Issue 011-26

BC LOG & TIMBER
BUILDING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
SUPPORTING OUR UNIQUE BUILDERS

Winter 2025/26

BC Log Builders & Timber Framers NEWSLETTER

The Salmon Arm Pier

Where Wood and Craftsmanship Come Together BCLTBIA's 29th Annual Conference

BCLTBIA's 29th Annual Conference, "Where Wood and Craftsmanship Come Together", is just around the corner and shaping up to be one of the best yet. Join us March 19th - 22nd, 2026, for an unforgettable weekend on the waterfront at Prestige Harborfront Resort in scenic Salmon Arm. Back again by popular demand, this elegant getaway is nestled directly beside Shuswap Lake, offering spectacular views of the nearby Bastion Mountains and lush refuge in Salmon Arm's famous boardwalk and bird sanctuary. The best part? The full conference package includes gourmet meals all weekend, a full-service spa, and some of Canada's finest nature trails all at an unbeatable price available only for our conference attendees; that's you!

Through this amazing weekend, we have the opportunity of welcoming the very best industry-leading professionals from across the province (and beyond), coming together as one community to

BCLTBIA's 29th Annual Conference .... continues on page 3

BC LOG & TIMBER BUILDING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
SUPPORTING OUR UNIQUE BUILDERS

BCLTBIA Newsletter

Winter 2025/26 – Issue 011-26

#116, 5100 Anderson Way #420
Vernon, BC V1T 0C4
Phone: 250-545-5647 (LOGS)
www.bclogandtimberbuilders.com

Catherine Hansen, Executive Director
bcltbia@gmail.com

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

Gus Hansen
bcltbia@gmail.com

Kelly Marciniw
kelly.marciniw@gmail.com

Peter Sperlich
sales@canadianlogandtimber.com

Gord Woodward
gwoodward@roadsafetyatwork.ca

Sam Zirnhelt
info@ztframes.com

SUPPORTING OUR UNIQUE BUILDERS

Our seasoned Log Builders and Timber Framers all share one thing in common: a true passion and dedication to their craft. They have recognized the benefits of integrating traditional methods with computer-cutting technology and continue to embrace new technologies moving forward.

BCLTBIA Newsletter

bcltbia@gmail.com 250-545-5647 (LOGS)
Editor: Catherine Hansen
Design Layout: Cameron Luckock

Contributions and advertising DEADLINE for next issue is March 1, 2026

BCLTBIA Newsletter welcomes advertisers.

Our Newsletters are a great way to connect the best builders and suppliers for our industry. Newsletters mailed to members & posted online.
bclogandtimberbuilders.com/resources/newsletters

In the Winter Issue

BC LOG & TIMBER BUILDING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
SUPPORTING OUR UNIQUE BUILDERS

Who We Are

The BC Log & Timber Building Industry Association (BCLTBIA) is a self-funded organization dedicated to improving business opportunity, craftsmanship, and profitability for British Columbia's log home and timber frame building industry.

Since British Columbia's first pioneers, tradesmen from throughout the world have built a tradition of excellence in wood craftsmanship throughout British Columbia. Our province is home not only to vast renewable forests, but also a wealth of talented Timber Framers, Handcrafted Log Builders and Machine Profile Log Manufacturers.

The log home and timber frame building industry is vital to the rural BC economy, and our goal is to not only foster appreciation for their contribution, but also promote job stability, skill development and healthy industry growth.

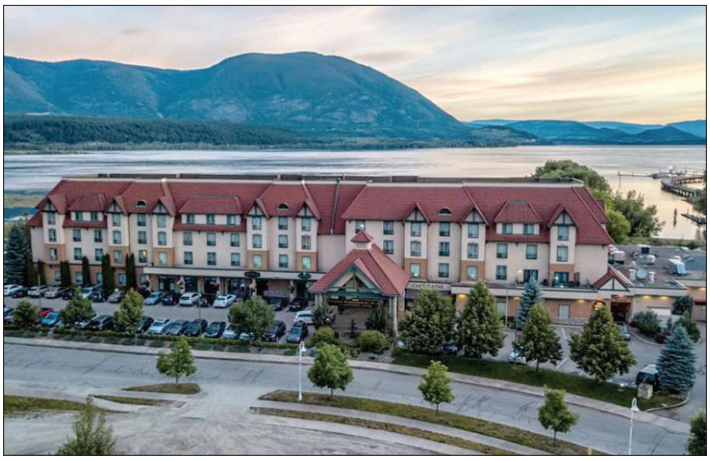
BCLTBIA's 29th Annual Conference .... continued from page 1

benefit our industry at large. Every year, we create a bottomless well of shared knowledge unavailable anywhere else in the world, backed by the passion and pride we share in our craft; an experience made possible by all of our amazing members. Through the power of events like this, we remain the foundation of our field, getting to know one another not only as business partners, but as family and friends. Your voice - your Association.

It's not just fun and games either - our conference offers world-class workshops and seminars across many crucial subjects, details of which will be released very soon in the Event Schedule! We are also happy to offer art classes, auctions, and a selection of other recreational opportunities for our attendees and their families, ensuring no one gets left behind in the fun of the weekend. Most importantly, this conference offers a chance like no other to invest in the future of your business; whether by connecting with suppliers, acquainting with industry peers, or simply being there to have your finger on the pulse of what's next.

We are happy to announce that our conference fees will be offered at 2024 pricing, with an **Early Bird Discount for those registering by January 31, 2026**. Further details and updates will be available on our website at https://bclogandtimberbuilders.com/resources/2026-conference-agm. In addition you will find the Delegate Registration form on page 15 of this issue.

To book your room at Prestige Harborfront Resort, please call (250) 833-5800 and let them know you are with the BCLTBIA conference so that you can receive the rate reduction for the duration of your weekend stay. Above all else, we look forward to having you, your employees, and your families spend a weekend in the paradise of the Shuswap with us.
See you soon!



BCLTBIA President's Message

On behalf of the board I'd like to wish all of you a Happy New Year! The BCLTBIA is looking to build on momentum generated in recent years to further support our membership on critical issues that have a real impact on your businesses. If you have suggestions (or questions) for challenges you've faced that would be better faced together please connect with us. Some of the topics we've been working on and will keep pushing on in the new year include: supporting initiatives to support the use of our products particularly in public builds in part through our connections with BC Wood and other government initiatives, payment policies for government projects, maintaining log construction as a viable option with new building/energy code requirements, fibre supply (largely working with the BCTS review and value-added accelerators), OHS plans to keep our members up to date on new worksafe requirements and insurance and cyber security. The annual conference is the best opportunity of the year to share in the collective wisdom of our industry, attend workshops specific to our members and have a great time – we hope to see you there!

Sam Zirnhelt, BCLTBIA President

Building Code Year in Review

Kelly Marciniw | kelly.marciniw@gmail.com

BC building code had few updates this past year that may apply to our members - especially timberframers involved in multi unit or multi storey buildings. There has also been both a provincial and federal push on increasing the number of homes for Canadians.

Adaptable dwelling units

Adaptable dwelling units are easily convertible to an accessible unit without major renovations. So layouts with wider doorways, bathrooms with turning radius, back framing for future grab bars, and consideration of locations of light switches are included.

This building code change applies when there are five or more units in a building, and then it is 1 in 5 units (*exceptions apply, check the details). While not required for single family homes and seasonal log cabins, they can still be good to include for aging in place or a sudden disability to allow the owner to stay at home longer.

A couple tips from a recent project we completed with an accessible unit:

- Ensuring the lowered light switches have indicator lights to help find in the dark, as ablebodied occupants may not intuitively reach lower when trying to turn on the lights
- Having a long slide bar or multiple shower heads so the shower works for both tall standing or low sitting positions.
- Choosing grab bars that are sturdy yet also match the decor with different trim profiles and finish colours available

More info: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/construction-industry/building-codes-standards/bc-codes/2024-bc-codes/accessibility#adaptable

Single exit stair buildings

A significant change for the design of multi unit buildings is allowing single exit stairs (instead of requiring double loaded corridors with stairs in either end). Units can have windows on multiple sides allowing cross ventilation, more natural light throughout the day, and increasing variety of multi bedroom layouts.

There are a lot of rules on this new change including limiting heights to under 6 stories, number of units per floor a maximum of 4, additional sprinklers, and requirements on the local fire fighting capabilities.

More info: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/construction-industry/building-codes-and-standards/revisions-and-mo/bcbc-revision-3/bcbc_revision_3_single_exit_stair_convenience_copy_2024-08-28.pdf

Lateral wall bracing and bands

See last BCLTBIA newsletter for a detailed article on this new change.

It applies to all part 9 buildings throughout BC, considering both wind and seismic loading.

Standardize building designs for small scale multi unit housing

Not so much a building code change but intended as a way to fast track designing of small scale density (multi-plexes, townhouses, accessory dwelling units) that meets code. Still check local bylaws and zoning!

More info on the provincial standard designs: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/construction-industry/building-codes-and-standards/guides/bc_std_des_catalogue_v1.pdf

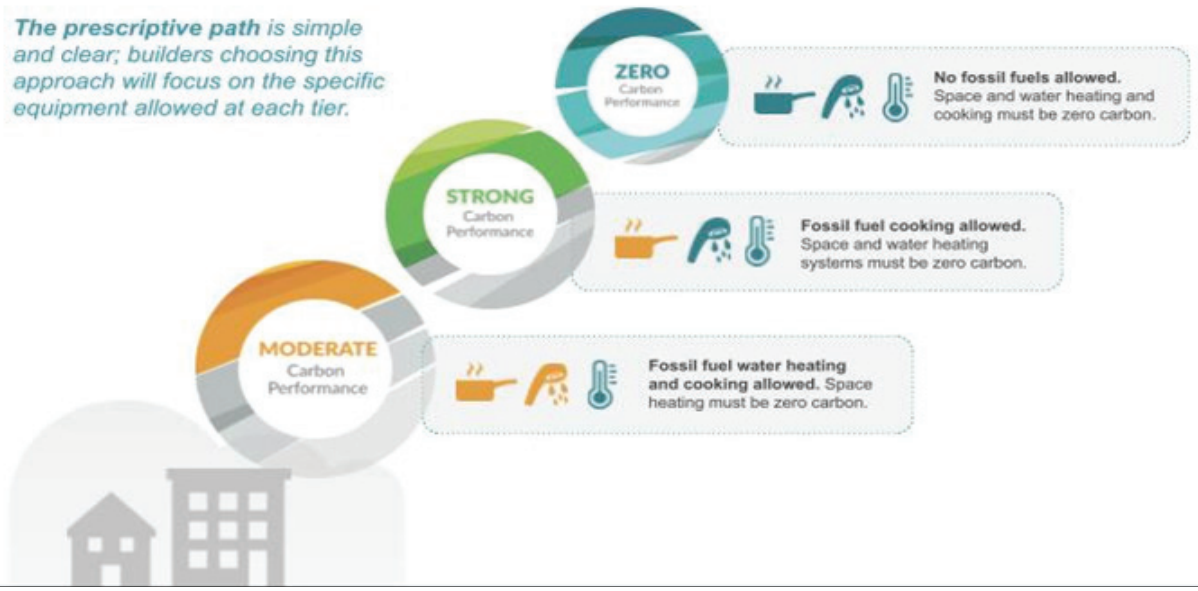
Federal catalogue of designs organized by regions: https://www.housingcatalogue.cmhc-schl.gc.ca

Energy and Operational Carbon Step Codes

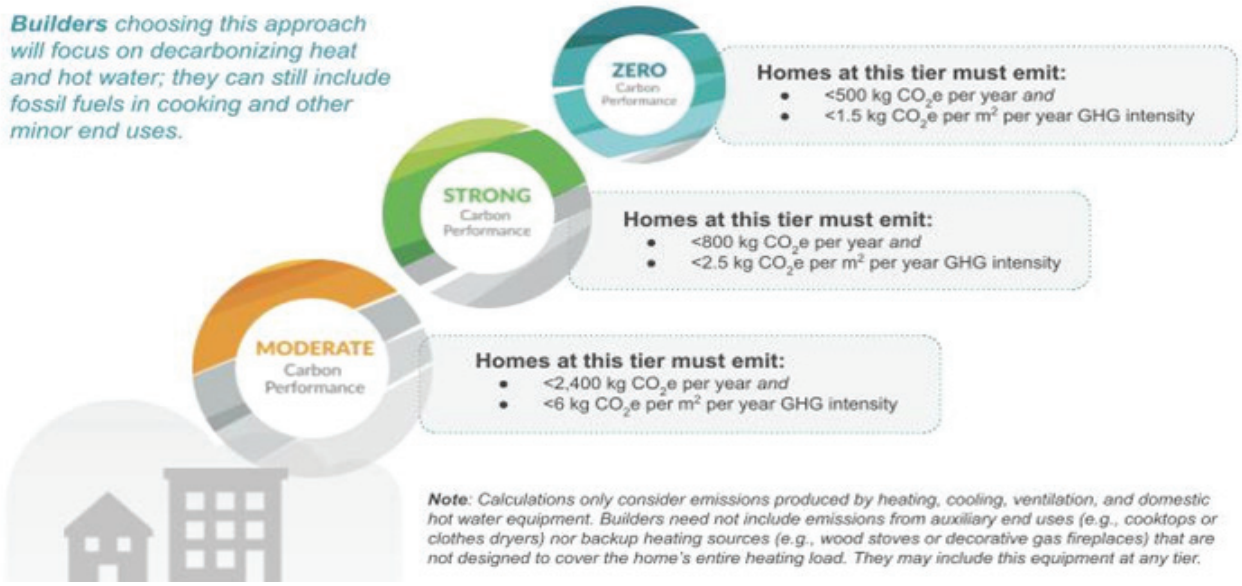
At the provincial level, the next big change to the step codes are expected in 2027. Energy step code moving up to Step 4 (40% better than code minimum on envelope and mechanical systems) and Operating Carbon moving to EL 2 (prescriptive path of no primary heat nor hot water from carbon intensive fuel - see images below for prescriptive and performance pathways).

The Province establishes minimum energy efficiency requirements. Local governments have the authority to require higher steps of the Energy and Zero Carbon Step Codes through bylaw if they choose - so check with your specific authority having jurisdiction on your projects.

Part 9 Buildings: The **prescriptive path** for Zero Carbon Step Code compliance



Part 9 Buildings: The **performance path** for Zero Carbon Step Code compliance



Note: Calculations only consider emissions produced by heating, cooling, ventilation, and domestic hot water equipment. Builders need not include emissions from auxiliary end uses (e.g., cooktops or clothes dryers) nor backup heating sources (e.g., wood stoves or decorative gas fireplaces) that are not designed to cover the home's entire heating load. They may include this equipment at any tier.

- As of May 1, 2023, Part 9 residential buildings must comply with Step 3 or above of the ESC.
- As of March 10, 2025, Part 9 residential buildings must comply with Emission Level 1 (EL-1) or above of the ZCSC.
- Local governments can require or incentivize compliance with higher Steps or Emission Levels.

Provincial minimum requirements will continue to progress through BCBC revisions and updates. The goal is to reach net-zero energy ready targets with the implementation of Step 5 of the ESC by 2032 and EL-4 of the ZCSC by 2030.

High Efficiency Electric Heating Systems for Log and Timber Homes

Peter Sperlich | sales@canadianlogandtimber.com

In the current environment of trying to build evermore efficient buildings, both ourselves and our clients are facing many challenges, such as choosing the most cost-effective heating systems; this and many other components affect both the build cost and future annual operating costs of these structures.

I'd like to share a bit about the recent build of my own house, which required an efficient yet relatively inexpensive heating system - the project led me to do quite a bit of research, especially with regards to air source heat pumps and mini split heating technology.

For starters, you should know that the efficiency of the modern heat pump and minisplit technologies are typically between 2-4 times more efficient than traditional electric heating systems. This technology is much more environmentally friendly than traditional fossil fuel heat sources, as it does not actually create heat; it just moves heat very efficiently!

I was surprised at our 2023 Conference held at Gavin Lake, when the BC Housing representative gave us an example of a log house that would be heated by electric heat; this seems to go against the whole concept of the new building code (and new housing having less impact on Global warming). After all, the entire intent of our step code is that it's supposed to be one of the most significant steps we can make to reduce carbon emissions here in Canada! Furthermore, I recently became aware of a modern multifamily facility in the metro Vancouver area (still under construction) which will be heated with only traditional electric heaters, probably because you can still have baseboard style heaters installed at a minimal cost. The payback of more efficient heating systems looks to be relatively quick, and the message that we're trying to reduce our environmental impact apparently hasn't hit home in some places.

Today's modern heat pump/mini split technology evolved from a scientific curiosity into the world's most efficient climate control solution: by utilizing advanced inverter technology and specialized arctic engineering, modern systems provide reliable, sustainable heating in harsh environments and efficient, effective cooling during hot summer months alike!

The origins of heat pump technology, the foundational principles of the heat pump, date back nearly two centuries. In simple terms, every refrigerator and freezer we use today is a form of heat pump, which removes heat from one source using gas compressed into a liquid and releasing that heat at another location when the liquid is returned to a gas. The reason heat pumps and mini splits can both heat in the winter and cool in the summer is the process is simply reversed by a switch mechanism.

Inverter technology, originally invented by Toshiba in Japan, is the single most significant advancement in modern heat pump efficiency. It introduces variable speed control: unlike older on/off systems that run at full power on AC current or not at all, modern inverter technology inverts the AC current to DC inverter-driven compressors, which modulate their speed to match the precise heating or cooling demand of the space. Therefore, considerably less energy is consumed in the process! This constant

adjustment prevents energy-intensive startup cycles and reduces electricity consumption by 30-50%. Inverters also help maintain stable indoor temperatures with minimal fluctuation, while also extending the lifespan of the unit by reducing mechanical wear and tear.

Here is a quick overview of the systems available:

Air-Source (most common, uses outside air) and **Geothermal** (uses ground). **Mini-Split**s are also a type Air-Source heat pump, but known more for zoned control with individual indoor heads (wall, ceiling, floor) and are usually for specific rooms. **Central Ducted Heat Pumps,** on the other hand, are for whole-home systems. Mini-splits offer flexibility; central systems require pre-existing and extensive ductwork, but both use the same basic heat-transfer technology.

Types of Heat Pumps (By Energy Source)

1. **Air-Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs)**: The most common, extracting heat from outdoor air.
   - **Ductless (Mini-Splits)**: No ducts; outdoor unit connects directly to indoor heads.
   - **Ducted (Central)**: Connects to indoor air handler and uses home's existing ductwork for whole-home heating/cooling.
2. **Ground-Source (Geothermal) Heat Pumps**: Uses stable underground temperatures via buried loops for even higher efficiency, but comes with a higher upfront cost and requires either deep holes or extensive pipe systems to access enough heat to last throughout the winter.
3. **Water-Source Heat Pumps**: Uses a body of water (lake, pond) as the heat source/sink.

Mini-splits offer various indoor units for zoned comfort including: Wall-Mounted, Ceiling Cassette, Floor-Mounted and Concealed Duct.

Key Differences: Mini-Split vs. Central forced air Heat Pump

- **Ducts**: Mini-splits are typically ductless (zoned), while central heat pumps use a forced air central forced air (whole-home).
- **Control**: Mini-splits offer room-by-room control, whereas a central heat pump typically uses a single thermostat which makes zoning temperature more difficult.
- **Mini-splits:** Works well for additions, older homes without ducts, central for homes with existing ductwork, or (most importantly) log and timber homes where running ducts can be more difficult than conventional homes.

Let's take a closer look at mini splits, as they have some distinct advantages that may suit many of our log and timber structures past and present.

Mini splits can be installed without the large special intrusion of an air handler, as they do not need the substantial forced/return air duct work of a central

Heating Systems .... continues to page 8

Heating Systems ....continued from page 7

heating system. An important difference between heat pumps and mini splits is that here in Canada, a heat pump is typically a central forced air unit, requiring the air ductwork mentioned above.

Heat can also be moved hydronically by an in-floor system, which while more efficient at a higher upfront cost, is not yet as common in Canada. This is certainly one of the most effective solutions, but it does require a more comprehensive initial design and investment. In Europe, it is found to be a common solution, as homes there are often engineered for multi-generational lifespans!

Without getting into a very long analysis of all the possibilities, I want to point out some key advantages that air source mini splits have that suit our builds and renovations: First, a mini split typically has air handlers in various parts of the house that distribute the heating or cooling; Second, the heat is moved via 2 small, insulated copper refrigerant lines that are very effective at moving heat (estimated between 3-10 times more efficient than moving heat through forced air); Third, these systems can be installed with minimal intrusions as wall, floor, and ceiling options make them especially compatible with log walls and timber beams; Finally, outdoor units typically have a number of line sets going to various indoor air handlers within the structure, requiring minimal intrusions.

Here are the typical Indoor air handlers available with mini splits, which then distribute the heat or cool in the summer:

Wall-Mounted Units: The most common ductless option, mounted high on walls to save floor space and provide rapid cooling or heating via adjustable louvers. You'll typically see these mounted on an outside wall, over a door, or above a window.

Floor-Mounted Consoles: Ideal for heating-dominant climates, these sit low on the wall similar to a radiator. This placement is effective because heat naturally rises, warming the room from the ground up.

Ceiling Cassettes: These units are recessed into the ceiling, with only a decorative grille visible. In 2026, many feature 360-degree airflow to eliminate cold spots in large rooms.

Floor-Ceiling Universal Units: Specialized models that can be installed either horizontally, on a ceiling, or vertically on a low wall, offering maximum flexibility for retrofits in spaces without drop ceilings.

Slim Ducted (Concealed): These units are hidden behind walls or above ceilings and connected to smaller, unobtrusive vents, offering the "invisible" look of central air without the need for massive trunk ductwork. It also gives the added advantage of heating or cooling more than one room by utilizing minimal ductwork. And yes; not

all mini split installs are completely ductless, giving even more flexibility!

Today's mini split systems offer diverse indoor unit styles, designed to be seamlessly integrated with interior aesthetics while maximizing efficiency.

While I'm sure you've heard the statement "heat pumps only work in warmer climates!", some manufacturers have created Arctic Systems (Cold-Climate): Purpose-built "Hyper Heat" or Arctic units which use Enhanced Vapor Injection (EVI) to provide 70-100% heating capacity at temperatures as low as -25°C to -30°C.

To summarize the choices I made for my building, I needed to weigh the factors. This house may at times be utilized seasonally, and being in the Caribou, there can be some very significant cold spells. More than 1 heating system made sense to have options and some redundancy!

First, I have always been a fan of wood heat. For those of us residing in less populated areas, a natural choice is still today's highly efficient wood heaters. You have a reliable heat source and a cooking source during power outages, plus the release of carbon has no more impact than the wood rotting in the forest (arguably less, as there isn't any methane gas generated by burning). Secondly, air quality is not as much of a consideration in areas with a sparse population. Third, I don't consider cutting and splitting wood a chore; rather, it's a nice form of exercise. I also needed a more constant and regular heating system, however; one that would keep the house warm while I am gone to catch the abundant fish in the Interlake's area!

I have the typical open "great room" design with living room and kitchen in half of the building. I also have 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, and a utility room on the other half of the building. I chose to use a cold climate rated 36000 BTU Minisplit outdoor unit, with an 18000 btu indoor ceiling cassette for the great room. The ceiling cassette sits in the great room under my stair landing and distributes air centrally to the kitchen, living room, and entrance hallway. For the other side of the building, I chose to install an 18000 btu concealed duct forced air indoor unit.

This system brings in the heat efficiently from the outdoor unit via the 2 copper lines, then distributes heat via a relatively short duct system to the 5 rooms. This ductwork has dampers built in, allowing the adjustment of airflow to each room.

Admittedly, a hydronic system may have been more efficient to distribute the heat, however the simplicity and lower cost of using the air handlers is what ultimately made them my choice. The system still allows for a 9000 BTU air handler to be installed should I find that I want to add supplemental heat in another part of the building.

So far, I am finding that this has been an efficient and cost effective solution for my situation!

Heating Systems .... continues to page 10

Heating Systems....continued from page 9

Though there is significant information on the internet about these systems, I would be happy to discuss my experience with anyone that has any questions. If you have a local HVAC contractor, I'm sure you will find it worthwhile to discuss your options with them. You may find, however, that many stick with what's comfortable to them and the suppliers they have relationships with; they may not want to venture into areas and/or products that they have less experience with.

In the evolving world of meeting the latest energy and carbon codes, we need to make decisions that not only meet or exceed them, but also weigh the initial costs with the lifecycle payback of everything that we install in our buildings!

CDW Benefits

Candace Dodson,
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS ADVISOR
Candace@CDWbenefits.net
250-299-2768
www.CDWbenefits.net

Winter Blues? Think EFAP.

Heading into the winter season can bring warm drinks and much needed get-togethers. However, it is important to recognize this season can also come with its hardships. Days are shorter and sunlight can be hard to come by. We want everyone to know that they are not alone, and this is quite a common human experience, with over half of Canadians reporting feelings of anxiety, depression and isolation during the winter.

To help alleviate these feelings, it is important to take time for yourself and find time for activities you truly enjoy, however sometimes taking these kinds of actions is not enough. If you have group benefits through your employer, it is possible you have access to an Employee & Family Assistance Program (EFAP). This program can provide immediate, confidential, short-term counselling for a large variety of issues, including, but not limited to, mental health, elder care, bereavement, drug or alcohol issues, marriage counselling, finances and much more. This winter season we want everyone to have the support they need.

CDW Benefits wants to wish all the BCLTBIA members and their teams a Happy & Healthy New Year!

ROAD SAFETY AT WORK

Many of your members have staff who drive for work — to see clients, make deliveries, visit job sites, or run errands. That driving creates real risk for workers and real liability for employers, even in small organizations.

If you need a timely and brief item for your newsletter, blog or other channels, Road Safety at Work highlights 3 simple actions small businesses can take in 2026 to help meet their road safety requirements. The information follows:

New year, safer drivers: 3 resolutions for employers

The new year is a great time to strengthen road safety for your employees who drive on the job. Here are 3 simple resolutions you can make for your business for 2026:

- Review last year's driving incidents and near misses. Talk with drivers about any safety concerns they have.
- Check drivers and vehicles. Confirm that employees have a valid licence and satisfactory driver's abstract, and that they've been oriented to the vehicle they use for work.
- Identify and reduce driving risks. Talk with drivers about the hazards they face on the road and how to manage them.

Need help getting started? Use Road Safety at Work's Virtual Assistant for tips and practical tools or contact us at info@roadsafetyatwork.ca.

Top 10 Business Builders for 2026

Kelly Marciniw | kelly.marciniw@gmail.com

Besides growing your sales, here are the top ten ways to build your business for the longterm to do this year. Some are so quick you can even do over the winter holiday while sipping eggnog and tending a fire.

10. Skim read the 50+ recommendations from the BC Timber Sales (BCTS) review. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/forestry/bc-timber-sales/business-plans-performance-reports/bcts_task_force_report.pdf

Bonus points for picking 2-3 and letting your local MLA how they'd impact your regional economy and wood industry in BC.

9. Follow industry news to keep updated on what's happening with the wider log and timber builders, wood value-add, and forestry sectors. Some places to start: https://treefrogcreative.ca, https://www.bcwood.com/bc-wood-news, and https://bclogandtimberbuilders.com/resources/newsletters.

8. Fill out the Ministry of Forests wood manufactures' fibre/tree supply needs survey. Do so here: https://submit.digital.gov.bc.ca/app/form/submit?f=a7bb40f8-d78f-4e0e-9f89-5b8999c14f22

Bonus points for reaching out to your region's Value Added Specialist about how they can help your business like connecting with new suppliers or sales. Reach them here: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/forestry/competitive-forest-industry/value-added-wood-manufacturing#regional-staff

7. Explore the various provincial and federal rapid / pre approved housing models. Use them as a starting point as still nuances like zoning and site optimization to work in.

- BC Housing's digitally accelerated standardized housing (DASH) is geared to multi family configurations. It's both plans for developers / builders, and it is also parts plans for the secondary manufacturer.
  Find out more here: https://www.acceleratedhousing.ca
- Canadian Housing Design Catalogue concentrates on adding gentle density as infill with designs and energy modeling for regions throughout Canada (that's a lot of climate zones!)

Explore more here: https://www.housingcatalogue.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/how-it-works

6. Contact your local high school and offer a shop tour or career talk to students. The more youth hear about craft and trade careers, the more likely they will consider them.

Bonus points for sponsoring a scholarship in June too.

5. Email BCLTBIA Executive Director Catherine to register for the annual conference & AGM in March 2026. Learning, networking, and suitable to bring your staff and families.

4. Think about each person on your team and then let each know one thing that you appreciate about them. Staff retention is multi facetated, but feeling appreciated is a cornerstone. More HR tools available here: https://bcvalueaddedwood.com/index.php/hr-toolkit/

3. Book yourself or key staff in for training. Besides the BCLTBIA conference, there are programs like United Brotherhood of Carpenters Canadian District's Sustainable Jobs Mass Timber Project; UBC Forestry's micro credentials; Centre for Advanced Wood Processing; and Cariboo Wood Innovation Training Hub.

Bonus points for applying to the StrongerBC future skills grant.

2. Register for the BCTS CAT-4 program for buying trees from the 20% of crown harvest designated for value-add processors. Even if you don't directly bid, up to 3 registered companies can share a sale together. More info found here: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/forestry/bc-timber-sales/category-4-value-added#apply

1. Take some time to smell the shavings and celebrate working with wood! An industry using renewable materials, biophilic designs, and good camaraderie.

Improving "Solid Log & Timber" Air Tightness to Meet the New Codes

Peter Sperlich | sales@canadianlogandtimber.com

With the demands of the latest energy codes and the criteria of performance-based testing, it is becoming more of a challenge than ever for our industry to meet new air tightness codes.

The recent build of my own house had me journey down the path of showing how modern log homes can indeed be an efficient and airtight option. My recent blower door test was at a low 1.2 air exchange, which meets step 4 requirements and likely step 5 requirements as well. In a series of articles in our newsletter, I will be sharing the materials and techniques that have made this level of efficiency possible!

In this issue, we are going to look at an old "tried but true" method of making a log home air tight: chinking. For the Timber framers: I would say "read on!" as I believe there are instances where chinking (especially the use of backer rod) could be useful in many areas.

In the past, most of us log home builders cringed at the thought of building a structure that was not airtight enough that it required chinking; In fact, many were proud to say that our homes never needed chinking! However, fast forward a few decades, and we're needing to re-examine that whole idea. First, we need to acknowledge the fact that chinking can actually be a very aesthetic option, but more importantly, it's an option we need to consider if we are going to meet the demands of modern codes.

Traditional chinking methods:

- These methods used lime or clay soil, moss, sawdust, wood, straw, or sometimes even dung for insulation between logs.
- They required regular maintenance as the logs shrink and expand with seasonal changes in humidity and temperature.
- Some still use Portland cement, sand, and lime, which is a fraction of the cost of modern chinking methods; the drawback, however, is that it still requires maintenance. One thing that cannot be denied is that with such maintenance, this system can stand the test of time.
- I personally believe that modern chinking is the better material for air tightness, but it is undeniable that the old world ways did the job for centuries!

Modern chinking advantages:

- Made from flexible Acrylic compounds
- Has elasticity of up to 10%
- Available in a wide range of colors
- Easy to apply
- Ready to use out of the bucket or tube
- Very effective at providing a seal to air movement
- Typically has added media to give the finish texture the "mortar" look

Modern chinking disadvantages:

- Costly
- Synthetic

In any case, a good HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) system is most essential for an HRV or ERV. Controlling the moisture within any wood structure is very important for 2 reasons: Firstly, during the curing or drying stage of the logs, a higher humidity would be preferable to not dry them out too quickly on the inside; secondly, keeping humidity at a lower level inside during cold periods stops any escaping warm moist air, which causes condensation and frost, ultimately leading to rot.

The actual application takes a bit of an artistic touch, and I recommend practicing first or hiring a



professional if you don't feel that you possess the skills; however, if you're patient and have a steady hand, you will most likely be able to master the techniques! Focus on the basics first; the final finish should be installed only on the logs or the materials you are sealing. Not all finishes are compatible with all chinking, so follow the manufacturer's recommendations. When in doubt, conduct some tests and contact the distributor.

The main difference between caulking and chinking is that chinking is designed to look like mortar. In the case of chinking, the use of a foam medium between the two surfaces more effectively facilitates the potential movement and flexibility between them. Typically, a round backer rod or styrofoam (in the case of very large gaps) is installed, most easily done with the use of staples and/or adhesives (see attached diagrams). Next, the chinking is applied in relatively thin layers by use of a caulking or sausage gun. Bulk loading systems are also available, allowing you to fill your gun out of the pail - personally, I found that a mortar applicator on a cordless drill functioned very well with some modifications. For those working on larger projects, professional application pump systems are available.

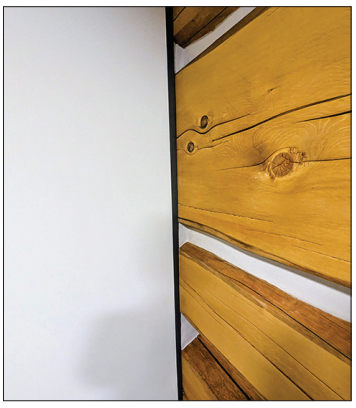
After layering, spray a light mist of water onto the chinking and carefully tool the material to the desired finish. Once that's done, use a spatula to flatten the material, followed by a moist foam brush to finish, rinsing often as needed. The key is finding the right amount of water to spray onto the material without making a mess, yet simultaneously facilitating the proper tooling of the chinking. Note that it will have the best flexibility if it has a larger adhesive foot on each side of the log, with a thinner membrane of flexible chinking between. Ideally, the foot side should be about ½" or more to best cling to the log and the mid flexible part be between ⅛" to ¼" thick.

The beauty of modern chink is that touch up and repair is relatively easy! There are a few companies that offer training and help with installation; I also recommend that you purchase the material from a reputable dealer that has current stock and all the tools, advice and accessories you need.

One final note is that I have found the use of baker rod in sealing a building to be essential material in your tool kit. It can be used between walls and windows, walls and posts, and posts and beams. Additionally, it's one of the cheapest sealants you can purchase, is very easy to use, and has a high degree of flexibility - I have found it is a great alternative to spray foam in many cases, especially for those of us concerned about the amount of potential toxins we are leaving in our buildings.

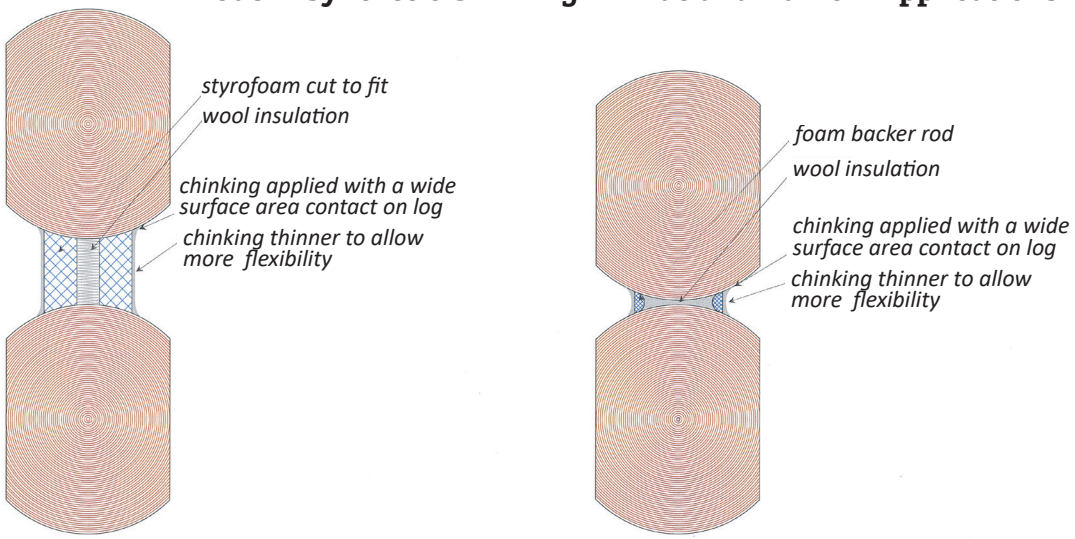
Stay tuned for the next issue: I will give you an insight into effective ways of blocking your airflow on checks!

Improving Air Tightness .... continues to page 14


Improving Air Tightness....continued from page 13

Modern Synthetic Chinking in Wide and Narrow Applications



Join a Committee

Get involved—join a committee! Together, we drive change and amplify our industry's voice.

BUILDING CODE, ENERGY AND CARBON

Chair: Kelly Marciniw – Advocating for industry and educating members on current and future building code requirements, including energy efficiency and upfront/ embodied carbon emissions.

EDUCATION

Chair: Maik Gehloff – Advancing education and professional development for our members' staff and owners, including engaging with the BC Wood / Ministry of Post Secondary Education and Future Skills on the Wood Value Add Workforce Development project.

FIBRE

Chair: Sam Zirnhelt – Connecting the log and timber sector to high quality fibre through engagement with and advocacy to BCTS, community forests, wood lots and other BC sources.

PROCUREMENT AND PAYMENTS

Chair: Sigi Liebmann – Advocating for members (with their typical prefabricated / offsite built build systems) to have comparable terms when navigating government and institutional procurement and clients' financing (mortgages).

INSURANCE AND RISK

Chair: Sam Zirnhelt – Educating members on insurance, and promoting informed risk taking to help their businesses.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Chair: Peter Sperlich – Working in conjunction with WorkSafeBC to ensure our Health and Safety Template meets the needs of our members and is current.

What We Do

Founded in 1997, the BC LTBIA has made access to suitable wood a top priority. British Columbia's wealth of world-class timber is as varied as it is renowned and as great admirers of this renewable resource, our builders understand that no two logs are alike. From coastal timber to high-elevation cedar, they know the characteristics of each timber type, and always use the highest-quality raw materials – no matter the project.

In part, we strive to represent the industry to all levels of government, and carry out regular volunteer efforts on behalf of our members. Additionally, we seek to improve education and awareness by promoting timber framing and log building to young people, as well as encouraging experienced builders to provide mentoring and on-the-job training.

Our members represent the most talented and productive builders in the region. The BC LTBIA is committed to growing this unique sector of the BC economy. If you're involved in the log home and timber frame building industry, we invite you to join us.

A Dedicated Organization – We support industry practicies, methods, and technologies through workshops, seminars, conferences and newsletters.

Renowned Craftsmanship – We're proud to support BC's rich wood culture, cultivated by our builders with a sense of tradition and quality craftsmanship.

Sustainable Green Buildings – Our builders are able to use lumber with limited environmental impact, ensuring future generations will be able to use and enjoy this prized resource.

Where Wood and Craftsmanship Come Together
BCLTBIA CONFERENCE 2026
March 19-22, 2026

Prestige Harbourfront Resort, Salmon Arm, BC

Delegate Registration Form

BC LOG & TIMBER
BUILDING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

1997 – 2026
29 Years

SUPPORTING OUR UNIQUE BUILDERS

Company Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Name(s) of Company Representative(s) Attending

_____ _____

_____ _____

Early Bird Pricing [EBP] - Register on or before January 31, 2026

First Member Company representative $475 Reg. / $395 EBP ..... $_____

Additional member rep. or guest (number) ___ x $375 Reg. / $300 EBP $_____

Non-member representative(s) (number) ___ x $550 Reg. / $475 EBP $_____

Children 4-12 (under 4 FREE) ___ x $175 Reg. / $150 EBP $_____

List names of children and age:_____

_____

Day rate (Friday or Saturday only) (number) _____ x $275. $ _____
(Circle Day attending)

Dinner only (Friday or Saturday night) (number) _____ x $75. $ _____
(Circle Day attending)

T-shirt size: S / M / L / XL / XXL (circle) Subtotal $ _____

GST 5% $ _____

Total Due $ _____

Credit Card Information - Visa or M/C #_____

Name on Card_____**Exp** ____ / _____ **sec code** _____ **(backside 3 digits)**
Email your completed registration to: bcltbia@gmail.com
Payment accepted by EFT, Credit Card or by Cheque.

If paying by cheque please mail to:
BC Log & Timber Building Industry Association,
116, 5100 Anderson Way #420, Vernon, BC V1T 0C4

Donation to the Auction? Item detail_____

Make it fun, make it unique, make us want to bid on it! All items are greatly appreciated!

Accommodation:

Please call the Prestige Habourfront Resort in Salmon Arm at 250-833-5800 and advise them you with the BCLTBIA to get your preferred rate. **Early booking is recommended.**

This location offers a comfortable yet upscale experience. It is within easy walking distance to the Salmon Arm Wharf, and located just blocks from downtown's shopping and dining offerings. The indoor/outdoor pool and outdoor hot tub on site are just a few of the many amenities guests can enjoy over the conference weekend.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

Full Conference Registration Fees Include:

All workshops, seminars, presentations, meals beginning with Breakfast on Friday into the evening on Saturday & Conference T-shirt.

Need additional information?

Contact the BCLTBIA Office at:
250-545-5647

bcltbia@gmail.com

Where Wood and Craftsmanship Come Together