

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2025

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SENATE BILL DRS15042-NN-4

Short Title: Promote NC Sawmills. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Hanig and Moffitt (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO PROMOTE LOCAL SAWMILLS BY ALLOWING THE USE OF UNGRADED  
3 LUMBER IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 SECTION 1.(a) Definitions. – For purposes of this section, the following definitions  
6 apply:

- 7 (1) Dimension lumber. – Lumber that has not been grade-stamped under the  
8 authority of a lumber grading bureau.  
9 (2) Small mill. – A sawmill that mills less than 1,000,000 board feet of lumber  
10 per year.

11 SECTION 1.(b) The North Carolina Residential Code Council shall amend the  
12 North Carolina Residential Code in order to permit dimension lumber that has not been  
13 grade-stamped under the authority of a lumber grading bureau to be used in the construction of  
14 one- and two-family dwellings, when that use meets all of the following requirements:

- 15 (1) The lumber is sold directly by the owner or employee of the sawmill that  
16 milled the lumber to the owner of the dwelling to be constructed or that  
17 person's authorized representative.  
18 (2) The dimension lumber meets or exceeds the requirements of the North  
19 Carolina Residential Code other than the requirements that only  
20 grade-stamped lumber be used in residential construction.  
21 (3) The operator of the sawmill has a certificate from a state-approved lumber  
22 grading training program, certifies that the lumber conforms with product and  
23 inspection standards under American Softwood Lumber Standard PS20, and  
24 marks the lumber with (i) the mill number, name, or abbreviation, (ii) the  
25 species or combination of species of the lumber, (iii) whether the lumber was  
26 dry or green when manufactured as required by American Softwood Lumber  
27 Standard PS20, and (iv) whether the lumber conforms with PS20 standards.  
28 (4) The appropriate code enforcement official reviews the framing of the dwelling  
29 to ensure that it meets the requirements of the North Carolina Residential  
30 Code in all respects other than the requirements that only grade-stamped  
31 lumber be used in residential construction. The code enforcement official shall  
32 not be liable for any structural failure that occurs as a result of the use of  
33 dimension lumber rather than grade-stamped lumber.  
34 (5) The sawmill provides to the purchaser a certificate containing all of the  
35 following information:



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- 1 a. A statement of the species of wood, quantity milled, and address where  
2 the lumber will be used.
- 3 b. The name of the sawmill operator certified pursuant to G.S. 143-138.2  
4 who milled the lumber.
- 5 c. A certification that the lumber meets or exceeds the requirements of  
6 the North Carolina Residential Code with the exception that it has not  
7 been grade-stamped by an accredited lumber grading bureau.
- 8 d. The date of sale of the lumber.

9 **SECTION 1.(c)** The North Carolina Residential Code Council shall amend the North  
10 Carolina Residential Code and the North Carolina Building Code Council shall amend the North  
11 Carolina Building Code in order to permit dimension lumber that has not been grade-stamped  
12 under the authority of a lumber grading bureau to be used in the construction of one- and  
13 two-family dwellings and structures classified as Residential Group R-2 or R-3, when that use  
14 meets all of the following requirements:

- 15 (1) The lumber is sold directly by the owner or employee of a small mill or a  
16 mobile sawmill that milled the lumber to the owner of the structure to be  
17 constructed or that person's authorized representative.
- 18 (2) The dimension lumber meets or exceeds the requirements of the North  
19 Carolina Residential Code or the North Carolina Building Code, as applicable,  
20 other than the requirements that only grade-stamped lumber be used in  
21 residential construction.
- 22 (3) The operator of the small mill or mobile sawmill has a certificate from a  
23 state-approved lumber grading training program, certifies that the lumber  
24 conforms with product and inspection standards under American Softwood  
25 Lumber Standard PS20, and marks the lumber with (i) the mill number, name,  
26 or abbreviation, (ii) the species or combination of species of the lumber, (iii)  
27 whether the lumber was dry or green when manufactured as required by  
28 American Softwood Lumber Standard PS20, and (iv) whether the lumber  
29 conforms with PS20 standards.
- 30 (4) The appropriate code enforcement official reviews the framing of the structure  
31 to ensure that it meets the requirements of the North Carolina Residential  
32 Code or the North Carolina Building Code, as applicable, in all respects other  
33 than the requirements that only grade-stamped lumber be used in residential  
34 construction. The code enforcement official shall not be liable for any  
35 structural failure that occurs as a result of the use of dimension lumber rather  
36 than grade-stamped lumber.
- 37 (5) The small mill or mobile sawmill provides to the purchaser a certificate  
38 containing all of the following:
  - 39 a. A statement of the species of wood, quantity milled, and address where  
40 the lumber will be used.
  - 41 b. The name of the sawmill operator certified pursuant to G.S. 143-138.2  
42 who milled the lumber.
  - 43 c. A certification that the lumber meets or exceeds the requirements of  
44 the North Carolina State Building Code with the exception that it has  
45 not been grade-stamped by an accredited lumber grading bureau.
  - 46 d. The date of sale of the lumber.

47 **SECTION 1.(d)** The Residential Code Council and Building Code Council shall  
48 adopt temporary rules to implement the requirements of this section no later than 180 days after  
49 the effective date of this section. The Residential Code Council and Building Code Council shall  
50 also adopt permanent rules to replace the temporary rules.

1           **SECTION 2.(a)** Article 9 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes is amended by  
2 adding a new section to read:

3 **"§ 143-138.2. Lumber grading training program.**

4           (a) The North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service shall establish a basic lumber  
5 grading training program for individuals and establish the general requirements for successfully  
6 completing the training program, including requirements for initial certification and for  
7 recertification. The North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service shall offer the training  
8 program at least annually. The Extension Forestry staff, in cooperation with the staff of the North  
9 Carolina Forest Service, shall develop and establish the content of the training program,  
10 determine the certification requirements for instructors teaching the training program, and  
11 determine the criteria for determining successful completion of the training program. Instructors  
12 shall be approved by the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service.

13           (b) The North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service may, in its discretion, authorize  
14 one or more private lumber grading training programs, provided that the content of the private  
15 programs and certification requirements for instructors and criteria for successful completion of  
16 the training program are at least as stringent as the program offered by the North Carolina  
17 Cooperative Extension Service. An authorized private training program may issue initial  
18 certifications and recertifications.

19           (c) An individual holding an initial certification from the program established by  
20 subsection (a) of this section, from a private program authorized under subsection (b) of this  
21 section, or from a state-approved lumber grading program in another state who mills lumber in  
22 the State shall be recertified under the training program every five years.

23           (d) An individual who holds an initial certification from the program established by  
24 subsection (a) of this section, from a private program authorized under subsection (b) of this  
25 section, or from a state-approved lumber grading program in another state shall register with the  
26 North Carolina Forest Service before selling lumber that has not been grade-stamped under the  
27 authority of a lumber grading bureau directly to the owner of a structure for use in construction  
28 of the structure."

29           **SECTION 2.(b)** The North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service shall establish  
30 the basic lumber grading training program no later than 180 days after the effective date of this  
31 section.

32           **SECTION 3.** G.S. 160D-1110 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

33           "(b1) For a structure constructed with lumber that has not been grade-stamped under the  
34 authority of a lumber grading bureau, a building permit applicant shall submit with the building  
35 permit application all of the following:

36           (1) A statement of the species of wood, quantity, and address where the lumber  
37 will be used.

38           (2) The name of the sawmill operator certified pursuant to G.S. 143-138.2 who  
39 milled the lumber.

40           (3) A certification that the lumber meets or exceeds the requirements of the North  
41 Carolina State Building Code with the exception that it has not been  
42 grade-stamped by an accredited lumber grading bureau.

43           (4) The date of sale of the lumber."

44           **SECTION 4.** Section 1 of this act is effective when it becomes law and expires when  
45 the Residential Code Council and Building Code Council have issued permanent rules  
46 substantially similar to Sections 1(b) and 1(c) of this act and notifies the Codifier of Statutes that  
47 it has done so. Section 3 of this act becomes effective on the date that the temporary rules required  
48 to be adopted by the Residential Code Council and Building Code Council by Section 1 of this  
49 act become effective. The remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law.