

reTHINK WOOD

WOOD: A NATURAL CHOICE

With growing pressure to reduce the carbon footprint of the built environment, building designers are increasingly being called upon to balance functionality and cost objectives with reduced environmental impact. Wood can help to achieve that balance.

Wood typically costs less—economically and environmentally—while delivering more in terms of its beauty, versatility and performance. It meets code requirements in a wide range of low- and mid-rise building types, and can be used as a low carbon alternative to steel, masonry and concrete in many applications.

Innovative new technologies and building systems have enabled longer wood spans, taller walls and higher buildings, and continue to expand the possibilities for wood use in construction.

Wood is more than a building material; it's a renewable and responsible choice.

ABOUT reTHINK WOOD

The reThink Wood initiative is a coalition of interests representing North America's wood products industry and forest landowners, public and private. We share a passion in wood and the forests they come from. Our goal is to educate each other and users about the use of wood in buildings.

Formed in 2011, the reThink Wood initiative aims to project a unified front and present a common message as it relates to wood performance, cost and sustainability. The initiative is not an organization; it has no staff. Associations, companies and research institutions develop and implement program objectives in coordination with key delivery agents such as the Softwood Lumber Board, Binational Softwood Lumber Council, Forestry Innovation Investment, U.S. WoodWorks, American Wood and the Canadian Wood Councils.



Photo credit Curtis Waltz, courtesy WoodWorks.

At the Herrington Recovery Center in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, patients need a comfortable and serene environment. So when architects designed the new 21,000-square-foot, 20-bed structure, wood was an obvious choice.



Photo credit Matt Todd, courtesy WoodWorks.

By designing the 160,000-square-foot Marselle condo complex in Seattle to meet Type III-A construction requirements, the architect and builder were able to build five and one-half floors with wood over a two-story concrete podium deck. Estimates suggest that the extra half-story mezzanine added about \$250,000 to construction costs but increased the value of the Marselle complex by \$1 million.

WOOD FACTS

– WOOD COSTS LESS.

Wood products sold in North America offer advantages in terms of material, construction and environmental costs. Wood can be locally sourced and is usually less expensive than alternative building materials. And wood building systems typically cost less to install than other mainstream structural materials. When considering environmental costs, over its lifetime, wood performs better than most building materials.

– WOOD IS VERSATILE.

Wood's design flexibility makes it suitable for a wide range of building types and applications, both structural and aesthetic. Its light weight and workability make it easy to apply to specific applications. Building with wood is fast and efficient, and can be undertaken year-round in almost any climate.

– WOOD MEETS CODE.

Today's building codes coupled with advances in wood science and building technology have expanded options for wood construction. Wood building materials and systems have a proven safety record for fire protection, while years of research and building-code development have established that wood-frame and hybrid structures can meet or exceed the most demanding earthquake design requirements. Wood also has inherent characteristics that make it ideal in areas prone to high winds.

– WOOD IS RENEWABLE.

Unlike other products that deplete the earth's resources, wood is the only major building material that grows naturally and is renewable. Responsible forest management helps to ensure that forests are legally harvested and managed to meet society's long-term demand for forest products.

– USING WOOD HELPS REDUCE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.

Wood products are better for the environment than other commonly used building materials. They need less energy across their life cycle, are responsible for less air and water pollution, and have a lighter carbon footprint.

INFORMATION

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Photo credit Dennis Ivy, courtesy WoodWorks.

The open trusses with exposed connection plates, exposed 2x10s and plywood decking give this high school arena in El Dorado, Arkansas a spacious, dramatic feel and cost less than steel.



Photo credit APA—The Engineered Wood Association, courtesy WoodWorks.

Wood's design versatility complemented the traditional styling of Brook Hill Elementary in Bullard, Texas. The 31,000-square-foot structure was built at a cost of \$127 per square foot in 2006.



Photo credit Arch Wood Protection, courtesy WoodWorks.

In a 2002 earthquake worthiness assessment of school buildings, the California Department of Government Services exempted wood-frame schools built prior to 1933 on the basis that "wood-frame buildings are known to perform well in earthquakes."