Commentary-Dave Pasolli-Western Wood Truss Association of Alberta

Best Practices for Authenticating Truss Designs in Accordance with STANDATA 23-BCI-015R1

On September 19, 2025, members of the WWTA were given a presentation on the implementation of STANDATA 23-BCI-015R1 from Paul Chang of Municipal Affairs. The video of the presentation is on the WWTA website under the members section conversations. WWTA Conversations - Western wood truss association

Municipal Affair also gave the presentation to BILD members October 8 and there were about 134 people in attendance. Although the presentation was rather clear to the truss people I still got a feeling that the builders may not quite understand what is going on. For example, due to the wording of the document some builders may not understand the differences between authenticating truss designs and the placement plan.

It is also clear that although the STANDATA is worded in a way indicating that authenticated designs are a condition of permit and should be required prior to the framing inspection, Municipal Affairs does not have the authority to make the AHJ request them in this manor and there is the potential that they may ask for them at the permit stage. This makes their life easier but makes the builder's life more complicated, especially if there are any changes or incomplete information.

We did get a target date for implementation of March 1, 2026 when the exemption of STANDATA 23-BCB-02 (1-2 family dwellings) will be archived and 23-BCI-015R1 will be applied to all Part 9 buildings.

As this date approaches truss companies need to be working on both internal and external best practices to ensure that the new requirements are addressed.

Purpose

To define when sealing (professional authentication) is required for metal plate connected wood truss designs, and to establish consistent procedures for coordinating sealed truss designs between the manufacturer, the truss design engineer, and the customer.

Key Principle

For most Part 9 projects in Alberta, ***sealed individual truss designs (profiles/calculations) are required, while sealed truss layout drawings are not normally required.***

Truss layout drawings are considered **assembly / placement aids**, not structural design documents. Truss **design drawings** (*component designs*) *are* structural documents and therefore will typically require professional authentication.

Only **in special cases** (e.g., engineered buildings outside Part 9, delegated engineering requirements, site-specific loading conditions requiring system-level analysis, or specific municipal / customer contract requirements) will sealed **layout drawings** be requested. This may be the case where the AJH decides that the building is complex in nature and the response to this request is that the building should require a co-ordinating structural engineer of record.

Customer Communication Standard

Truss companies should formally notify their customers in writing of the changes that are going to affect them due to the new requirements including costs and timelines.

Recommended Notification Statement

"Our standard practice is to provide sealed truss design drawings and unsealed layout drawings for installation reference. If your project requires sealed layout drawings, please inform us at the time of quote or order. Additional engineering fees and lead time may apply. Changes to truss geometry, loads, bearing conditions, or plate specifications invalidate the original seal."

At quoting or order confirmation:

"Truss component designs will be provided with professional engineer authentication. Truss layout drawings are provided for placement reference and are not sealed unless specifically requested. If sealed layout drawings are required, this must be communicated at time of order and may involve additional engineering fees and lead time."

"If sealed component designs are required at the permit stage, any changes in design (even minor in nature) will result in the previous designs being void and new designs to be authenticated which will result in additional charges and potential delays in production."

This language must appear in:

- Quotations
- Purchase Order Confirmations
- Builder Sales Sheets (if applicable)

Companies should create Standard Work Instructions (SWI) for this requirement. An example of a SWI is following.

Standard Work Instruction (SWI)

Title: Sealing (Authentication) Requirements for Metal Plate Connected Wood Truss Designs
Document No.: SWI-ENG-07
Revision: 1.1
Effective Date: _____
Department: Engineering / Design / Sales
Approved By: _____

1. Purpose

To ensure consistent application of sealing (professional engineering authentication) for wood truss design documents in compliance with Alberta requirements, including STANDATA 23-BCI-015R1.
This instruction clarifies that:

- **Sealed truss *designs* (component designs)** are **required**.
- **Sealed truss *layout drawings*** are **not normally required** unless specifically requested in writing.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all roof truss packages produced for use in Alberta by this facility.

3. Definitions

Term	Description
Truss Design (Component Design)	Engineered truss profile drawings including geometry, member sizing, design loads, reaction forces, and plate specifications. **Normally sealed.**
Truss Layout Drawing	A placement guide showing truss orientation and identification. **Not an engineered document and not normally sealed.**

Term	Description
Authentication / Sealing	Stamp & signature of a Professional Engineer (P.Eng). Confirms structural adequacy of the truss *design*, not the layout.

4. Key Requirement Summary

Document Type	Seal Required?	Notes
Truss Designs (Component Designs)	**YES (Standard Practice)**	Part of structural engineering responsibility.
Truss Layout Drawings	**NO (Default)**	Only sealed if customer or AHJ requires and confirms in writing.

5. Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Sales / Customer Service	Identify if sealed layout drawings are requested. Record in job notes.
Truss Designer / Detailer	Create truss designs and unsealed layout drawings.
P.Eng. (Design Engineer)	Authenticate truss design drawings. Re-authenticate when structural changes occur.
Document Control	Ensure correct versioning, retention, and distribution.

6. Procedure

6.1 Order Entry

1. **Record sealing requirements** using standard job setup fields:

   Sealed Truss Designs (Profiles): REQUIRED (Standard)

   Sealed Truss Layout Drawings: NO (unless explicitly requested)

2. If customer or AHJ **requests sealed layouts**, obtain written confirmation and notify Engineering Coordinator.

6.2 Design Preparation

- Prepare truss **design sheets** for sealing.
- Prepare **layout drawings** separately as reference documents.

6.3 Document Labeling Requirements

Required statement on all layout drawings:

- FOR PLACEMENT REFERENCE ONLY
- NOT AN ENGINEERED DOCUMENT
- NOT SEALED
- REFER TO SEALED TRUSS DESIGNS FOR STRUCTURAL INFORMATION

Truss design sheets must display the P.Eng. stamp and signature.

Truss designs must include all the required information from TPIC Appendix H.

6.4 Release to Customer and Production

- Provide:
  - **Sealed truss design sheets**
  - **Unsealed truss layout drawings**
- Ensure revision control prior to fabrication release.

6.5 Revisions After Sealing (Required Process)

This section applies whenever **ANY** of the following change:

- Span, slope, web configuration, panel points
- Bearing conditions or support locations
- Applied loads (dead, live, snow, wind)
- Plate type / plate sizes
- Member grade or species
- Truss location in structure

Process Steps:

1. **Identify change** (from customer, field, drafting, or QC).
2. **Stop release / fabrication** for affected trusses.
3. Designer updates truss design in software.
4. **Re-submit revised truss design to P.Eng.** for sealing.
5. Obtain **new sealed truss design sheets** with updated revision/date.
6. Update layout drawing (unsealed) to match new truss mark information.
7. Submit revised documents to:
    - Customer
    - Site (if already shipped)
    - Document control archive
8. **Mark superseded documents as "VOID – REPLACED"** and archive.

Fabrication must not resume until revised sealed designs are issued.

7. Change Management

- **Any structural modification requires re-sealing.**
- Non-structural presentation changes (sheet format, title, formatting) do **not** require re-sealing.
- Field changes requested verbally must be converted to a **written RFI/Change Request** before design modification.

8. Records

Document	Retention
Sealed truss designs (all revisions)	Minimum 10 years
Revision / change log	Minimum 10 years
Customer approval emails / RFIs	Minimum 10 years
Unsealed layout drawing (latest only)	Minimum 10 years

9. Training

All Engineering, Sales, and QC staff must be trained on this SWI and retrained following any revision.

10. Revision History

Rev	Date	Description	Author
1.0	_____	Initial Release	_____
1.1	_____	Added Revision-After-Sealing Process	_____

Benefits of Clear Procedures

Truss companies that implement consistent sealing communication will see:

- ✅ Fewer job delays
- ✅ Less back-and-forth with builders
- ✅ Stronger professional credibility
- ✅ Reduced liability exposure

Most importantly—customers understand **what they are getting**, **when they're getting it**, and **why it matters**.

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

Alberta, urban housing starts totaled 4537 in September 2025, a year-over-year increase of 20%. Canadian housing starts increased by 19% over the same period. Edmonton was up 24% from last September, while Calgary was up by 8% from a last year. Housing starts in Alberta were up from 3924 the previous month of August.

Housing Starts Alberta						
	Sep-25	Sep-24	% Change	YTD 2025	YTD 2024	% Change
Alberta	4537	3766	20.47%	40591	33575	20.90%
Edmonton	1783	1435	24.25%	16484	13359	23.39%
Calgary	2261	2090	8.18%	20893	17414	19.98%
Red Deer	16	14	14.29%	337	314	7.32%
Grande Prairie	40	19	110.53%	320	148	116.22%
Lethbridge	44	22	100.00%	475	599	-20.70%
Wood Buffalo	5	4	25.00%	26	19	36.84%
Whitehorse*	111	30	270.00%	272	42	547.62%
Canada	22375	18806	18.98%	178035	168442	5.70%
*Whitehorse Starts are for the quarter, statistics are not available monthly.						

Housing Starts by Dwelling Type (Centres 10K+)

	SEP-25	SEP-24	YTD-25	YTD-24
Total	4,537	3,766	40,591	33,575
Single	1,405	1,441	11,921	11,295
Semi-detached	349	265	3,156	2,776
Row	560	560	5,563	4,606
Apartment	2,223	1,500	19,951	14,898

Strong but signs of slowing: New residential construction in Alberta
Siddhartha Bhattacharya | ATB ECONOMICS | October 16, 2025

Despite rising in September, the latest numbers on housing starts point to some moderation in new home construction in Alberta.

Alberta's housing starts averaged almost 51,000** units in the third quarter (July-September), down 22% from the previous quarter and the first significant quarterly drop since 2023.

Starts are, however, still strong compared to last year with year-to-date (YTD) starts up 22% compared to the same nine months in 2024. The growth was largely fueled by a 29% surge in multi-unit dwellings, with single-unit builds rising 8%.

In urban areas (populations over 50,000), purpose-built **rental unit** construction posted a 43% YTD increase, mirroring a national trend. Alberta, however, stands out with a 9% YTD increase in starts intended for the owner-occupied market compared to a 5% decline in the rest of Canada.

Although 2025 is projected to set a new record for annual housing starts in Alberta, the momentum is anticipated to slow next year due to cooling population growth.

Once more for good measure: Bank of Canada cuts again
Rob Roach | ATB ECONOMICS | October 29, 2025

As we expected, the Bank of Canada announced this morning it is shaving another 25 basis points off of its trendsetting policy interest rate, taking it from 2.5% to 2.25%.

The Bank cited “ongoing weakness in the economy” as the rationale for the cut. The Bank also indicated that it is not overly concerned about the impact of a cut on consumer prices with “inflation expected to remain close to the 2% target.”

The Bank, however, stressed that it remains focused on the incoming data and is “prepared to respond” if its current projections change.

The next interest rate announcement date is set for December 10. Will the Bank of Canada pull the trigger again to close the year? It's possible, but they'll need to see more evidence that core inflation is cooling.

Either way, our view is that the Bank is near the end of this rate-cutting cycle as attention turns to economic levers beyond the Bank's control.

Like the rest of us, the Bank will be watching how much fiscal stimulus is brought forward in next week's federal budget and how the effort to get major projects built moves forward.

The Bank also presented a new economic projection for the Canadian economy of 1.2% growth in 2025, 1.1% in 2026 and 1.6% in 2027. “On a quarterly basis, growth strengthens in 2026 after a weak second half of this year.”

Although the national economy will continue to grow, these are not strong numbers with the Bank arguing that “the structural damage caused by the trade conflict [has reduced] the capacity of the economy.”

Housing Recovery-Yahoo Finance

US Housing Starts

Due to the government shut down I could not find any data on US housing starts for September, but I did find this.

On October 16, the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB)/Wells Fargo Housing Market Index (HMI) reported that builder confidence for newly built single-family homes **rose five points** to 37 in October, the highest level since April. Despite the increase, sentiment has remained in negative territory for 18 consecutive months.

The October HMI survey showed that 38% of builders reported cutting prices, consistent with the 37–39% range seen since June. The average price reduction rose to 6% in October after holding near 5% for several months—the highest share since October 2024. The use of sales incentives remained unchanged at 65%.

All three HMI components increased in October. The index measuring current sales conditions rose four points to 38, the gauge of sales expectations for the next six months

jumped nine points to 54, and the measure of prospective buyer traffic increased four points to 25.
Regional three-month moving averages showed mixed results. The Northeast rose two points to 46, the Midwest was unchanged at 42, the South increased two points to 31, and the West gained two points to 28.

Lumber

Lumber futures tumbled past $540 per thousand board feet, a seven-week low, as weakening demand, persistent oversupply, and trade-policy uncertainties converged. US tariffs are intensifying pressure on Canadian softwood, with existing antidumping and countervailing duties around 35%, plus new Section 232 levies of 10% on timber and 25% on wood products, lifting import costs above 45%. Weak demand compounds the decline, with US residential building permits at a seasonally adjusted 1.4 million units in July, the lowest since June 2020, and construction spending down 3.4% from May 2024. Housing starts remain near five-year lows, keeping retail price pass-through muted despite higher import costs. Export channels have narrowed, with Canadian softwood constrained by tariffs and hardwood exports to China dropping from 40% of volume in 2017 to 7% today. Temporary curtailments and mill closures are emerging, yet abundant inventories and sluggish construction sustain downward pressure.

[West Fraser's $204-million loss hints at B.C. forest sector challenges | Vancouver Sun]

[Trump tariffs lead to more forestry job cuts as B.C. sawmills announce cutbacks | CBC News]

[Republican legislative leaders ask Congress for relief for timber industry battered by tariffs - Arkansas Times]

[Industry minister says relief coming for tariff-hit softwood lumber sector | Politics | thecanadianpressnews.ca]

Quality Control

A Simple Solution to a Complex Problem

During Apollo 13's crisis, the CO_2 scrubbers failed and threated the astronauts' lives. In order to fix the problem, engineers on the ground devised a way to adapt square canisters to round ones using duct tape, plastic bags, and cardboard. Highlighting how simple materials can solve life-or-death technical problems.

Maybe it is the farmer in me, but I love it when I see someone in our industry find a simple or homemade solution for a complex problem.

One of the Q.C. issues that all truss companies face is ensuring that the plates on the bottom side are installed correctly. Over the years I have seen everything from a pit in the floor with a person, to expensive plate detectors to address this problem.

I was recently at Woodland Truss and they came up with a great simple solution.

Installing a couple of security cameras on the floor and a monitor at the finishing press so that they could easily look at the bottom side of the truss.

Cameras and monitor for underside of truss

I am sure that you could buy a couple of cameras like this from amazon for not much money. You may even have a security camera system installed in your plant that you could easily tie into.

What I would really like to stress is that this solution was a result of the company doing their regular internal inspections, discussing what they could improve and management commitment to the issue. If a company does not have quality management system commitment processes remain the same.

It certainly beats the method of someone bending over or lifting the truss to check the bottom side.

Health and Safety Toolbox

Don't Fall Into Winter

As Alberta transitions into winter, slippery surfaces, poor lighting, and changing conditions dramatically increase the risk of slips, trips, and falls—which account for approximately 20% of workplace lost-time claims.

Falls aren't just accidents—they're preventable incidents.
Whether it's icy stairs, blocked views, or worn flooring, we all have a role in recognizing hazards and taking action.

Prevention starts with awareness:
✅ Wear proper footwear for the task and terrain.
✅ Maintain three-point contact on equipment.
✅ Keep walkways clear and well-lit.
✅ Use handrails—and make sure they're at the right height.

Let's make safety stick this season because one slip can change everything.

- Talk to your teams.
- Review hazards.
- Adjust for changing conditions.

Learn more from the Government of Alberta's OHS resource portal **https://lnkd.in/dkf7KJH6** and repost if you find this information helpful.

Remember a couple of months ago I talked about using AI to help with safety requirements. Well, here is a hazard assessment by ChatGPT on Walking on Ice Outside. It took less than a minute to get it.

Hazard Assessment – Walking on Ice Outside

Location: Exterior yard, parking lot, shipping area, loading zones
Task: Employee walking between vehicles, buildings, storage areas, and work zones during winter conditions.
Date: *(Insert date)*
Assessed By: *(Insert name/position)*

Hazard Description
Icy or compacted snow surfaces create slip-and-fall risks for employees walking outdoors. This may occur after snowfall, freezing rain, melt/refreeze cycles, or when snow is tracked from yard equipment. Falls on ice can result in sprains, fractures, head injuries, or lost time incidents.

Risk Ranking

Severity (S)	Probability (P)	Risk Score (S × P)	Risk Level
3 (Serious injury possible)	3 (Occurs regularly in winter)	9	**High**

Hazard Controls
Engineering / Physical Controls

- Apply sand, gravel, ice melt, or other traction agents to walking areas, especially:
  - Parking lots
  - Walkways to plant entrances
  - Shipping areas
  - High-traffic footpaths in the yard
- Remove snow promptly after accumulation.
- Ensure exterior lighting is functional to highlight icy patches.
- Install handrails on sloped walkways and loading dock steps.
- Maintain designated pedestrian walkways clear and treated before shift start.
- Ensure proper footwear including crampons are available and used.

Administrative / Procedural Controls

- Daily inspection of yard and walkways during winter months.
- Supervisors initiate sanding/salting when icy conditions are observed or forecast.
- Communicate icy areas during toolbox talks and shift start meetings.
- Employees report hazardous icy conditions immediately so they can be treated.
- Post signage in known slippery zones when temporary hazards exist.

Training

- Train workers on:
  - Winter walking techniques (short steps, bent knees, weight low, hands free)
  - Awareness of changing conditions during temperature swings
  - Requirement to wear proper winter footwear
- Review hazards during seasonal safety meetings.

PPE

- **Mandatory:** Winter-rated slip-resistant footwear.
- **Recommended:** Clip-on ice cleats or crampons for employees walking regularly in the yard.

Safe Work Procedures

1. Survey walking route before proceeding; avoid visibly slick surfaces if possible.
2. Walk slowly, take short steps, keep hands out of pockets.
3. Hold onto railings or stable surfaces when climbing steps or walking on slopes.
4. Step down, not forward, when exiting trucks or equipment.
5. Report icy areas or request sanding/salting immediately.

If you create your own you can get ChatGPT to even create a poster training material.

Here is the WWTA poster pdf for working in the cold.

Working in Cold Weather Poster-WW

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

WWTA Board of Directors Meeting

The Board of Directors of the WWTA is scheduled to meet November 27. If you have anything that you would like the board to address, please email it to me prior to November 21.

Alberta Manufacturing Productivity Grant

Small- and medium-sized manufacturers can get funding to help boost their productivity and increase competitiveness on the global stage.

The Alberta Manufacturing Productivity Grant (AMPG) is a 2-year pilot program, beginning in mid-2025, funded by the Government of Alberta and administered by the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters (CME).

Through the AMPG, over $4 million is available for eligible small- and medium-sized manufacturing businesses, which includes access to advice, expertise and up to $30,000 in matching funding for technology upgrades and new machinery and equipment. These investments in long-term production assets and technology will aim to enhance manufacturing businesses' productivity, capacity and market entry.

This funding will help to provide successful applicants with the resources they need to boost their productivity. The grant will empower local business owners to invest in new technologies, machinery and equipment while driving job creation and accelerating growth in Alberta's manufacturing sector. The pilot program is expected to support approximately 130 small- and medium-sized businesses.

Eligibility

Manufacturing companies from any sector are eligible to apply to the pilot program if they have a physical location in Alberta which makes, refines, refurbishes or processes a product or material, uses or locates the equipment or technology from the grant in Alberta and employs between 5 and 750 employees.

Apply

If you are interested in applying for the AMPG, go to the CME website for program details and to register.

Wood Solutions Conference: Calgary 2025

Save the date! WoodWorks Alberta and the Canadian Wood Council are bringing the Wood Solutions Conference to Calgary this fall.

Join us **November 21, 2025**, at **The Westin Calgary Airport** for Alberta's premier event dedicated to wood design and construction. This one-day conference will bring together expert-led seminars, cutting-edge innovations in wood building systems, and top-tier networking opportunities for professionals in architecture, engineering, and construction.

Registration opens on Oct. 1st!
Location:
The Westin Calgary Airport
671 Aero Drive NE
Calgary, AB T2E 7Y5

Wood Solutions Conference: Calgary 2025 | The Canadian Wood Council (CWC)

WWTA Alberta Web Page

I just noticed that something is wonky with the WWTA webpage. Everything is still available, but it seems a bit scrambled. No doubt some update sent everything out of wack.

Did You Know?

I saw this a while ago while filling my gas tank. This is what happens when your Tesla is out of juice.