as trigger locks and sequential triggers to prevent unintentional firing.
  - Always keep the nail gun pointed away from people and body parts when not in use.



### 2. Hearing Damage:

- *Potential Hazard:* The noise generated by compressed air nail guns can cause hearing damage to users if proper precautions are not taken.
- *Control Measures:*
  - Provide hearing protection (e.g., earplugs or earmuffs) to users.
  - Limit exposure to high-noise environments by implementing noise-reduction measures.

### 3. Dust and Debris:

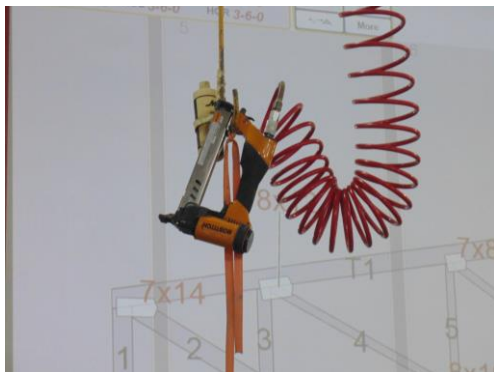
- *Potential Hazard:* The use of nail guns can generate dust and debris, which can lead to respiratory issues and eye injuries if not managed.
- *Control Measures:*
  - Encourage the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), such as safety glasses and dust masks.
  - Implement dust collection systems where possible to minimize airborne particles.

### 4. Compressed Air Hazards:

- *Potential Hazard:* The use of compressed air can result in pneumatic hazards, such as leaks, pressure bursts, or hose whip.



- *Control Measures:*
    - Conduct regular inspections of the air hose and connections for damage or wear.
    - Use proper hose restraints and safety clips to prevent hose whip.
    - Maintain the compressor and air supply system to ensure consistent pressure.
5. **Incorrect Fastener Selection:**
- *Potential Hazard:* Using the wrong type or size of nails or staples for a particular task can lead to equipment malfunction or compromised structural integrity.
  - *Control Measures:*
    - Provide training to users on proper nail or staple selection.
    - Clearly label nail bins or containers with the correct fastener specifications.
6. **Tripping Hazard:**
- *Potential Hazard:* Air hoses on the floor causing a tripping hazard. Damage to the hoses.
  - *Control Measures:*
    - Regularly inspect hoses for wear and damage.
    - Provide proper training for storing hoses.
    - Store hoses when not in use.
    - Ensure that hoses are supported off of the floor.



*Air hose supported*



*Air hose on the floor*

**Risk Assessment:** Assess the likelihood and severity of each identified hazard to determine the overall risk level by the likelihood and severity of the risk.

**Risk Mitigation:** Develop and implement control measures to mitigate the identified hazards. Ensure that these control measures are communicated to all users and regularly reviewed for effectiveness.

**Emergency Response:** Establish procedures for responding to accidents or incidents involving compressed air nail guns. Ensure that first aid kits and emergency contact information are readily available.

**Training:** Provide comprehensive training to all users on the safe operation, maintenance, and storage of compressed air nail guns. Regularly update training to address new hazards or equipment changes.

**Conclusion:** This hazard assessment serves as a foundation for creating a safe work environment when using compressed air nail guns. Regular reviews and updates to control measures should be conducted to ensure ongoing safety for all personnel involved in nail gun operations. Additionally, encourage a safety culture where users are actively engaged in identifying and reporting potential hazards.

For more information of identifying hazards and controlling them refer to:

[Hazard Assessment and Control: a handbook for Alberta employers and workers](#)

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

### STANDATA

There is no official news to report on the new STANDATA being developed for metal-plate connected trusses and engineered lumber, but there has been some work going on behind the scenes during the summer. This issue has been a rollercoaster over the last year and hopefully it will come to a satisfactory conclusion for all before the end of the year.

It remains the position of the WWTA that sealing placement plans would be very disruptive to the current process adding not only cost but significant delays for builders.

### TPIC

The next TPIC meeting is scheduled for October 11, 2023 and your representative David Klassen, P.Eng will be attending. If you have any issues or items of concern that you would like to be addressed, please e-mail them to me before October 2, 2023.



## Quality Control

In preparation for complying with the CSA S349:20 standard this year I am auditing plants on the basis of this standard. This **does not** mean that a plant can imply or state that they meet that standard because they are not being audited by a certifying body that is accredited. The CWTA continues to work on the creation of a certifying body that can be accredited by the Standards Council of Canada.

Documents for the accreditation scheme for the CWTA to become a certifying body were presented to their board in June and will be reviewed at the upcoming meeting in October.

The intent is to indicate to plants what they need to do and where gaps lie in their quality management system in preparation for meeting the standard. It is kind of like practice for the big game.

For plants that have significant work to do such as, not having a good internal inspection system in place or not having a quality manual, they are given an action plan indicating what they need to work on.

My goal was to get to every plant before the end of the year, but of course I am behind, and I now expect this may not happen and role into next year. If you would like to ensure that I get to your plant for a review soon, please drop me an e-mail and schedule a visit.

## WWTA Online Training

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?

Canadian: I want to live forever.

Genie: I can't grant wishes like that

Canadian: Alright, I want to live until the Leafs win the Stanley Cup

Genie: You crafty Canadian.