



# NEWS

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## **Southern Pine Council Releases Certification Survey Results**

(Kenner, La.) – Recent surveys conducted by the Southern Forest Products Association (SFPA) and *Random Lengths* assessed the use of forest certification programs in the wood products industry and uncovered interesting results.

SFPA sent its survey to 58 Southern Pine producers and received responses from 30.5% of them. The respondents represented both small and large companies. Here are some key findings:

- Almost 39% of respondents use a chain-of-custody certification system
- Almost 85% of the rest say they will pursue certification at some point in the future
- 11% receive weekly requests for certified products and 50% receive monthly requests
- 89% feel it is important to market Southern Pine lumber as a “green” product.

*Random Lengths* respondents:

- Approximately 56% do not engage in a certification program
- Seeking certification depends heavily on “regional market variances, whether the customer base is residential or commercial, and whether a seller seeks a share of government projects that require green certification.”

SFPA surveyed Southern Pine producers who are members of the Southern Pine Council and *Random Lengths* surveyed a broader industry representation, including producers, wholesalers, distributors and retailers.

Russell Richardson, SFPA’s director of industrial markets, helps translate some of the data. “Certainly, one impediment to seeking certification is cost,” he said. “According to *Random Lengths*’ survey respondents, the average cost of obtaining and maintaining certification is

\$19,898 annually. Five respondents noted costs as high as six figures. While some companies don't currently have certification programs, they are hearing a lot about it and are working to accommodate their customers."

Richardson added, "Based on the numbers we are seeing from these surveys, feelings toward certification are mixed. Producers are environmentally conscious. However, they must balance the cost of investing in a certification system to prove they are environmentally conscious against the need to maintain a viable business model. The growth of certification systems will largely depend on how much demand green building projects create for certified wood products."

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The Southern Pine Council (SPC) is a joint promotional body coordinated and supported by producing members of the Southern Forest Products Association (SFPA) and the Southeastern Lumber Manufacturers Association (SLMA). Both associations represent manufacturers of Southern Pine lumber. SPC is the leading source of information about Southern Pine products for design-build professionals and consumers.

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