

NH Native Lumber Law: Questions & Answers

New Hampshire RSA 434:59-61, relative to the “Grading and Certification or Stamping of Native Lumber” was passed by the 1994 session of the General Court. Its purpose is to allow sawmills that are registered with the NH Division of Forests and Lands to mill certify their lumber, if required by local code enforcement officials, for local end use applications within New Hampshire. Rules were adopted by the Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food to implement the legislative directive.

Who is Eligible to issue Native lumber certificates?

Only those New Hampshire sawmills who are registered with the NH Division of Forests and Lands and have completed training provided by the UNH Cooperative Extension and have been permitted by the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food.

What kind of lumber can the certificate be issued for?

The law only provides for the certificates to be used for softwood lumber that is equal to or better than the No. 2 grade (American Softwood Lumber Standard), or as amended, provided that lumber for use in load bearing wall members shall be of stud grade minimum. The lumber may be green or dry and of any softwood species, but this information must be provided on the certificate.

How are the Certificates to be handled?

They are issued by the permitted mill to the purchaser with each load of native lumber if and when the municipality in which the lumber is to be used requires grade stamped lumber. The certificates are to be filed with the building permit application for a specific end use.

What sawmills have been permitted to issue native lumber certificates?

The New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food has published a list of the mills and the graders at those mills who may issue the certificates. The grading permit is effective for five years and may be renewed upon completion of repeat competency training.

May mills stamp native lumber in addition to providing a certificate?

Yes, lumber may be stamped individually if the mill wishes to do so, however, a certificate must also accompany the lumber shipment, as it is intended for a particular purchaser for use in a specific structure in a given town.

For further information about the Native Lumber Certification Program please contact the NH Dept. of Agriculture, Markets & Food, 25 Capitol St., PO Box 2042, Concord, NH 03302-2042. Phone: (603) 271-2753.

For information about receiving training in grading standards contact Sarah Smith, UNH Cooperative Extension Forest Products Utilization Specialist, Phone: (603) 862-2647.