

by WTCA Staff

Find out what component manufacturers want from lumber suppliers and the results of a survey distributed to almost 1,000 CMs.

WTCA staff attended the 11th Annual MSR Lumber Producers Council Workshop on June 8 at the Marriott Grand Hotel in Point Clear, AL. Two presentations were of particular interest to the building components manufacturing industry. The first session featured an industry panel including Randy Graham (I-joist producer), Ken Kellums, (post frame builder and truss manufacturer), Dennis Fahey (wholesale distributor), Craig Steele (residential truss manufacturer), Don Scott, P.E. (truss plate engineer), Brad Douglas (AF&PA/AWC Regional Engineer) and Kerlin Drake (glulam manufacturer). The following are key points that emerged from the panel session:

- Labor is a critical concern for the entire building community and is affecting the componentization of framing.
- There is a need in the market for more grade stamps on a stick of lumber.
- Currently the premium is in shorter lengths, so manufacturers are buying longer lengths and cutting them into shorter lengths to meet their needs.
- Customers have a low tolerance for mold.



Craig Steele discusses the needs of the residential component manufacturing market.



Don Scott provides the truss plate supplier and MSR lumber user perspective.



Francois Robichaud of Forintek East Canada.

at a glance

- The 11th Annual MSR Lumber Producers Council held a workshop in early June.
- In one session, an industry panel discussed topics on labor, grade stamps, mold, the availability of 2x3 lumber and ANSI/TPI 1's new repetitive member factor.
- In another session, Francois Robichaud of Forintek East Canada, highlighted the results of a lumber usage survey distributed to component manufacturers.

- Lumber drying is still big issue particularly for those re-manufacturers that have gluing operations.
- There is a limited amount of 2x3 lumber, which is used heavily in I-joist applications.
- The ANSI/TPI 1 standard has just introduced the repetitive member factor for tension and compression and this could be an advantage for MSR lumber use.
- The key benefit of using MSR lumber continues to be its higher quality and lower cull rates.
- The MSR group could really help its customer base by doing more work in the following key areas: making recommendations on the best ways to wrap and ship lumber, improving the consistency of moisture content, providing more finger jointed 2x3 product, promoting MSR for non-truss uses like tall walls, and defining more specifically the value proposition for using MSR.

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CM Lumber Usage Stats Revealed...

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The second session, "What Component Manufacturers Want from Lumber Suppliers," was presented by Francois Robichaud of Forintek East Canada. Key points from this session include:

- A survey distributed to 937 component manufacturers yielded a response rate of just over 20 percent.
- 37 percent of respondents are manufacturing wall panels. About 30 percent of those not making wall panels are considering manufacturing wall panels in the future.
- 65 percent of the lumber used in wall panel manufacturing was SPF and 15 percent was SYP.
- 55 percent of respondents said they use visually graded lumber in roof truss production. Another 33 percent use MSR.
- 55 percent of component manufacturers report buying their lumber from wholesalers while 30 percent buy directly from a mill.
- Key component manufacturer concerns about lumber include:
 - Price volatility (trumps all other concerns)
 - Straightness and wane (close second)
 - Availability and shipping problems **SBC**

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