



# GM's Corner

Stuart Sing



CANADIAN MILL SERVICES ASSOCIATION

# Lumber Matters

It was such a promising start to the year. House construction was strong so demand for lumber was up, lumber prices were following the curve up and our members and their employees were busy working. And then in mid-January we all got word of a mysterious virus that was affecting a major city (Wuhan) in China and it may have started in one of their wet markets. Before we knew it, many people were coming down sick with the weakest, or those with already compromised immune systems dying. Images on TV were worrisome as the demand for hospitals services there was quickly outstripping the ability for the hospitals to take everyone in and people were being bedded down in the hallways.

They say timing is everything and in this case the timing was the start of something bad. With the start of Chinese New Year many people had already started to travel back to their hometowns to celebrate the Lunar New Year with family. Many business people from around the world had also come to China to complete their business before the New Year celebration shut the factories down and they too were returning home to continue their work there.

Once word got out that it may not be a serious infection but it may be a potential pandemic instead, that the lockdown of Wuhan began. Tens of millions of Chinese citizens were confined to their homes in the Wuhan and surrounding counties, but unfortunately the horses were already out before the gate got closed. People had already traveled to their hometowns or went on overseas vacations and the business people returned to their countries, and anyone who was infected may have unknowingly passed on the virus to anyone they may have come in contact with. Of course, we now know this corona virus as COVID-19 but at the time and with minimal symptoms, it got spread around quickly.

The slow closing of borders to international travelers in many countries helped infect more people to the point the World Health Organization finally declared it a pandemic. Then the rush was on to secure enough PPE and ventilators to meet the demands of the population as some hospitals got overrun with new patients. In some countries and cities this has morphed into an emergency to the

point where not enough ventilators were available to treat the rush of patients. In a throwback to World War II, we now see car companies making ventilators and not new vehicles, we now see N95 masks being made whereas the factory was producing boxes previously. When the going gets tough, we improvise.

Needless to say, it is not business as usual at Canadian Mill Services Association (CMSA).

Out Ladies in the office – Ingrid Shen, Rika Hatachi and Catherine Chu are now working mainly from home with maybe one stop to the office in any one week. For Kris Reklinski and Earl Scott, in addition to keeping up with COVID-19 protocols at the large sawmills that they visit, they will generally call ahead to ensure the operation is running and that someone can be present to assist and ensure a safe working area is secured. For John Leahy and myself, again following the COVID-19 protocols of our members, we find ourselves doing more electronic audits where the HT certificates and back-up documents are scanned and E-mail to us instead.

With many of our members taking some downtime, we at CMSA have also adjusted and all staff are taking one to two Work Reduction Days (WRD) or vacation days each month so that we can conserve cash and ensure that we are viable in the future. We too are not immune from the cash crunch so spending has also been throttled back with no unnecessary travel or major expenditures including electronic equipment replacements.

The 2020 BC Lumber Grading Championship which we were supposed to host in Prince George has been cancelled for this year. Lumber Grading Classes in Prince George have been postponed to a later date and the Coast Species Grading Class that was being held in Surrey had to be wrapped up early. This just in, the CMSA AGM has been postponed to later in 2020.

While I was able to do some member visit with Kris in early March, I had to postpone the member visits that I had planned to do with Earl.

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In this our 56<sup>th</sup> edition of Lumber Matters you will hear from Kris as he reviews the COVID-19 Checklist as issued by the CLSAB and the Best Practices document as released by the ALSC. Earl will remind all that the CLSAB and ALSC will resume their visits to BC soon, and how MSR and Kiln Record audits can be handled at this time. From John you will hear of any new Plant Health updates and how electronic office audits can be made better. Ingrid is still collecting names for upcoming educational courses and Rika will insert in the pictures collected during the first few months of 2020.

I have a feeling that this new normal is going to be the normal for a longer period of time than we would like. We will continue to practice proper social distancing at all times and follow the safety protocols of our members. In addition, we will follow the advice of our Provincial Health Officer – Dr. Bonnie Henry as her word is gold.

It's all about keeping you and your families safe, as well as our staff and our immediate and distant family members safe too. The most important thing we can do is practice social spacing and wear a mask if going out. Preferably though, stay home, stay safe and we will check-in with you again in September.

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## CMSA 2020 AGM – Date TBA

Ingrid Shen

Usually CMSA will be holding an Annual General Meeting in mid-June every year.

However, this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the date for the AGM hasn't been confirmed yet. We are following the instructions of BC Government and closely monitoring the situation.

Once the date is confirmed, it will be announced immediately.

If you have any questions about this year's AGM, please contact Ingrid Shen or Stuart Sing at (604) 523 1288 for details.



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## 2' Trimming of Lumber and Cut-in-Two Lumber

Stuart Sing

A reminder to our Members that do Trimming or Cutting-in-Two of lumber as part of their business. First off, make sure you are a part of the CHTWPCP program to retain the KD-HT designation on your grade stamp.

If trimming previously grade stamped lumber by 2' or less, it is not necessary to obliterate the original grade stamp and to re-stamp with your own grade stamp. The original grade stamp may stay.

If the trim amount on previously grade stamped lumber is greater than 2', then the original grade stamp shall be obliterated and your assigned grade stamp (correct grade) applied.

Cutting lumber in two from longer lengths still requires that the original grade stamp be obliterated and your assigned grade stamp applied. The one exception to this rule is if the lumber is already grade stamped on both ends by the original producer. In this case the lumber can be cut-in-two and the original grade stamps can remain on both halves.

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## Farewell to Nancy

*"Nancy was a great friend to the Forest Industry because she understood our challenges and always tried to come up with logical solutions rather than reading from a textbook.*

*Her common sense approach will be missed." (Stuart Sing)*

*"She was west coast based and had many years of experience in all phyto-sanitary matters relevant to wood and the forest industry. Nancy always had a very common-sense and practical approach to all issues, and a good understanding of the science behind the issues." (John Leahy)*

Thank you for your years of hard work and dedication to the industry.  
Wishing you all the best in your new retired life!

**Nancy Furness**  
*(Former Senior Forestry Specialist at CFIA)*



The CLSAB and ALSC recognize that lumber grading agencies and member facilities have to do things differently during the pandemic in order to keep everybody safe.

Due to travel restrictions, CLSAB field staff have been taken off the road and are currently working from home. The travel ban for CLSAB field staff was implemented for the month of April and will continue until mid-May at the earliest.

We expect that the ALSC has similarly restricted travel to Canada, due to the border closures.

During this time CMSA is required to forward copies of all of our monthly audit reports to the CLSAB on a weekly basis. During “normal” times (non-pandemic), our reports are checked by the CLSAB in our office on an annual basis.

Grading agency site visit protocols during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Perhaps the biggest change to our regular field visit protocols is that we are now permitted to contact member facilities to schedule our monthly visits. This has become necessary so that arrangements can be made to safely carry-out our inspections, and respect the site-specific Covid-19 precaution protocols that are in place at member facilities.

General Safety Procedures – for Grading Agency personnel

1. Individuals who are sick should not go to work.
2. Ask for and follow facility COVID-19 policies at each work site.
3. Drive to facilities unaccompanied - one person in vehicle when possible
4. Limit travel to day trips where possible to address hotel stays
  - a. Ensure appropriate COVID-19 practices are in place at time of hotel reservation
5. Use only your own Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
6. Clean personal PPE at least at the start and end of every day it is used
7. Do not use PPE provided by facilities
8. Maintain physical distance of at least 6 feet
9. Do not eat in or enter facility lunchrooms
10. Do not share equipment or tools
11. Carry face masks, for use at the discretion of staff

## **Lumber inspection**

If a grade-stamping facility is in operation, and actively grade stamping, the mill must make grade stamped lumber available for inspection. In the words of the ALSC “Zero oversight is not an option”.

That said, we are very flexible in finding ways to get our jobs done, while maintaining maximum safety for all involved. So far, we do not have any CMSA member sites that are inaccessible on an on-going basis. Many of our members facilities have taken down-time, which we can generally just schedule around. For facilities that are down for an entire reporting period (month), then “nil” reports can be issued.

We observe all standard protocols like the use of PPE, frequent hand washing and maintaining the required physical distancing.

## **Product testing**

Where physical testing is required eg proof-loading MSR lumber and bend-testing finger-joined lumber, our field staff take the necessary precautions to ensure their personal safety, and the safety of facility employees. So far, the testing rooms and equipment have all been accessible and our field staff are able to work alone (no physical distancing issues).

## **Documentation review**

The offices of many of our members are closed to non-employees during this time, and we work-around this by having the necessary documentation handed out to us to review in isolation, or by having the necessary documentation sent-in electronically.

When reviewing documentation on site we either ensure adequate hand-washing pre and post inspection, or wear gloves.

## MSR and Kiln Audits during Social Distancing

Earl Scott

During these strange times there have been some needed changes to ensure the safety of inspectors and mill employees. Regulations state that lumber mills still need to be audited if they produce lumber. Here are some guidelines to make it safer for everyone.

### Testing of samples – SPS 1, 2, 3 and 4

Wash hands with sanitizer or soap before inspection. Agency staff will select and mark all pieces (include a mark to identify the strength reducing characteristics for MSR or testing joint for FJ) and provide them to the facility staff operating the testing equipment. The mill operator will submit photos or video to the Agency prior to testing of the lumber to demonstrate that the testing equipment is set according to the standard. The mill operator can submit photos or video to the Agency of test results. The mill operator will immediately test the samples and provide the Agency staff with the test results. Agency staff may conduct testing on their own. Wash hands with sanitizer or soap before and after examining paperwork.

### Reviewing Records, Certificates and Kiln charts

Wash hands with sanitizer or soap before putting on gloves. Use nitrile gloves when examining records (optional). Make arrangements for access to records in a safe environment. Agency staff may conduct the review on their own. Records, Certificates and Kiln charts can be emailed to Agency staff.



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## Vancouver Island Report May 2020

Terry Ryan

Hello from Vancouver Island during our unprecedented quarantine from COVID 19.

With our Health officials urging us to stay home where possible, keep our distance of 2m and wash our hands frequently this spring has been a different situation to our usual lifestyle.

We are trying to find things to do to keep active without risking ourselves. With spring in the air there are lots of gardening items to keep busy with. Checking Facebook and other internet platforms. Joining in with Zoom conferences and connecting that way with family are all different lifestyles from what we are used to.

On April 29 the new San Group Specialty mill in Port Alberni had a fire in new construction on their property close to the Pulp mill. The owners were interviewed just after the fire was contained and said that of the four machines that were in the structure two were undamaged and two were damaged beyond repair. They said that they had already started a search to replace those two machines.

My mills have some visiting restrictions due the COVID 19 so conducting audits has been a different format from normal.

Keep safe, wash your hands, keep your distance and we will see you hale and healthy when it is safe to resume our “normal” activities.

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## MSR and Finger joint Calibration

Earl Scott

Every member that produces MSR lumber or Finger Joined lumber must have a 3<sup>rd</sup> party annual calibration done on their proof loaders.

Please ensure if your calibration is coming due that the company that does your calibration is booked. Once that is done and you receive a report from the technician, make sure a printed copy is kept in a readily accessible location. The previous year's printed copy is also required to make sure numbers match up on your CUSUM forms.

Lastly your CMSA inspector and our office needs a copy of the latest reports. This is required to satisfy any office audits performed. Thanks in advance for any new calibrations you will be sending us!!

## Prince George Annual Grading Class Postponed

Kris Reklinski

The 2020 spring grading classes in Prince George unfortunately had to be postponed.

We were able to complete the first two classes prior to the risks around COVID-19 increasing. At the time it was tough to make this choice but in hindsight, after all that has gone on surrounding the pandemic, it was the right thing to do.

Having said that, if all goes well moving forward, we are hoping to continue on with the classes this fall. There will likely be extra precautions taken, including appropriate social distancing, but we are hopeful we can resume.

Please check with the QC personnel at your mill as we get closer to the fall to hear more details regarding the course as the province progresses through the stages of relaxing current advisories put out by our health officers.

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## S-P-F and WRC Grading Classes

### – Names Being Taken to Determine Interest

Ingrid Shen

We are collecting names for a potential S-P-F and WRC grading classes for later this year or early 2021.

The S-P-F or WRC class is not guaranteed yet, only if the demand is there, a class will be scheduled.

If you have the interest to take a class, no matter a S-P-F or a WRC class, please give me a call or send me an email to register your name with us so that we know if we can have enough demand for filling up a class.

Again, my email is [shen@canserve.org](mailto:shen@canserve.org) and my phone number is 604-523-1288 ext. 2.

Thank you. Hope everyone staying safe and healthy.

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## Vancouver Island Classes for 2020

Terry Ryan

Once again there are no planned grading classes until the distancing restrictions are eased. There will have to be some changes in how we conduct classes for the time being. I am anticipating grading may start in mid September. Dates and times to be finalized in July or August.



*Photo from  
2020 Coastal Species  
Grading Class*

**CGSWCP – Canadian Green Sawn Wood Certification Program**

I reviewed this program in some detail in our last Newsletter, but note that there is still some confusion around the program.

As of September 1<sup>st</sup> 2019, the only way to ship green lumber to Australia is under a CGSWCP certificate. During the high risk BMSB (Brown Marmorated Stink Bug) season – all Canadian lumber imports will be fumigated at the port of discharge in Australia. Fortunately this period has been shortened to 4 months (wood shipped between Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> and Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>) for CGSWCP certified products.

The CLSAB and CFIA continue to work with the DAWR (Australian authority) to revise the CGSWCP program to include kiln-dried lumber, which cannot be shipped under this program currently.

Heat treated lumber that is certified under the CHTWPCP program, can also be exported to Australia, but it is not recognized as an official “BMSB safeguarding” program. As a result, shipments going under this program will be subject to fumigation at the port of discharge for an extended period (Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup>).

For clarity I have summarized the key features and limitations of the Australian plant health programs in the table below.

**CGSWCP vs CHTWPCP**

Canadian Green Sawn Wood Certification vs Canadian Heat treated Wood Products Certification

	<b>Element</b>	<b>CGSWCP</b>	<b>CHTWPCP</b>
1	Mandatory Plant health certification - industry issued certificate	Yes	Yes
2	Recognized by Australia as a "safeguarding" program for BMSB	Yes	No
3	Applicable to	Green lumber only	Heat treated lumber only
4	Product must have no outer bark, no decay, no live pests, no grub worm holes, no pin worm holes, no powder worm holes and no contaminants	Yes	No
5	High risk season for BMSB - lumber shipped between <i>(Fumigation mandatory at port of discharge in Australia during the High risk season for BMSB)</i>	Sept.1st to Dec. 1st 3 months	Sept. 1st to May 30th 9 months
6	Fumigation not mandatory for certified lumber shipped between	Dec. 2nd and Aug. 31st 9 months	June 1st and Aug. 31st 3 months

**B.C. Lumber Grading Championship**

**Earl Scott**

Hello all, 2020 has been a most upside-down backward year. New words like social distancing, flatten the curve. Many things cancelled or postponed indefinitely. All the major sports seasons cancelled!!

On top of that CMSA the hosts of this years Lumber Championship had to make the difficult but absolutely necessary decision to cancel. We can look forward to next year once things settle down.

Details are unclear at this time but once we know it will be added to one of our newsletters.

So stay safe and we will come out of this.

**CLSAB and ALSC Audits**

**Earl Scott**

Most of the time spring is the start of the CLSAB and ALSC audit season. CLSAB cancelled all audits till mid May, they will be starting up again very soon. Make sure your manuals are up to date, training every two years is one that falls between the cracks. Have a look at your manuals and check the last time your employees were trained.

Spring also brings moisture issues, please ensure your moisture sensors are calibrated and reading correctly. ALSC are under a bit of a different circumstance. As of this publishing non-essential travel is not permitted between our shared border with the United States. When that is resolved ALSC will be up auditing our mills. They are behind on audits, so be ready we will see them!

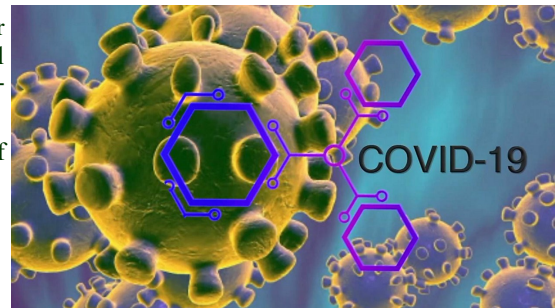
The CLSAB has come out with a “Checklist” of which was agreed upon by the CLSAB Technical Committee and passed by the Operations Committee. This checklist is to assist the accredited agencies (CMSA) during the unprecedented situations surrounding COVID-19.

This checklist covers similar questionnaire inquiries most of our members already ask when we arrive on site in regards to potential exposure and risks. It also includes general safety procedures for when we deal with paperwork and interact within the mill. We will be following this checklist moving forward for inspections as well as any other site specific rules at any of the members we are visiting on a given day.

Here are some of the main points, some of which are different to our previous procedures when completing monthly inspections:

- We may call ahead now prior to our inspections to ensure a mill is operating and if so, that there will be someone on site available to help.
- We have the option to not look at lumber lengths shorter than 8 feet. If we choose to look at shorter lengths, we will view those packages on our own.
- For any reason we are unable to access a mill, a Nil report will be done and will list the reason we were not able to access the members site. Please be aware that zero oversight is not an ongoing option for grade stamping products. Therefore, if we are unable to get into a mill for a prolonged period, other ways of ensuring that grade checking and proper quality control are in place, will need to be put into action.
- Remote electronic review is now an option where it is best suited or where there is no better way of viewing records safely while social distancing, or the physical access to the records is no longer a possibility.

We will of course always maintain social distancing and work with all of our members to ensure our inspections are done safely.



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## ALSC Best Practices Being Put in Place to Move Forward

Kris Reklinski

The ALSC have currently sent out best practices (similar to the CLSAB checklist introduced) in order to have procedures to keep themselves and everyone around them safe as they start to resume completing inspections.

They have a task force currently working on these procedures in case any new concern arises, or if a different procedure needs to be put in place. These best practices have been reviewed by CMSA to ensure we have access to our members in the safest manner possible and still have the ability to continue our inspections in order to maintain the integrity of the ALSC programs we oversee. These practices cover all proper hygiene protocols, as well as clearly stating anyone feeling sick will not work or enter any site. These procedures also allow for certain changes, such as calling ahead to ensure a mill is operating and access is available, the approval of remote viewing of electronic records where we are unable to social distance properly within the mill or offices, and always making sure we use our own PPE and equipment. These best practices may make inspections take longer and therefore in some cases less packages may be viewed. It is also possible to skip viewing lumber under 8' in length until further notice.

Ultimately, if any of our members are grade stamping we must be able to ensure proper oversight is in place to satisfy the ALSC.

We plan to work with our members to utilize other options (within ALSC regulations) if needed, to ensure both the health and safety of everyone, and that proper quality control checks and oversight are in place.

We thank you all for your patience and understanding as we work through these new best practices being implemented and put into place.



**CANADIAN MILL SERVICES ASSOCIATION**

**#200, 601-6th Street, New Westminster, BC, V3L 3C1**

**Phone: 604-523-1288 Fax: 604-523-1289**

**E-mail: [hatachi@canserve.org](mailto:hatachi@canserve.org)**

*Your Association of Choice*

**Photo Gallery (CMSA Member Companies)**

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*Marie Boivin & Patricia  
(Kyahwood Forest Products)*



*Jeff Harris &  
Colin Magel  
(Canfor Houston)*



*Wes Peterson  
(Canfor Plateau)*



*Sajjan Minhas  
(Canfor PG Sawmill)*



*Joe Cvenkel  
(Timberspan Wood Products)*

  
*For any comments and questions,  
please contact Rika Hatachi  
at 604-523-1288  
or at [hatachi@canserve.org](mailto:hatachi@canserve.org)*