



## WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AMENDMENT MEMO

**2007 Senate Bill 28**

**Assembly Amendment 1**

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### **Current Law**

Under current law, the Department of Commerce (Commerce) has authority to establish construction standards for one- and two-family dwellings and for multifamily dwellings. All building materials used in these dwellings must conform to certain construction standards. Commerce requires that lumber used in the construction of one- and two-family dwellings and multifamily dwellings be tested and approved, or “graded,” according to national standards.

According to testimony on the bill, it is cost-prohibitive for a small sawmill to pay for the services of an independent lumber grader or to obtain and maintain the authority to grade lumber that it produces itself. Therefore, structural lumber produced by small sawmills may generally not be used in residential construction in Wisconsin.

### **The Bill**

Under the bill, lumber that has not been graded may be authorized for use if the lumber, once milled, is certified by the person milling the lumber to meet or exceed applicable standards. The exemption applies only if the lumber is milled at the request of the owner of the lumber for use in his or her own dwelling.

Once the lumber is certified, a building inspector may approve or reject use of the lumber or may impose additional construction restrictions for its use.

### **Assembly Amendment 1**

Assembly Amendment 1 requires the forest products outreach program at the University of Wisconsin (UW)-Stevens Point to establish a basic lumber grading training program in cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and to offer the program through the UW-Extension. The

program must provide certificates to individuals who successfully complete the course, valid for five years.

Assembly Amendment 1 also authorizes the DNR to issue a certificate authorizing a person to grade lumber if the person has either of the following:

- A bachelor's or postgraduate degree in forest products or wood science and technology, or a degree that is equivalent to either of these degrees.
- A level of experience or background in understanding wood properties, construction, and design that is equivalent to the level of understanding held by an individual who successfully completes the training program.

Assembly Amendment 1 also requires a person certifying lumber under the provisions of the bill to be certified by the DNR as authorized to grade lumber, as provided above.

### **Legislative History**

Assembly Amendment 1 was offered by Representative Hubler on January 23, 2008. On January 29, 2008, the Assembly Committee on Housing recommended adoption of Assembly Amendment 1, and passage of the bill, as amended, on votes of Ayes, 7; Noes, 0.

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