

# Standard Grading Rules for Southern Pine Lumber

Management of Change Form



## Background Information

**Name of Person Requesting the Change:** Multiple

**Date of Requested Change:** 1Q2025

**Request Title:** Modifications to Moisture Content Provisions (Section 160)

**Printed Date:** 2Q25

## Change Category

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proposal to align with National Grading Rule    | <input type="checkbox"/> Proposal to align with SPIB governance     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proposal to align with ALSC Enforcement Regs    | <input type="checkbox"/> Proposal based Resource Monitoring Program |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Proposal to align with PS 20         | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade Rule - Addition                      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Editorial change to existing content | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade Rule – Removal                       |

## Description of Proposed Change

1. Change phrasing within provisions, to align with PS-20's "moisture content at time of grade marking" language.
2. Add a table summarizing the various moisture content designations described in section 160 of the rule book

## Rationale

1. Product Standard 20 utilizes the verbiage "time of grade marking" when referring to moisture content limitations, but current wording in the Standard Grading Rules states "time of dressing" in 4 instances: Section 161.2, 164.3, 164.5, and the sub text of table 200-9.
2. Section 160 of the grading rules references many different moisture content designations, and the products (thicknesses) upon which these labels may be used. A table is being added to better and more succinctly communicate which moisture designations are allowed on which products, and the limits associated with those designations.

## Proposal

1. Change the wording from "time of dressing" to time of grade marking in 4 instances.
  - a. **161.2** Restrictions on moisture content shall apply at the time of shipment, as well as at the time of **dressing grade marking** if dressed lumber is involved, and at the time of delivery to buyer; provided, however, that where lumber is shipped on railroad chain cars or similar open railroad equipment which exposes the lumber to the weather during transit, the seller is relieved of responsibility for the moisture content restriction after the lumber has been loaded on

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said equipment if the buyer is notified of and consents to the method of shipment.

- b. **164.3** Lumber over 2" nominal thickness, under these rules, is not required to be dry unless specified, and when such lumber is dressed to the standard unseasoned sizes shown in these rules and is grade marked, the designation "S-GRN" indicates the lumber is unseasoned at the time of ~~dressing~~ **grade marking**.
- c. **164.5** Grade marks applied to Southern Pine Timbers (5"x 5" & larger) must bear the applicable moisture content at the time of ~~dressing if dressed and at the time of marking if rough~~ **grade marking**: "KD20" if kiln dried; "DRY" if dry or air dried; and "GRN" if unseasoned (above 23% moisture content).
- d. **(Subtext of table 200-9)** (2) Boards less than the minimum dressed thickness for 1" nominal but which are 5/8" or greater thickness dry may be regarded as American Standard Lumber, but such boards shall be marked to show the size and condition of seasoning at the time of ~~dressing~~ **grade marking**. They shall also be distinguished from 1" boards on invoices and certificates.

2. Add the table below at the beginning of section 160.

Applicable Nominal Thicknesses (inches)	Moisture Content Designation(s)	Moisture Limit
Up to 4	KD15	15% <sup>(1)</sup>
Up to 4	KD19, KD, S-DRY	19%
Up to 4	MC designations (19 or less)	As stated in "MC" label
5 and greater	DRY	23%
5 and greater	KD20	20%
2-1/2 and greater	MC designations (20 and above)	As stated in "MC" label
2-1/2 to 4-1/2	S-GRN <sup>(1)</sup>	None
5 and greater	GRN	None

**Table 100-4: Summary of moisture content provisions**

(1) See section **162** for criteria related to D and better grades

(2) "S-GRN" or "GRN" may be combined with "MC" designations such as MC23 or MC25 on conforming products. See section **164.3** for additional requirements on "S-GRN" material.

### Supporting Information

Section 160 from 2021 Standard Grading Rules for Southern Pine Lumber:

#### 160. MOISTURE CONTENT PROVISIONS

**161.** Dryness or seasoning, as expressed in terms of maximum moisture content as specified under Sections **162** and **163**, is a standard grade requirement under these rules for lumber of 2" thickness and less, except as otherwise specified.

**161.1** Moisture content limits for other sizes or on a different basis should be specified if desired.

**161.2** Restrictions on moisture content shall apply at the time of shipment, as well as at the time of ~~dressing~~ **grade marking** if dressed lumber is involved, and at the time of delivery to buyer; provided, however, that where lumber is shipped on railroad chain cars or similar open railroad equipment which exposes the lumber to the weather during transit, the seller is relieved of responsibility for the

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moisture content restriction after the lumber has been loaded on said equipment if the buyer is notified of and consents to the method of shipment.

**161.3** Moisture content determinations shall be made with electric meters correctly calibrated and used as per ASTM D7438 Standard Practice for Field Calibration and Application of Hand-Held Moisture Meters.

**161.4** Kiln dried lumber shall be adequately cooled after removal from kilns before dressing and final moisture content testing.

**162.** Moisture content for D and better grades of 1" and 1-1/4" nominal thicknesses shall not exceed 15%, but if specified, represented, or grade marked as kiln dried, the maximum shall be 12% on 90% of the pieces and 15% on the remainder. (See exception for paneling, Section **240.3**) For 1-1/2" and 1-3/4" and 2" in such grades, maximum shall be 18%, and kiln dried limit 15%. For thicknesses over 2" but not over 4" in such grades, the maximum shall be 19%, and the kiln dried limit 15%. If over 4" thick, the maximum shall be 20%, and the kiln dried limit 18%.

**163.** Moisture content for Select Structural, No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, Construction, Standard, Utility, and Stud grades of 2" nominal thickness and less shall not exceed 19%, but if specified or represented as kiln dried, the limit shall be 19% if ordered "KD" or "KD 19" and 15% if ordered "KD 15".

**164.** Moisture content limits when kiln dried or air dried lumber is specified without stating the maximum percentage of moisture content allowed and which is not subject to the moisture provisions of standard grades shall be construed as permitting the moisture content of 4" nominal thickness and less to be not over 19% if ordered "KD", "KD 19", dry or air dried, and not over 15% if ordered "KD 15", and if in excess of 4" nominal thickness, the limit shall be 20% if ordered kiln dried and 23% if ordered dry or air dried.

**164.1** The designation "MC 15" indicates the maximum moisture content is 15% by either air drying, kiln drying, or both.

**164.2** "S-DRY" or "MC 19" indicates the maximum moisture content is 19%.

**164.3** Lumber over 2" nominal thickness, under these rules, is not required to be dry unless specified, and when such lumber is dressed to the standard unseasoned sizes shown in these rules and is grade marked, the designation "S-GRN" indicates the lumber is unseasoned at the time of **dressing grade marking**.

**164.4** Where lumber is over 4" thick, the design values apply without regard to seasoning, and design values as herein indicated for a moisture content over 19% apply also to seasoned lumber if over 4" thick.

**164.5** Grade marks applied to Southern Pine Timbers (5"x 5" & larger) must bear the applicable moisture content at the time of dressing if dressed and at the time of **dressing if dressed and at the time of marking if rough grade marking**: "KD20" if kiln dried; "DRY" if dry or air dried; and "GRN" if unseasoned (above 23% moisture content).

**164.6** "MC" can also be used to designate a moisture content limit above 19% for lumber greater than 2" in nominal thickness. For example, designations such as "MC23" (limit 23%) or "MC25" (limit 25%) can be used. If the designation is applied to a product, the product shall conform to the moisture limit specified.

**164.7** "HT" (heat treated lumber) has been placed in a closed chamber with artificial heat until the lumber achieves a minimum core temperature of 133° F (56° C) for a minimum of 30 minutes.

**165.** In case of complaint on account of the dryness of any item or shipment of Southern Pine lumber, Bureau inspection service shall be available upon request in the event the buyer and seller are unable to resolve the complaint pursuant to the provisions contained in Section 166. Such inspections for dryness shall be made in accordance with the maximums allowable under these rules or inspection service shall be rendered for special moisture content limitations if detailed specifications are provided.

**166.** If a complaint is made on moisture content, the buyer shall notify the shipper within 72 hours after the lumber is unloaded, and the shipper shall either adjust the complaint within 72 hours in a way that is satisfactory to the buyer or arrange for inspection.

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**166.1** In case of inspection on a complaint for moisture content, each piece shall be tested and a separation made of all pieces conforming to the maximum allowable from any portion exceeding such maximum.

**166.2** All lumber on which complaint is made as to moisture content must be fully protected from conditions which would tend to increase its moisture content, and if there is evidence upon arrival of the Quality Supervisor that these provisions have not been observed, the seller shall be relieved of responsibility for any excess moisture found in the lumber.

**166.3** If it should be found as a result of Bureau inspection that all or any portion of a shipment exceeds the maximum moisture content allowable, such portion shall be considered as not complying with applicable grade provisions.

**166.4** Expenses of such inspection shall be born as set forth in Section **173**.

**167.** Lumber dressed at a moisture content within the limits of these rules is sufficiently stabilized for most uses, but limited size changes will occur from shrinkage or expansion if the moisture content is further reduced or increased after dressing. The normal shrinkage allowance is 1% reduction in size for each 4-point reduction in percentage of moisture content and same tolerance for any expansion.

**END FORM**