



Canadian Wood Council Launches Updated Carbon Calculator

Includes New Options for Mass Timber Buildings

OTTAWA, Tuesday, November 15th, 2016 – The Canadian Wood Council reinforced its ongoing commitment to sustainable development with the updated launch of the Carbon Calculator tool. With growing pressure to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) in the built environment, designers are increasingly being called upon to balance function and cost objectives with reduced environmental impacts. As the only major building material that is renewable and stores carbon over its lifetime, wood building products and construction systems play a vital role in contributing to climate change mitigation efforts.

The Carbon Calculator, developed in partnership with US WoodWorks, can be accessed for free online at www.cwc.ca/carboncalculator. How does the tool work? A user inputs wood volumes and the carbon calculator estimates how much time it would take for Canadian and U.S. forests to grow that volume of wood along with the associated carbon benefits. Carbon benefits refer to the amount of carbon stored in the wood building materials and the amount of GHGs avoided by choosing wood instead of another more emissions intensive building material. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator is employed to translate the carbon benefits into more tangible results, such as, number of cars off the road and annual home energy use.

Updates to the Carbon Calculator include:

- Pictures and descriptions provided as pop-ups for wood products
- Revised forest growth rates
- Nomenclature of construction types to clarify the selection of appropriate displacement factors
- New materials added: Laminated Strand Lumber (LSL), Oriented Strand Lumber (OSL), Parallel Strand Lumber (PSL), and Nail Laminated Timber (NLT)
- Engineered wood products can now be selected for use in mass timber, light-frame/post and beam or combination structural systems
- The cross laminated timber (CLT) displacement factor of 0.71 is now used for all mass timber products
- Updated oven-dry densities to reflect revisions to design standards
- Calculations aligned with USEPA GHG Equivalency Calculator
- Default unit of measurement for dimension lumber and I-joist changed to linear feet

Numerous life cycle assessment studies worldwide have shown that wood products yield clear environmental advantages over other building materials. The Carbon Calculator aims to assist building and construction sector stakeholders, such as designers and owners, by providing quantitative information about the carbon benefits of choosing wood solutions.

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