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Sidewall Success

Bear Creek Lumber's #1 Sidewall Shingles were a siding success for Laurie and John Strong's home in Fort Collins, CO



pictures by Laurie and John Strong



Siding With Bear Creek

One of the reasons so many customers enjoy working with Bear Creek Lumber is our large selection of natural wood sidings. From sidewall shingles (pictured here) to standard bevel clapboard siding to custom tongue and groove, Bear Creek Lumber has a wood siding product for every type of construction.

Bear Creek Lumber can manufacture sidings to match Victorian patterns, craftsman or bungalow buildings, 1970's and 80's renovations or any siding that is no longer in stores. Generally, we have a set-up charge for custom milling, and we ask that the order is for at least 300 square feet.

Typically sidings are made of Western red cedar or redwood although we do provide sidings made of Douglas fir, Port Orford cedar, Alaskan yellow cedar, or pine. Some sidings are pre-cut into standard patterns such as dolly varden, shiplap, channel rustic, clapboard, V2E tongue and groove as well as boards for boards and batt siding. We also have rabbetted bevel siding, and wavy edge bevel available. Detailed profiles are available upon request.

For historical renovations, Bear Creek Lumber can provide a clear vertical grain grade in most species, when it is called for. We can also have knives manufactured for cutting obscure patterns. Matching trim, soffit, or timbers of like species are also available.

Pre-priming, pre-staining and other pre-finishing services can be provided for orders purchased directly from Bear Creek Lumber. We do not offer that service for materials acquired or cut elsewhere.

Call (800) 597-7191 for more information.

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Boatbuilding Woods from Bear Creek Lumber

How the Wood Species Compare

Alaska Yellow Cedar

32 lbs per cubic foot/ 2.67 lbs per board foot

Grows along the Pacific Coast from Alaska to Oregon. Heartwood is bright yellow, while thin layer of sapwood is white. Wood has a fine uniform texture with low shrinkage, and is moderately strong. Heartwood is high in decay resistance, and works well, finishes well.

Port Orford Cedar

30 lbs per cubic foot/ 2.5 lbs per board foot

Grown in limited areas of Northern California, and Southern Oregon, it is the preferred species of boat building cedars. Although only moderately strong, it is the strongest and heaviest after finishing. The heartwood is light yellow, to pale brown with a distinctly spicy odor. The wood is fine and uniform in texture, moderately hard, shrinks moderately, seasons well and is very resistant to rot.

Western Red Cedar

23 lbs per cubic foot/ 1.92 per board foot

Grown in the Pacific Northwest, the wood has narrow white sapwood and reddish brown heartwood. It is rather soft and weak, shrinks very little, and the heartwood has good resistance to decay. The grain is uniform and straight, although somewhat coarse and brittle. While often used for conventional planking, it is not highly recommended for this use. However, for veneers for use in cold molded hull planking, the material is excellent.

Douglas Fir

34 lbs. per cubic foot/ 2.83 lbs. per board foot

This boat building lumber comes from the coastal areas of the Pacific Northwest. It is not a true fir. The unseasoned green lumber is common and should be avoided. The heartwood tends to be pinkish to yellow in color, with mature growths being straight, uniform and dense grained. Younger trees have more knots. The wood is strong, moderately hard, moderately decay resistant in the heartwood. It splits easily, does not bend or steam bend readily, and is fairly easy to work. Douglas fir is sometimes used for making spars in place of Sitka Spruce, and in these applications, the wood should be free of defects, well seasoned and of vertical grain strength.

Redwood

28 lbs per cubic foot/ 2.33 per board foot

Grown along the Northern California coast, the heartwood is light cherry to dark mahogany in color, while sapwood is nearly white or pale yellow. The heartwood is extremely decay resistant, but the sapwood is not. The wood is straight grained and free of defects, especially if heartwood. It shrinks and swells little, is easy to work, tends to be brittle, and does not hold fastenings well. The strength is moderate, it does not bend well, and has little use as a plywood in boat building.

Sitka Spruce

28 lbs., per cubic foot/ 2.33 per board foot

Grows along the Pacific coast from Alaska to California. Because the tree grows tall and the material is exceptionally strong for its weight, it is the ideal spar building lumber, even though rot resistance is low. The wood shrinks little and is moderately strong in bending. The heartwood is light pinkish brown, and the sapwood is creamy white. Where light-weight and strength are important, it is ideal.

information courtesy of Glen-L Marine Designs (www.glen-l.com)

Customer Email File

James,

My lumber arrived today and I am very pleased with it. I'm just as pleased with the pleasant treatment I've had from everyone involved in the transaction. I want you to know that Arnold from Arrow Trucking was very helpful and accommodating.

Many Thanks,

Dave Rojek

Saratoga Springs NY



Maintenance-Free Decks

An Urban Legend

Most people make the choice of decking based on the desire to have a deck that is "maintenance-free". Products sold as such are being disingenuous. There is no such thing as a maintenance-free deck. Even the spokesman for Trex Deck admits, "a deck is not a self-cleaning oven. We call them 'low-maintenance' because of cleaning issues."

Virtually all decks need cleaning yearly. Basic housekeeping means keeping dirt and grime from getting too ground into your deck by removing leaf and other organic buildup, and washing with a cleaning solution. Pressure washing is not recommended unless the homeowner is extremely careful. Professional cleaning services who use pressure washers do so with experience in how not to damage deck surfaces.

For wood decks, a wood repellent coating, and UV protectant should be reapplied every year. Exotic hardwoods, such as ipe and teak, require extra prep. The surface should be prepared with oxalic acid, a pine bristle broom, and a garden hose to clean off the deck, which will bring back the original color. Then re-apply the finishing product for the best results. Do not leave any residues on your wood decking product!

Industry News

Existing-home sales roared to another record in June, with prices posting the biggest yearly increase since 1980, the National Association of Realtors said Monday.

In a report that offered few signs the hot housing market is slowing, the Realtors said sales of existing single-family homes, condos and town houses, fueled by low mortgage rates and a good economy, rose 2.7% in June to a seasonally adjusted 7.33 million, up from 7.14 million in May. Sales were 4.4% above year-ago levels.

Construction of new homes and apartments showed no change in June following a decline the month before, a possible sign that the red-hot housing market is starting to cool off.

The Commerce Department reported that builders broke ground on 2 million new homes, and apartments, in June at a seasonally adjusted annual rate, exactly the same pace as in May.

The unchanged performance in June was far below the 1.1 percent increase that private economists had been expecting and analysts noted that the performance in May was revised down to show a decline of 1.1 percent instead of the small increase that had been previously reported.

Builders, showing some restraint, trimmed spending on construction projects around the country in June, marking the fourth consecutive monthly cutback.

The latest snapshot of construction activity released by the Commerce Department in August showed that builders have been paring spending each month after the value of all construction projects surged to an all-time high of \$1.13 trillion, on an annualized basis, in February.

Spending on all construction projects dipped by 0.3 percent in June from the previous month. Even with the decline, though, the value of all projects was still at a healthy level of \$1.1 trillion, at a seasonally adjusted annualized rate.



Investors Flip/ Cities Win

Flipping homes (the practice of buying houses and fixing them up only to put them up for sale again) has a flip side. Urban blight, which has made many neighborhoods unlivable, has been eased during this time of cheap credit and hot real estate values. The city of Baltimore's housing department had kept five crews busy, as recently as last year, boarding up abandoned homes to shut out prostitutes and drug dealers. Many of those neighborhoods are now seeing rebirth as investors buy up, and renovate these properties during the real estate boom. Also benefitting are parts of the cities of Oakland California, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia.

Philadelphia is offering incentives to people who build new houses or renovate older ones. Oakland used to advertise for buyers for its worse buildings, but in this market, the city has more buyers than buildings. In Baltimore, developers are buying up whole city blocks to turn into upscale housing centers with shopping and dining.

Changing around such neighborhoods is not an overnight venture. Some renovators have found the houses they have upgraded have been vandalized during the process, with new fixtures torn out and graffiti spray-painted on walls. But overall, the cost of such housing is so low that the investors are not deterred. The worry that some of the new buyers might turn into slum landlords has also abated. Most of these buyers are middle-class investors whose main interest is reselling, so they are very conscious of upgrading the properties and their neighborhoods. The results are making everyone, tenants, city officials, and the neighbors, happy.

Selling Homes

Keep Women In Mind

There is no secret that men and women have different sensibilities. However it is women, whether as singles or as part of a married couple, that tend to make the house buying decision. Realtors say when showing a house, a women will look at the colors, decor, arrangement of rooms and what remodel they will take on first. Men tend towards looking at the overall space, including yard, garage and family room. They will also put the most value into the room where the television will go. Women will check out the utility and style of a house, as well as the neighborhood its in.

Regardless, it is the kitchen that make or break most sales decisions.

No one in this day and age wants to be stranded alone in the kitchen. Floor plans that allow for open access to other rooms are the best sellers. Regardless of who wears the apron in the family, kitchens must work for the main cook. Plenty of space for creativity, and good lighting are important to most people.



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