

Wood Products Usage in Residential Repair and Remodeling in the United States, 2014

Repair and remodeling of residential units in the existing housing stock is an important market for wood products. Included are many and varied repair and remodeling activities and projects, some requiring substantial amounts of wood products, some not. Historically, one-fourth of all lumber and structural panels, one-sixth of all nonstructural panels, and lesser amounts of engineered wood products consumed in the United States have been used for residential repair and remodeling.

Background

The residential repair and remodeling market has become much more important in recent years as the Nation's housing stock has grown larger, its average age has increased, homeowner incomes have risen, and economic challenges have driven some homeowners to delay trading up and staying in their current homes longer than expected. Also, as the United States has moved out of the recent economic recession, questions have arisen as to how the repair and remodeling markets fared. Did changes in repair and remodeling activity follow closely the changes in new construction activity? Was the demand for additional new housing offset by increased activity in repair and remodeling? Did the large number of foreclosures cause a jump in repair and remodeling needed to re-sell these houses? How did the drop in house prices change the perspective of homeowners concerning the return on investment from upgrading the attributes of the home and the impact on construction material usage? Was a decline in repair and remodeling expected as we moved out of the recession? These and other questions need to be addressed to better understand and respond to the needs of this important wood products market.



Repair and remodeling of an existing residential home.

Objective

The objective of this project is to develop reliable estimates of types and amounts of wood products used to maintain and improve residential structures in the United States in 2014, to evaluate changes since 2006 (the year of the most recent wood residential repair and remodeling study) in both types and quantities of wood products used and ways in which wood products were used, and to determine economic drivers that influence repair and remodeling activity in the United States.

Approach

The Home Innovation Research Labs (Home Innovation) (formerly NAHB Research Center) is a recognized authority in the U.S housing market, for both new construction and repair and remodeling. They

annually conduct a survey of more than 50,000 U.S. households to quantify and track many aspects of residential repair and remodeling activity. This Consumer Practices Survey includes questions specific to the use of wood products and other building materials. Questions are designed to provide comparability with similar data developed by Home Innovation in previous Wood Products Council/Forest Service studies. Data will be collected for both owner- and renter-occupied structures. Data analysis will be performed by Home Innovation using its Consumer Practices Report methodology. A profile of characteristics known to strongly influence repair and remodeling activity will be developed and compared to characteristics of the U.S. population as a whole. Weights will be developed based on differences between the two profiles. Data will then be weighted to compensate for under- or over-representation in the sample. Final data will be stratified by four Census regions and occupancy type.

Expected Outcomes

This research will result in a publicly available research report and database (Microsoft Excel) evaluating the use of wood products for residential repair and remodeling in the United States. This study will provide new information on current levels of wood products consumption for residential repair and remodeling needed by (1) the Forest Service to formulate programs and policies; (2) the forest products and

other industries to develop new products, marketing strategies, and manufacturing facilities; (3) state and local governments to promote economic development; and (4) others interested in the well-being of the Nation's forests.

Timeline

Data extraction from the Consumer Practices Survey is expected by July 2015. Data analysis should be completed by September 2015, with tabulations drafted by December 2015. A draft report will be completed by January 2016, with final publication expected by March 2016.

Cooperators

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