

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**  
**SESSION 2025**

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**HOUSE BILL 184**

Short Title: Promote North Carolina Sawmills. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Gillespie, Brody, Greene, and Penny (Primary Sponsors).  
*For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.*

Referred to: Agriculture and Environment, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

February 25, 2025

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

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

1 the effective date of this section. The Residential Code Council and Building Code Council shall  
2 also adopt permanent rules to replace the temporary rules.

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

5 **"§ 143-138.2. Lumber grading training program.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- 38 (1) A statement of the species of wood, quantity, and address where the lumber  
39 will be used.
- 40 (2) The name of the sawmill operator certified pursuant to G.S. 143-138.2 who  
41 milled the lumber.
- 42 (3) A certification that the lumber meets or exceeds the requirements of the North  
43 Carolina State Building Code with the exception that it has not been  
44 grade-stamped by an accredited lumber grading bureau.
- 45 (4) The date of sale of the lumber."

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