



Building Standards and Codes

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TECHNICAL BULLETIN

Code Effective Date: May 12, 2020¹

Source Document: 19 NYCRR Part 1220 – RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION
19 NYCRR Part 1221 – BUILDING CONSTRUCTION²

Topic: Grade Stamping of Sawn Lumber Used for Load-Supporting Purposes

This document is intended to provide guidance on the Uniform Code requirements for grade stamping of sawn lumber used for load-supporting purposes and the DOC PS 20 standard referenced in the 2020 Residential Code of New York State (2020 RCNYS) and the 2020 Building Code of New York State (2020 BCNYS).

According to Sections R502.1.1 and R602.1.1 of the 2020 RCNYS: *“sawn lumber shall be identified by a grade mark of an accredited lumber grading or inspection agency and have design values certified by an accreditation body that complies with DOC PS 20.”* As an alternative to a grade mark, *“a certification of inspection issued by a lumber grading or inspection agency meeting the requirements of this section shall be accepted.”*

Sections R502.1.1 and R602.1.1 also provide that, subject to the approval of the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ), *“dimension lumber which is neither identified by a grade mark nor issued a certificate of inspection by a lumber grading or inspection agency may be used for load-bearing purposes”* where:

1. The lumber is sold by the producing mill directly to the consumer or the consumer’s builder, AND
2. The producing mill certifies in writing *“that the quality and safe working stresses of such lumber are equal to or exceed No. 2 grade of the species in accordance with the conditions set forth in DOC PS 20. Such certification shall be filed as part of the building permit application.”*

Section 2303.1.1 of the 2020 BCNYS contains similar language to that of the 2020 RCNYS but adds a third condition to the use of such lumber. The third condition indicates that the use shall be in accordance with Section 503 of the 2020 BCNYS and limited to:

- a. *Buildings of residential Group R occupancy not exceeding three stories in height.*
- b. *Buildings of assembly Group A, business Group B, educational Group E, factory industrial Group F, high-hazard Group H, institutional Group I, mercantile Group M, storage Group S, and utility miscellaneous Group U occupancies not exceeding 10,000 square feet (929 m²) of cumulative floor area or 35 feet (10 668 mm) in height.*

¹ The “Code Effective Date” for this Technical Bulletin is May 12, 2020, which is the effective date of the 2020 update of the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code (the Uniform Code).

² The Uniform Code is contained in Title 19 of the Official Compilation of Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York (19 NYCRR) Parts 1220 through 1227 and the publications incorporated by reference into those Parts, including, but not limited to the 2020 NYS specific code books which are based on the 2018 International Code Council books.

The 2020 RCNYS and the 2020 BCNYS reference the American Softwood Lumber Standard document DOC PS 20-05. As stated on the American Lumber Standards Committee website:

One of the main functions of the ALSC is to maintain the American Softwood Lumber Standard (Voluntary Product Standard PS 20). The ALSC serves as the standing committee for this document. It is developed in accordance with the Procedures for the Development of Voluntary Product Standards of the U.S. Department of Commerce. Developed through a consensus process, PS 20 establishes sizes, green/dry relationships, methods of assigning design values, industry nomenclature, inspection provisions, re-inspection provisions, and grademarking requirements. PS 20 provides the basis for policies and procedures developed by the ALSC and enforced through the Board of Review. The American Lumber Standard system is the result of this process.

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