

NEWS RELEASE

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It Pays to Know Your OSB Grade Stamp

To be sure you are getting the proper panel for the job, ensure you refer to the grade stamp on the panel. The stamp contains important information including specifications and code requirements that will assist you in selecting the right panel.

Certification Agency

The top of the stamp will bear the name of the agency certifying panels to performance standards recognized by all major North American building codes—the National Building Code (BOCA), the One and Two Family Dwelling Code (CABO), the Standard Building Code (SBCCI), the Uniform Building Code (ICBO), the International Building Code (ICC) and the National Building Code of Canada (NRCC). These codes recognize OSB for various applications, including single layer floors, roof sheathing, siding, soffits, subfloors, underlayment and wall sheathing. Panels are certified by three nationally accredited agencies: TECO, APA and PSI.

Standards

Below the name of the certification agency will be the name of the standard, for example PS 2. OSB panels are manufactured to meet performance criteria set by the U.S. Department of Commerce's PS 2 Performance Standard for Wood-Based Structural-Use Panels. In Canada, panels must comply with the Canadian Standards Association's CSA O325 Construction Sheathing or CSA O437 OSB and Waferboard. All three standards set maximum values for deflection under load, dimensional stability, and minimum values for strength, stiffness and lateral nail loads.

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It Pays to Know Your OSB Stamp—Page 2

Structural Grades and Dimensions

One of three grades - Sheathing, Structural 1 Sheathing, and Single Floor - will be stamped. Sheathing is for use in construction applications, such as covering material for roofs, subfloors and walls. Structural 1 Sheathing is a sheathing panel that meets additional requirements for cross-panel strength and stiffness. Single Floor is for use as a combination subfloor and underlayment. Next to the grade will be numbers for panel thickness and span rating, indicating allowance for roof and floor spacing respectively.

Bond Durability Classification

One of two exposure categories – Exterior or Exposure 1 - determines where panels can be used. Exterior panels, fully waterproof, are designed for permanent exposure to the weather. Most OSB panels are classified as Exposure 1, suitable for panels that are not permanently exposed to the weather that must resist effects of high humidity and moisture during construction delays.

To order OSB panels, the specifier or builder should designate thickness, trademark grade, span rating, bond durability classification, dimensions, "square edge" or "tongue-and-groove" as desired for thicker panels and number of pieces. One glance at the certification stamp will confirm key requirements.

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For additional information about OSB, contact the Structural Board Association at (416) 730-9090, fax (416) 730-9013 or e-mail info@osbguide.com. The SBA Web site (www.osbguide.com) is another excellent resource.

