

Commentary-Dave Pasolli-Western Wood Truss Association of Alberta

What is Build Canada Homes (BCH)

Build Canada Homes is a recently announced federal agency whose mandate is to build *affordable housing at scale*. Key features include:

- Initial capitalization of **\$13 billion** to finance large housing projects. [BCH announcement](#)
- Leveraging public lands to reduce land costs and risk for builders.
- Flexible financial incentives (loans, loan guarantees, equity, contributions) to derisk projects.
- Emphasis on modern construction methods: modular, factory-built housing, mass timber, etc., to build faster, more sustainably, with lower cost overhead.
- A “Buy Canadian” component: prioritizing Canadian materials and supply chains.
- Use of large portfolios of projects, so scale and predictability are improved.

What’s the current Alberta housing / affordability context

To understand impact, here’s what Alberta is facing:

- Alberta has been subject to housing affordability pressures: rising home prices, tightening inventory in many regions.
- There has already been some joint provincial-federal funding: e.g. \$203 million toward 25 projects delivering ~2,300 affordable units under the Affordable Housing Partnership Program. [Alberta Affordable Projects](#)
- The province has been leading in housing starts per capita at times (2024 / Q1 2025) and showing population growth especially into Calgary, Edmonton, etc.
- There are smaller communities with very low supply, significant price growth in certain non-metro areas.

How Build Canada Homes is likely to affect Alberta

Here are the main ways this federal program could influence Alberta — both positive effects and potential constraints.

Opportunities for Alberta

1. **Increased Affordable Housing Supply**

With the federal backing and resources, Alberta can scale up the number of affordable units, especially for low-income households, seniors, Indigenous communities, etc. The type of deep affordability (non-market, supportive, transitional housing) that is hard to finance under market-only models becomes more feasible.

2. **Lower Land-Related Costs & Risk**

One of the challenges for builders is land costs — acquiring serviced land, zoning, development charges, etc. By using public land, or transferring federal land, Build Canada Homes can reduce that front-end barrier, making projects more financially viable. This is especially important in high-cost areas (metro Edmonton / Calgary), but also in smaller cities which may struggle to find or afford land.

3. **Faster, More Predictable Financing**

The program's financial tools (loans, equity, loan guarantees) — plus the promise of scale and portfolios — should help builders better predict costs, reduce the risk premium, and possibly lower the required returns. This helps especially for builders who do mixed-income or affordable housing, or who want to try modular/factory-built techniques which may need upfront investment.

4. **Modern Methods & Innovation Boost**

Alberta already has a construction sector with some innovation, but modular factories, mass timber, prefab, etc., are less pervasive. Build Canada Homes' push for modern construction can create demand for these methods, which could lead to:

- New factories or expansion of existing ones
- More skilled labor in prefab, modular, mass timber
- Potentially more cost efficiencies and faster build times

5. **Supply Chain and Jobs**

- Emphasis on Canadian materials (lumber, steel, mass timber) will likely benefit Alberta's industries (especially if there are forest / sawmill operations, steel, etc.).
- Job creation along the supply chain: manufacturing of prefab components, transportation, construction, etc.

6. **Middle Class and Mixed-Income Housing**

Build Canada Homes is not only about very low-income households; it also aims to partner with private builders to deliver affordable housing for the middle class.

This could open more opportunities for private home builders who can partner with the program.

7. Regulatory / Permitting Improvements Encouraged

Implicitly, to make projects go faster, there will likely be pressure to streamline zoning, permitting, approvals. We've seen evidence of that already through other programs (Housing Accelerator Fund, etc.). Builders who are ready to work in jurisdictions that embrace these changes can benefit.

Challenges / Risks for Alberta & Builders

Carney's housing plan will likely spend a lot for very little

1. Competitive Pressure

Because Build Canada Homes is a national program with big funding, there will be competition among provinces, municipalities, developers. Alberta must ensure its proposals are well-prepared, shovel-ready, properly partnered, that local governments cooperate, to capture a share of the pie.

2. Capacity Constraints

- Skilled labor shortages could limit how fast projects can be delivered. Even if financing is available, if there aren't enough carpenters, prefab operators, etc., that slows things.
- Prefab / modular capacity may not be sufficient initially; investment will be required, which takes time to ramp up.

3. Cost Inflation and Supply Chain Issues

Even with incentives, the cost of materials, transport, steel, mass timber, etc. may remain volatile. Inflation, tariffs, or other trade issues could affect material costs.

4. Municipal / Provincial Regulatory Barriers

Builders still have to deal with zoning, development charges, building codes, permitting delays. Unless local governments streamline and align with the federal program's intent, the red tape could blunt the benefits.

5. Land Availability Even Public Land May Have Constraints

While use of public lands helps, there could be challenges regarding location (servicing, infrastructure, transit access), environmental concerns, brownfield vs. greenfield, existing policy restrictions etc.

6. Financing/Cost Risk if Projects are Delayed

If approvals drag, if supply chain problems occur, if costs rise faster than anticipated, risk exposure for builders remains. Projects with tight margins may be vulnerable.

7. Ensuring Affordability vs. Financial Viability

Deeply affordable housing often means lower returns. The financing tools help, but developers still need to ensure projects remain economically viable while meeting affordability goals. There is sometimes tension between cost cutting, design quality, sustainability goals, speed, and affordability.



Affordable Housing Project by HomeEd in Edmonton. Not very affordable roof lines in my opinion



What this means for Alberta Home Builders (both large and small)

From the perspective of home builders in Alberta, these are the likely implications:

- **New Business Opportunities:** Builders who can partner with Build Canada Homes, or non-profits, municipalities, can access new markets (affordable, mixed-income). Builders who adapt to modular/factory-built methods may win more contracts.
- **Need to Adjust to Innovation:** Builders may need to adopt or invest in modern construction methods to stay competitive under the program's priorities. Those who are slow to adapt may be left behind.
- **Scale and Project Size:** Projects under Build Canada Homes tend to be larger portfolio projects. Builders who can scale up, or form consortia, or collaborate,

- may do better. Smaller builders may need to partner or specialize in certain components (modular, finishing, etc.).
- **Potential for Downward Pressure on Cost Premiums:** With federal incentives, risk reduction, and competition, margins may tighten, especially for builders who haven't optimized cost, supply chain, or who have high overhead.
 - **Opportunity in Public Land Projects:** Builders who have experience working with public entities, or complex regulatory environments, may get access to projects using public lands, which may have lower land cost and less speculative land risk.
 - **Sustainability / Green Building Gains:** Builders that have prepared for more sustainable construction methods (mass timber, energy efficiency, etc.) may be favored in bids and tenders. There is likely going to be more emphasis on these aspects.
 - **Skills, Labor Training Necessity:** Demand for skilled trades, prefab work, modular assembly, etc., may increase. Builders may need to invest in training, partnerships with trade schools, or find ways to secure labor.

What It Means for Wood Truss Suppliers

Wood trusses are a backbone of residential construction, and Alberta's truss industry is positioned to play a critical role in the Build Canada Homes rollout. Here's what the program likely means for suppliers:

1. Surge in Demand for Trusses

- The program's scale — thousands of new affordable and middle-class homes — directly translates into increased demand for roof and floor trusses.
- Large portfolio projects and multi-family builds may require trusses in higher volumes and more standardized designs, pushing suppliers toward streamlined, high-capacity production.

2. Shift Toward Modular and Panelized Systems

- Since Build Canada Homes promotes factory-built housing and modular methods, truss suppliers may see stronger demand for pre-engineered truss packages that integrate with wall panels or modular units.
- This could mean closer collaboration with prefab factories and modular home producers, rather than just site-based builders.

3. Tighter Timelines and Standardization

- Federal financing and public pressure to "build fast" will compress construction schedules. Truss suppliers will be expected to deliver quickly, consistently, and at scale.

- Standardized truss profiles may become more common in high-volume projects, which could increase efficiency but reduce customization margins.

4. Emphasis on Sustainability

- Build Canada Homes includes a “Buy Canadian” requirement and favors sustainable materials. Alberta truss plants using Canadian lumber and certified practices (e.g., FSC, CSA standards) may have a competitive edge.
- Energy-efficient design standards could also mean more complex truss engineering for higher R-value roof assemblies or net-zero ready homes.

5. Pressure on Costs

- Affordable housing mandates mean builders will push suppliers for competitive pricing. Truss suppliers will need to balance cost efficiency with rising labor and material input costs. Automation, lean manufacturing, and logistics efficiency may become critical for profitability.

6. Workforce and Capacity Challenges

- As order volumes increase, truss plants will need more skilled designers, press operators, and delivery staff.
- Workforce shortages could become a bottleneck if supply doesn’t keep pace with the surge in projects.

7. Partnership Opportunities

- Truss manufacturers who can position themselves as reliable partners for large builders, non-profits, and modular housing producers could lock in long-term supply contracts.
- Those with design departments that can quickly produce sealed engineered truss drawings in line with provincial code requirements (e.g., Alberta STANDATA 23-BCI-015R1) will be at an advantage.

The Build Canada Homes program is a **double-edged sword** for Alberta’s truss industry. On one side, it promises a sustained pipeline of large-scale housing projects, which could provide steady demand for years. On the other, it will demand faster turnaround, sharper pricing, standardized products, and integration with modular construction.

Truss suppliers who invest in automation, workforce development, sustainable sourcing, and partnerships with modular and affordable housing builders are most likely to thrive in this new environment.

What Alberta Needs to Do to Maximize Benefit

To ensure Alberta captures the upside and mitigates risks, these are strategic actions that stakeholders should consider:

1. Streamline Approvals and Permitting

Municipalities in Alberta should review bylaws, zoning, density rules, development charges, and try to align with the federal program's goal of speeding up housing delivery. Reduce duplicative reviews, improve clarity, shorten timelines.

2. Make Public Land Available

Provincial and municipal governments should identify public lands that can be used for housing, assess servicing needs, and make them easy to transfer/lease under favorable terms.

3. Invest in Modular/Fab Capacity

Alberta should encourage or support prefab/modular construction manufacturing in the province, maybe via incentives, technical support, or infrastructure, so the capacity is local and can meet demand.

4. Develop Workforce / Training

Ensure adequate training for skilled trades, especially those relevant to modern methods (mass timber, prefab, etc.). Also, attract labor migration or apprenticeships to meet demand.

5. Ensure Supply Chain Resilience

Foster local materials supply (lumber mills, steel, etc.), ensure transport/logistics are efficient, and reduce dependency on imported or distant materials where possible.

6. Public-Private / Non-Profit Partnerships

Encourage builders (private) to partner with non-profits, Indigenous housing providers, municipalities under the program. These partnerships can allow sharing risk, combining resources, and accessing different revenue streams.

7. Design for Affordability + Quality

While cost is constrained, design should still ensure energy efficiency, sustainability, durability, and livability; avoiding short cuts that lead to long-term problems.

Overall, Build Canada Homes offers a major opportunity for Alberta to make headway on housing affordability, with tools to lower costs, reduce risk, speed up delivery, and build more sustainable, scalable housing. For Alberta home builders, especially those willing to innovate, partner, and scale, this could be a transformative time.

However, to realize the benefits, Alberta needs to align regulation, land policy, supply chains, and workforce to take advantage of the federal program. Builders who fail to adapt might find that costs, competition, and regulatory delay continue to be headwinds.

For those of us that are always skeptical of new Federal Programs:

[Gunter: Federal housing program reveals Carney government's magical thinking](#)

[Ontario housing construction collapse should alarm policymakers-yahoo finance](#)

[Canada on track to build far fewer homes than needed to meet housing gap - National | Globalnews.ca](#)

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 3924 in August 2025, a year-over-year decrease of 2%. Canadian housing starts decreased by 9.73% over the same period. Edmonton was down 12% from last August, while Calgary was up by 21% from a last year. Housing starts in Alberta were down from 4392 the previous month of July.

Housing Starts Alberta						
	Aug-25	Aug-24	% Change	YTD 2025	YTD 2024	% Change
Alberta	3924	3998	-1.85%	36095	29809	21.09%
Edmonton	1642	1868	-12.10%	14701	11924	23.29%
Calgary	2031	1675	21.25%	18632	15324	21.59%
Red Deer	24	6	300.00%	321	300	7.00%
Grande Prairie	18	7	157.14%	280	129	117.05%
Lethbridge	19	276	-93.12%	432	577	-25.13%
Wood Buffalo	2	2	0.00%	21	15	40.00%
Whitehorse*	N/A	N/A	#VALUE!	N/A	N/A	#VALUE!
Canada	18408	16775	9.73%	156285	148636	5.15%

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

Housing Starts by Dwelling Type (Centres 10K+)

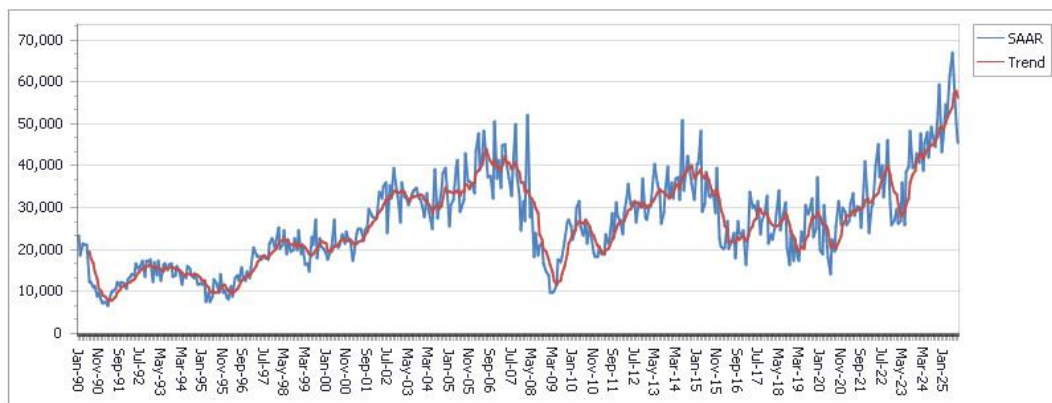
	AUG-25	AUG-24	YTD-25	YTD-24
Total	3,924	3,998	36,095	29,809
Single	1,238	1,444	10,453	9,854
Semi-detached	338	342	2,824	2,511
Row	571	593	4,999	4,046
Apartment	1,777	1,619	17,819	13,398

Housing hotbed: Residential starts and benchmark prices in Alberta

Rob Roach, ATB ECONOMICS | September 18, 2025

New construction - Going strong

On the one hand, housing starts* in Alberta continued to roar along in August. At almost 48,000 (seasonally adjusted annual rate), starts were 19% higher than the five-year average. On a year-to-date (YTD) basis, starts in the province were 23% higher than the same eight-month period in 2024.



On the other hand, starts have been coming down from the all-time monthly record of almost 69,000 set in May and dipped below 50,000 for the first time since January.

Coming down from the monthly peak was expected with our forecast for the year sitting at about 55,000. Despite the cooling over the second half of the year, we still expect 2025 will be a record high for annual housing starts in Alberta.

It will slow, but the pace of new residential construction should remain hot next year. We expect housing starts to come in at just under 49,000—the third highest on record.

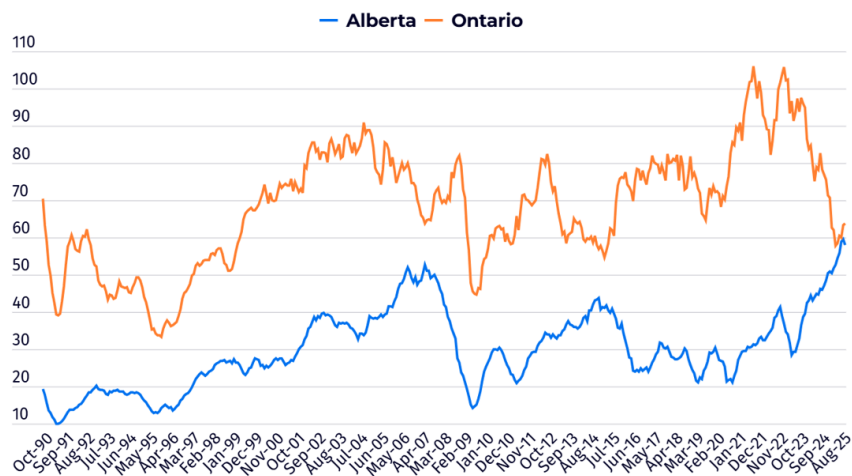
There is little mystery to the strong run of starts in the province with [recent spikes](#) in population combined with [ongoing demographic growth](#) fueling demand for more housing. By the same token, the relatively slower rate of population growth will give the construction sector a chance to catch-up and, in turn, reduce the pace of new builds.

The strong YTD numbers in Alberta stand out against the picture in Ontario where starts were down by 22% and B.C. where they were essentially flat. Other strong performers include Quebec (+26%), Saskatchewan (+47%) and the three Maritime provinces (+22%).

Housing starts

Units, seasonally adjusted at annual rate, six-month moving average

ATB Economics



Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation/Haver Analytics and ATB Economics

Ease the break: The Bank of Canada cuts its policy rate to 2.5%

Mark Parsons, ATB ECONOMICS | September 17, 2025

After an extended ‘wait and see’ period, the Bank of Canada [decided](#) it was time to resume its rate cutting this morning.

The decision to trim its policy rate by 25 basis points to 2.5% did not shock us, and most others in our line of work. It was [our call](#).

With today’s cut - the first since March - the Bank is confident that enough progress is being made on inflation as it deals with the now-apparent negative effects of the trade war.

- As we [reported](#) yesterday, headline inflation has cooperated, falling below 2% in each of the last five months. Core inflation is more sticky, but the Bank said today that too may be improving.
- Meanwhile, the Canadian economy has cooled (GDP shrank 1.6% in 2025Q2) and the labour market has weakened (unemployment at 7.1% in August - highest since 2016 outside of the pandemic).

Stateside, the U.S. Federal Reserve is widely expected to cut its policy rate later today - not because of inflation progress (it's around 3%), but because of a darkening employment picture.

We don't have a new forecast from the Bank (that will need to wait until October), so we are left dissecting the statement and press conference remarks for any clues as to what's next.

I interpret some of the comments as dovish. Most notably, the note of "less upside risk to inflation" in the forward looking statement. Further, the Bank specifically references the dropping of Canadian counter-tariffs as a disinflationary force, and that upward momentum on core inflation in recent months has "dissipated".

Still ticking: Alberta's population growth slows, but still outpacing other provinces
Mark Parsons, ATB ECONOMICS | September 24, 2025

Alberta's population clock is slowing, but it's still ticking faster than other provinces.

In second quarter [data](#) released this morning, the province recorded its 16th consecutive quarterly net inflow from the rest of Canada. That's keeping population growth higher in Alberta.

At the same time, population growth is easing, mostly due to a net outflow in non-permanent residents (NPRs).* The federal government announced in 2024 that it was scaling back the number of temporary work and study permit holders, and this policy change is evident in the data.

In the second quarter, Alberta's population grew 0.4% - second only to PEI. That's still much stronger than the 0.1% national pace, but it is a marked slowdown from the previous two years.

Today, there are more than 5 million Albertans (though, as regular [population clock](#) watchers, we already knew this). The official tally as of July 1 is 5,029,346.

Where did the growth come from?

In the second quarter of 2025, Alberta's population grew by 19,268 (+0.4%). This came from three sources:

- international migration (7,720);
- interprovincial migration (6,187); and
- natural increase (5,361).

US Housing Starts and Permits Decline in August; Completions Increase

On Sept 17, the US Census Bureau reported that privately owned **housing starts** were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate (SAAR) of 1.31 million in August, an 8.5% decline from July's revised 1.43 million and 6.0% below the August 2024 level of 1.39 million. Single-family starts dropped 7.0% to 890,000. The rate for units in buildings with five units or more was 403,000.

Building permits, a forward-looking measure, fell 3.7% to a rate of 1.31 million, down 11.1% from a year earlier. Single-family intentions declined 2.2% to 856,000. Authorizations of units in buildings with five units or more were at a rate of 403,000.

Housing completions rose 8.4% to 1.61 million units. However, completions were 8.4% lower than the August 2024 level of 1.76 million. Single-family completions increased 6.7% to 1.09 million. The rate for units in buildings with five units or more was 503,000.

[President Trump Floats Declaring an National Housing Emergency](#)

Lumber

Lumber futures traded above \$580 per thousand board feet in September, holding above earlier month lows as supply tightened and housing demand showed signs of renewal. Major producers such as Interfor reduced output through maintenance and shift cuts and mill idling while Canadian softwood flows remained constrained by tariff uncertainty which compressed prompt availability. Expectations of Fed further rate cuts later in 2025 encouraged forward looking builders to replenish inventories.



Lumber prices reached their lowest levels of 2025 during August and September. The framing lumber composite price on September 19, 2025, continued to decline, marking its lowest point in over a year.

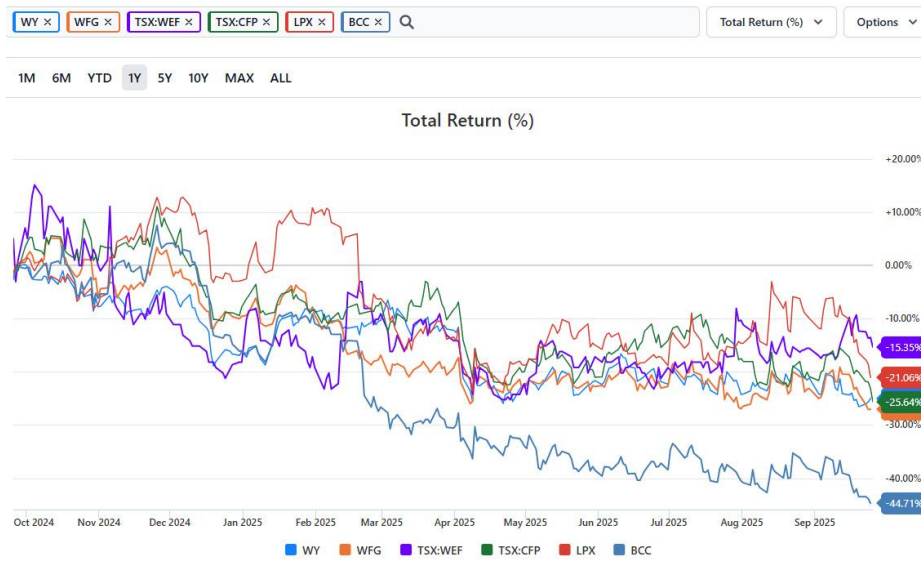
Key Factors Contributing to the Decline

- Excess Supply: The market saw an "oversupply" or "wall of wood" primarily built up in anticipation of higher duties on Canadian imports.
- Weakened Demand: High mortgage rates and elevated home prices curtailed new home sales, building activity, and home improvements, leading to weak construction and renovation demand.
- Tariff Uncertainty: Uncertainty surrounding duties and anti-dumping measures on Canadian lumber also impacted the markets.

Future Outlook

- Analysts predict short-term weakness, with price projections potentially dropping as low as \$450 per thousand board feet before stabilizing.
- A potential rebound to the mid-\$500 to low-\$600 range is expected in 2026 and 2027, tied to factors like seasonal building demand and court rulings on tariffs.
- Lower interest rates are anticipated to potentially revive homebuilding and remodeling demand.

- [Interfor to cut lumber output until year-end](#)
- [Western Forest Products Announces Lumber Curtailments](#)
- [Aspen Planers halts Merritt mill operations](#)
- [COFI statement on increased duties on Canadian softwood lumber](#)



Lumber stocks not having too good of year in 2025

Quality Control

COPQ

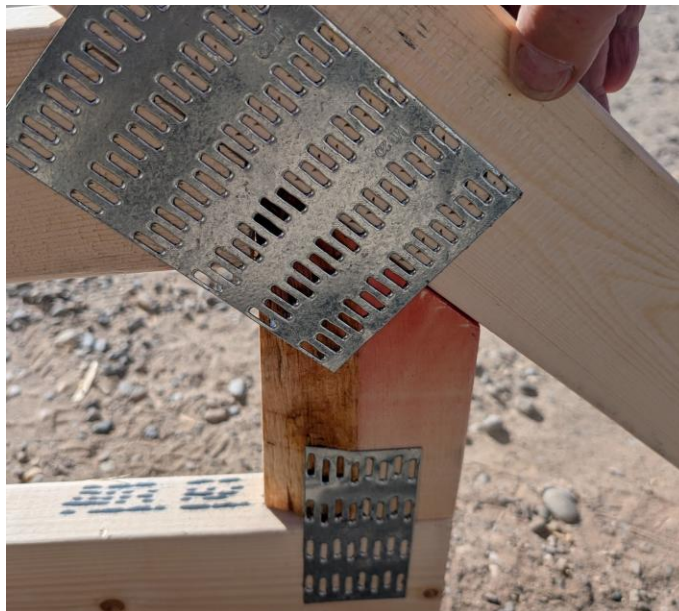
When we talk about quality in a truss plant we tend to focus on tolerances and what is acceptable. We also look at standards and what we can do to ensure we meet those standards like creating documentation of internal truss inspections.

This month I have a new acronym for you that COPQ or Cost of Poor Quality. Although it is not in a requirement standard it should be something that all quality managements systems address.

COPQ refers to all the costs associated with preventing, finding, and correcting defective work. It provides a metric to understand the cost of quality problems and drive improvement initiatives.

Tracking COPQ enables organizations to identify processes that need attention, set quality improvement goals, and allocate resources effectively.

Recently I was at a plant with excellent required systems in place, yet I found the following issue. A short heel web with pretty large wane making virtually all of the teeth ineffective. The teeth on the other side of the truss were also ineffective.



Let's take a bit of a detour. This short (< 12") web was cut from a 2x4 with wane of about 1 1/2". In the grading rules this amount of wane may be allowed if it does not exceed 1/4 the length of the board. However, we need to keep in mind that we are cutting the board into shorter lengths, and this should never have made it to the production table.

By choosing to continue to cut this board into these short webs it was ensured that this condition showed up on more than one truss.

If this was caught at the saw or even preferably before the saw, obviously the cost of this issue would be considerably less than at the point of the trusses being installed.

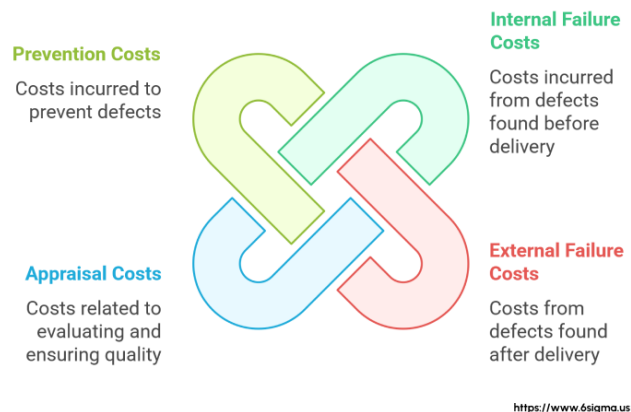
What is the Cost of Poor Quality (COPQ)

Cost of poor quality (COPQ) refers to the costs associated with producing defective products or services that fail to meet customer expectations. It highlights the extra costs incurred due to poor processes or systemic issues that allow defects, errors, and quality issues to occur.

COPQ quantifies the costs linked to preventing, finding, and correcting issues to ensure quality. Professionals with a six sigma certification are trained to analyze COPQ data, providing visibility into quality management costs and performance.



COPQ (Cost of Poor Quality)



Categories of costs: COPQ is broadly divided into four categories

- Prevention costs: Expenses incurred to prevent defects like training, quality planning, etc.
- Appraisal costs: Inspection, testing, and audits to identify issues.
- Internal failure costs: Expenses from defects found before delivery to the customer.
- External failure costs: Costs occurring after delivery due to returned products, complaints, etc.

Tracking COPQ highlights areas for improvement in processes and systems to reduce overall costs.

Why Measure Cost of Poor Quality?

Understanding the cost of poor quality is critical for plants looking to improve profitability, efficiency, and customer satisfaction. Measuring poor quality equips companies with the tools to measure and reduce COPQ, driving these improvements.

Tracking quality costs allows plants to identify problem areas, benchmark performance over time, and prioritize quality improvement initiatives.

Impact of COPQ on Profits

The cost of poor quality has a direct impact on an organization's bottom line. These costs drain profits and can account for a surprising percentage of operating expenses.

By measuring quality costs, companies can determine exactly how much money is being lost to rework, scrap, returns, and other quality issues.

Reducing these costs through process improvements and quality control boosts profit margins.

Identify Problem Areas with COPQ

Analyzing quality cost data allows organizations to pinpoint processes, products, or services responsible for the highest defects and failures.

For example, tracking repair and warranty expenses spotlights which areas incur the greatest quality costs. Companies can use this information to focus quality improvement projects on problem processes first.

Benchmark Performance

Tracking quality costs over time provides an ongoing benchmark to measure performance improvements.

As initiatives like having regular Q.C. meetings reduce errors, organizations can quantify savings in prevention, appraisal, and failure costs. Comparing the current cost of poor-quality metrics to past performance illustrates tangible financial gains from quality programs.

Calculating the Cost

In the previous example it would be a good exercise for the company to look at the cost of not picking this 2x4, discarding it after cutting, discarding it at the production table, repairing a truss after it is built, and finally the cost of it being installed and creating a warranty or safety issue.

The least expensive of all these costs is a little bit of training.

Training employees on quality awareness and building a culture of quality is essential. This includes leadership commitment, employee empowerment, and recognition programs.

A strong quality culture enables long-term gains over short-term workarounds.

All it takes is a little common sense.

Health and Safety Toolbox

Strategies to Boost PPE Compliance in a Truss Plant

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) plays a pivotal role in safeguarding against workplace injuries and illnesses. Yet, fostering consistent adherence to PPE usage among employees presents a significant challenge.

Knowledge and Training

Employees' effective use of PPE depends on understanding its purpose and the correct methods for putting it on and maintaining it. Comprehensive training on PPE applications and safety protocols is crucial to instill a deep understanding of the importance of PPE compliance. This training program must cover the risks of neglecting PPE usage, identifying potential workplace hazards, and preventive measures against accidents and injuries. By providing thorough education and training, employees are empowered to embrace PPE compliance actively, thereby strengthening the workplace safety culture.



Visual Cues

Consistent visible reminders serve as persistent cues, including posters and signage strategically located in mandatory PPE zones like entering the factory or entering the yard. These visual prompts explicitly emphasize the essential nature of PPE and provide clear directives on its proper use, effectively reinforcing employee PPE compliance.

Incentivizing Adherence

Implementing incentive software to understand employees' constant adherence to PPE rules is an effective motivator. Rewards may also consist of gift cards, bonuses, or a point-based system, fostering a feeling of significance around PPE compliance. This approach not only motivates employees but also cultivates healthy competition and nurtures a positive workplace culture that prioritizes safety.

Routine Evaluations

A strong approach includes accomplishing regular tests to ensure correct PPE usage and promptly address any non-compliance issues. These tests should be scheduled regularly, with results transparently shared with all employees. The assessment technique must scrutinize PPE usage, overall workplace safety, and the identification of potential hazards very well. Routine tests like fit tests assure non-stop oversight of worker safety, allowing management to make well-informed, data-driven selections to enhance PPE compliance.

Overcoming Common Barriers to Compliance: Strategies to Boost PPE Compliance in the Workplace

Adhering to PPE guidelines and consistently employing safety gear is essential. Nevertheless, like any safety initiative, boosting PPE compliance within the workplace presents challenges. Non-compliance often arises from discomfort, unavailability, and insufficient knowledge or training in effectively using PPE.

Discomfort

Discomfort is a key factor in employees' reluctance to comply with PPE usage. Ill-fitting safety gear like hard hats, safety goggles, and respirators can impede job performance, prompting workers to remove them. Offering various PPE options and seeking employee feedback on comfort can promote consistent usage.

Lack of Availability

A significant obstacle to PPE compliance is the need for more availability of safety gear. Employees might hesitate to use PPE if it is not readily accessible, or the supply is limited. Employers can overcome this challenge by ensuring constant accessibility of PPE, maintaining on-site storage, and regularly restocking inventory to encourage usage.

Inadequate Knowledge or Training

More training on PPE can contribute to non-compliance among employees who may also want help understanding the suitability of equipment for their responsibilities or how to use it correctly. Employers can address this challenge by offering complete training on PPE usage, covering its significance, types, and accurate fitting and usage. Hands-on training, including demonstrations and role-playing, ensures employees use PPE correctly.



PPE vending machine at Star Building Materials

Lack of Positive Reinforcement

Employees who feel undervalued or unsupported can be much less willing to stick to PPE requirements. Employers can counter this by providing positive reinforcement, including spotting and appreciating employees with the right protection practices, expressing gratitude for compliance, and incentivizing people who show off excessive PPE usage.

Leading by Example

Leadership sets the tone for the complete organization, which includes its protection tradition. **Leaders must be visible sporting PPE constantly and effectively to enhance its significance and encourage compliance.** When leaders need to remember to put on PPE, it sends a message to employees that protection isn't always a priority, which can have severe consequences.

Effective leaders actively promote protection by ensuring PPE is maintained well, and employees are educated on its proper use. Leaders who prioritize the safety of their personal conduct and employee expectancies assist in creating a tradition where protection is a shared value.

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 Presentation

Paul Chang, RSE Provincial Building Administrator Municipal Affairs Government of Alberta gave a presentation to WWTA members on September 19 regarding the implementation of STANDATA 23-BCI-015R1.

A video of his presentation is available on the WWTA website in the members area

<http://www.wwta.ab.ca/wwta-conversations.html>

He had previously given the presentation to Safety Codes officers and will be giving it to **BILD members on October 8**. If you are a member of BILD I would encourage you to attend this presentation so that you can get the builder's perspective. Please contact your local BILD representative to get invited to the presentation. It is important for builders to understand what changes and timelines are required on their part in order not to cause them additional costs and delays.

One thing that was interesting in the presentation was that although the STANDATA is written in a way that would require authenticated designs as a condition of permit Municipal Affairs indicated that they can not dictate when sealed designs will be required and that may still be left up to the Authority Having Jurisdiction.

Obviously from our point of view it would be beneficial not to have drawings authenticated until just prior to production. However, from the building department's view they may prefer to have them at the time of permit in order to ensure that all the details are worked out.

This may be a problem for builders that make changes after permit but prior to construction having to get documents authenticated more than once.

If I had to put a pin on a calendar when this would be effective I would say March 1, 2026, although some AHJ's may vary.

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Location:

The Westin Calgary Airport
671 Aero Drive NE
Calgary, AB T2E 7Y5

[wood-solutions-conference-calgary-2025](#)

Impacted by Trade Disputes

Just wanted to flag this new federal program with the WWTA members impacted by trade disruptions: [Regional Tariff Response Initiative \(RTRI\) in the Prairie provinces – Program information - Canada.ca](#). I believe it was already in-place out East and they are now expanding to AB/SK/MB.

It looks like a typical Federal application program, so good luck if you want to check it out.

Did You Know?

Several large data centers are under construction, particularly in Alberta, Canada, due to the boom in artificial intelligence (AI) and cloud computing. Notable projects include the eStructure CAL-3 data center, a \$750 million facility near Calgary, and a potential [\\$70 Billion Data Center](#) near Grande Prairie. Other developments include Meta's plans for significant data center expansion and construction projects by companies like Vantage and Applied Digital.