



# The Sustainable Benefits of Wood



A worldwide trend toward environmentally friendly building is gaining popularity each year as consumers warm to the idea of green homes. Although there is a vast amount of green building material to choose from, no other commodity can compete with the sustainable benefits of wood. With wood, there are opportunities to reduce the immense environmental impact of building and operating homes through construction and building design. However, in order to be considered sustainable, wood must be certified and acquired through forestry and harvesting practices that ensure the long-term health and diversity of forests.

Sustainable forestry practices, or certification systems, are the management of forest resources to meet the needs of today without compromising the needs of future generations. There are more than 50 different forest certification systems in the world today that represent nearly 700 million acres of forestland. Additionally, there are 15,000 companies involved in producing and marketing certified wood products.

According to Hawaii

Lumber Products Association's (HLP) new president, Jeff Browning of Sause Bros., the association's purpose is to "promote the use of forest products in Hawaii through an informational and educational campaign designed around the benefits of utilizing not only cost-effective but also 'green' and sustainable resources during construction."

Natural wood uses less energy and produces less air and water pollution than other major manufactured building materials.

"Wood is a material that can be used instantly and only needs a few preparatory treatments," said Browning. "It's manufactured in the forest and only needs to be shaped and sawed into the correct sizes." Also, with continuous technological advancements, engineered wood systems can maximize the use of the material to reduce the use of resources.

Over the past decade, a trend toward environmentally and climate-

friendly building is becoming apparent in the construction industry worldwide and will continue to grow in the future. With sustainable qualities from production through construction, wood is undoubtedly leading the way in this green trend.

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