

Coalition for Advanced Wood Structures

a university, industry, government partnership

*Mississippi State
University*

Iowa State University

University of Idaho

*APA – The Engineered
Wood Association*

NAHB Research Center

*USDA Forest Service,
Forest Products
Laboratory*



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Wood has been used as a structural material for thousands of years. Despite the development of other materials, wood continues as a primary structural material and is widely used because of its excellent performance characteristics and affordability. As we move into the future, research is needed to develop more efficient and durable structures that are adaptable to the changing forest resource typified by plantation-grown trees and small-diameter secondary species.

In recognition of this need, academic and industry leaders together with the USDA Forest Service, Forest Products Laboratory, formed the Coalition for Advanced Wood Structures (CAWS). CAWS brings together representatives from universities, industry and government to work together in a cooperative, complementary manner to foster sustainable, efficient use of our forest resources while improving the economy and performance of wood structures. The scope of activities includes all types of wood structures, focusing in three areas:

Housing including single- and multi-family units using conventional in-place stick built, panelized, modular or manufactured construction.

Non-Residential Building Structures focusing on low-rise structures such as schools, retail stores, manufacturing/warehouses and office buildings.

Transportation Structures including vehicle, railroad and pedestrian bridges, noise barriers and marine facilities.

The Coalition effectively functions as an extension of the USDA Forest Service, Forest Products Laboratory (FPL), Madison, Wisconsin, and cooperatively participates in research and technology transfer to meet National and regional needs. Coalition research maximizes the unique capabilities of the respective members to develop and evaluate technology for both new and existing structures in which wood and/or wood-based products are used as primary or secondary components.

Examples of specific CAWS research areas include the following:

- Forest resource utilization and sustainability
- Affordability
- Durability
- Design efficiency and optimization
- Fire and disaster resistance
- Energy and resource efficiency
- Construction and quality control
- Environmental conservation and recycling