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In This Issue

Customer/Reader Response

Industry News

War On Drugs /Forest

Rain Forest Rescue

February Specials!



Why Can't You Send Me A Current Pricelist?

In responding to our questionnaire, many clients continue to ask why we don't have a published pricelist. For several years Bear Creek Lumber did publish a pricelist and here's why we no longer do:

1) **Too many items to list.** Bear Creek carries over 1,800 different types of wood products on a per line basis.

2) **Prices change.** Lumber is a free market commodity and prices reflect supply and demand. We do, once a month, publish prices on selected products and hold those prices while the supply of those products lasts. Those are also published as delivered prices within the continental USA, and are for a minimum of one thousand board feet.

3) **Delivery expense and quantity factor into every quote.** We no longer have a minimum order size and may send as little as one board to a customer. We treat every customer individually, working with their special needs. Some can be filled directly from inventory, some are custom milled, and some are a combination. Some require special freight arrangements, and some are as easy as a UPS package. So, publishing prices becomes problematic given the many factors involved.

4) **Product turnover.** Bear Creek Lumber keeps about one million board feet of product on stock for customers. However, we are a specialty company, and many people come to us for the unusual. We may have a product only for a short time because it was bulk ordered to fill an order. We put it on sale to move the remainder. We wouldn't necessarily keep it in stock. Some items, like V2E tongue and groove sell all the time, and are in stock consistently, but if we only published a list with those readily available items, it limits the vision of how many products we really do sell.

5) **Cutting down on confusion.** To sum up, Bear Creek handles more items than most people can imagine. Prices change, and seeing a published pricelist that's too long and quickly out of date makes many people confused and uncertain. Bear Creek Lumber keeps it simple. You tell us what your needs are and we will give you a price delivered to your door. You can ask for options / multiple quotes for the same job so you can see how different products compare. Prices quoted are good for ten days.

It's not Home Depot shopping, but most people get the information they need about the products they are looking for and can't find elsewhere. Good quality, good service. That's what we do and it seems to work!

CVG Hemlock Now Available!

In addition to Douglas fir CVG (clear vertical grain), we also now carry Hemlock in that grade. Call (800) 597-7191 for more information



Many Responses To Our Annual Questionnaire

Once again many readers have responded to our December questionnaire, with pictures, stories and quotes. We will be publishing them throughout the year along with general comments and letters that come in. Out of 350 respondents, four said they had problems with their orders from Bear Creek Lumber. Of those four, two were problems from this past year and the others were from 1997 and 1998. We want you to know that Bear Creek Lumber would rather report that the number was 0 for 350 but we are working with what we learned from those few problems, and continuing to improve. I want to thank everyone who returned their forms. Some of the first comments are listed on the next page. Your input warms my heart. Thanks for all the compliments! Your suggestions will keep the creative juices going.

Thanks to all who took the time to respond and to our customers for your business. We look forward to a productive and exciting building season.



Customer/Reader Response

To: Ela

Re: Your newsletter--18 Dec 00
Thanks for your contributions to better trade policies and understanding what is relevant--
All the best of the Season--
Bruno

Re: Deck Basics

I had always heard that you lay deck boards with the rings down ("A" instead of "V") to retard cupping. In this month's "Timberline" you said that moisture causes wood to "cup towards the bark". If I read this correctly you are saying that the cupping occurs exactly the opposite of what I had always thought. Any comments?

Tom Frink

Ed - Even my research mentioned it was a matter of opinion within the industry. Read on...

About the bark side thing....

Good Morning Ela.

Just a short note on the continuing story/conflict of the bark side up or down thing. We have a bunch of jobs done this way. It doesn't matter!!!!. I think its the way the board looks that started all this, I mean it just seems like the cup in the grain should be down so it doesn't fill up like a bowl. I hear this from time to time from my customers, and of course, there is always the picture books that come out every year (building your own deck in a weekend) that repeat the rumor, but really down the road the wood reacts to moisture the same, no different if the bark is up or down. With wood being how it is, most of the folks I do work for want the good side up, if you have to make a choice. Ventilation is a good idea. I have been putting trimmed vents (like soffit vents in overhang) in the skirting as an extra, very good for decks low to the ground. As far as protecting all four sides with sealer (I have been using SuperDeck for years, its the best I have found, its 1800 is better than anything with Tompsen on the label), I really can't see any advantage. After watching a few I have out over the years, it seems like that would help but I can't tell any difference. One good idea that does work is a nail pattern with two on the ends, and one (not two) in the upside of the next joist, and one in the down side of the next joist. This really cuts down on the splits, it gives the wood room to move; the fewer fasteners, the better.

Many thank you's for the Timberline, it's great. I used to build houses in Eugene, OR and I really miss the Northwest, Timberline is like a letter from home. All the best to you all,
John Hyatt / DeckMasters
OKC.OK.



Picture of the Month:
from William Haines,

"The lumber I received was excellent and has held up through 100 inches of rain a year, for 10 years, with little upkeep!" - Bill and Marie Haines

What I Like About Bear Creek Lumber

• Customer information given freely--
Mark Simendinger

• I like your straight forward/direct selling to the trades (including current prices) You are right on track!- Gordon Tadewaldt

• Personal touch to satisfy customer needs- Charles Schmitt

• Its nice to know quality exists in a field of mediocrity-Rich Stieb,

• I like everything about Bear Creek Lumber. I recommend you all the time and I know my fellow builders orders from you. We often share materials. My experiences with BCL have been excellent. Materials and service, as well as cost, have been super-Arnold Engster

• I love the feeling I get when I read your newsletter, a warm fuzzy-Jack Parks

• Honesty. You tell, it like it is and do not misrepresent your products, I enjoy doing business with you-Bill Mante

• I like the potential to show my customers quality wood products-Joe Grenus



Industry News

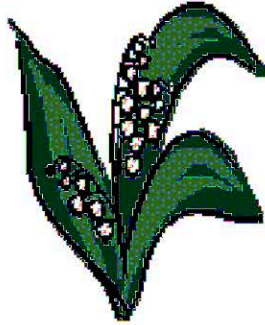
Housing construction rose a solid 2.2 percent in November, the biggest jump in nine months, as builders broke ground on more new apartments and condos, but fewer single-family homes.

The Commerce Department reported that builders began work on all new homes at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.56 million last month, a 2.2 percent increase from October. Starts of single-family homes slipped by 0.4 percent in November to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.22 million, while starts of apartments, condos, and other multifamily housing projects increased by a strong 12.9 percent to a rate of 342,000.

Many economists were expecting only a small rise in all housing starts in November. The 2.2 percent increase in housing starts, fueled entirely by the West, marked the biggest increase since a 4.5 percent rise in February. The 1.56 million level was the highest since 1.57 million in June. In October, housing construction fell by 0.6 percent, according to revised figures, weaker than the government previously reported.

Cheaper mortgage rates helped builders during the fall. The average interest rate on a 30-year fixed rate mortgage was 7.75 percent in November, down from 7.79 percent in October but up a tad from 7.74 percent in November 1999. Despite cheaper mortgage rates, the National Association of Home Builders, in a survey released Tuesday, said that builders in December are less confident about the market for new homes. Builders said they are worried that the recent decline in consumer confidence, stock market volatility and rising energy costs will dampen sales.

Economists believe housing starts and home sales will slow this year but still remain at healthy levels. By region, all parts of the country reported declines in housing starts except for the West, where they rose. In the Northeast, new housing construction fell by 10.9 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 139,000 in November. In the South, they declined by 5.2 percent to a rate of 680,000 and in the Midwest they fell by 1.9 percent to a rate of 314,000. But in the West, housing starts rose 28.1 percent to a rate of 429,000. New building permits, a sign of future construction activity, rose by 2.6 percent in November to a rate of 1.59 million, following a 1.8 percent rise the month before.



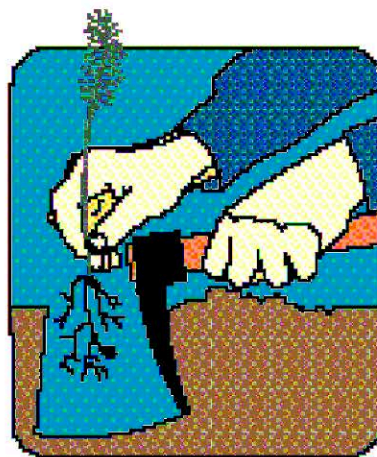
War On Drugs Is Also A War on the Forests of Colombia

A war being fought between the leftist guerrillas and the far right paramilitary of Colombia, combined with the illegal drug trade is affecting 3,600 square miles of fragile Amazon woodlands. Military actions and sabotage have led to the destruction of crude oil pipelines and deforestation on a scale that “could turn half the country’s jungles into pasture in 17 years” according to the country’s Environment ministry.

Colombia is considered one of the world’s foremost environmental gems, with water and biodiversity resources that are unique to the wooded Amazon region. The country has been torn by four decades of war with the most recent actions being targeted at the oil industry. In addition, the lucrative cocaine industry is responsible for contamination of water by 200,000 tons of the 28 types of chemicals used in the drug’s manufacture. Colombia is considered the world’s top producer of cocaine, with a output of 90% of the product. Crude oil has contaminated 1,625 miles of river, with slicks up to 112 miles long. Deforestation is also caused by farmers growing coca and marijuana. The overall effect has been described as an ecological disaster of “unsuspected proportions”.

Rain Forest Coffee Helps The Forests of Mexico

Coffee beans in a natural state grow as understory trees in tropical climates. There are a variety of types of coffees, some which are shade loving, and some which demand open sunlight. Those most commercial viable are the sunlovers, and these have the most devastating effect on rain forest ecology. The goal of the Arbor day organization is to encourage a more sustainable economy in the region. In an effort to encourage growers to use the more traditional and ecological sound coffees, the National Arbor Day Foundation is sponsoring RAIN FOREST RESCUE COFFEE. The organization is selling packages of this exceptionally flavorful coffee in either whole bean or ground, decaffeinated or regular for \$5.00 each. If you like the coffee, they will continue to send you a \$8.95 package every month



“The cultivation of trees is the cultivation of the good, the beautiful, and the ennobling in man.”

J. Sterling Morton

until you ask to cancel. A free coffee mug will also come with your first 10-ounce pack.

The Foundation is targeting the El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve, an area which harbors 30 native mammals from jaguar and spider monkey to ocelot and white tailed deer, with over 150 species of birds, including migratory songbirds such as Baltimore orioles and cedar waxwings. The Foundation hopes to be able to help protect Monarch butterfly habitat as well.

The area is currently being undermined by corruption and illegal logging which is exasperated by poverty and neglect. If you are interested in this coffee program, contact the Foundation at 211 N. 12th St., Lincoln NE 68410 or visit their website at arborday.org (email info@arborday.org) or call (402) 474-5655. Have a credit card available to order the coffee!