

HOUSE BILL 553

57TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2025

INTRODUCED BY

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This document may incorporate amendments proposed by a committee, but not yet adopted, as well as amendments that have been adopted during the current legislative session. The document is a tool to show amendments in context and cannot be used for the purpose of adding amendments to legislation.

AN ACT

RELATING TO TIMBER; ENACTING THE TIMBER GRADING ACT; PROVIDING FOR IN-STATE STRUCTURAL TIMBER GRADING CERTIFICATES; PROVIDING FOR THE USE OF STRUCTURAL TIMBER THAT IS GRADED AND LABELED IN-STATE HAFC→; ~~MAKING AN APPROPRIATION~~←HAFC .

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. [NEW MATERIAL] SHORT TITLE.--This act may be cited as the "Timber Grading Act".

.230449.4AIC March 8, 2025 (11:15am)

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[bracketed material] = delete
Amendments: new = →bold, blue, highlight←
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SECTION 2. [NEW MATERIAL] DEFINITIONS.--As used in the

Timber Grading Act:

A. "building inspector" means a person certified by the construction industries division of the regulation and licensing department and certified by one or more trade bureaus to conduct inspections of permitted construction work to ensure that all work performed by a contractor or homeowner complies with applicable building codes;

B. "certificate" means the document provided to a person after completion of a program that allows that person to engage in timber grading and labeling as a grader;

C. "division" means the forestry division of the energy, minerals and natural resources department;

D. "grader" means the owner of a sawmill or a person employed by a sawmill who is certified to inspect, grade and label structural timber at that sawmill;

E. "label" means a document that provides information on the grade of structural timber that was milled in-state;

F. "program" means the structural timber grading certificate program; and

G. "structural timber" means dimensional lumber, structural beams and vigas milled in-state.

SECTION 3. [NEW MATERIAL] DIVISION POWERS AND DUTIES--
STRUCTURAL TIMBER GRADING SYSTEM--STRUCTURAL TIMBER GRADING

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CERTIFICATE PROGRAM--STRUCTURAL TIMBER GRADING CERTIFICATE.--

A. The division shall:

(1) create a structural timber grading certificate program accessible to sawmill owners and the employees of sawmills to provide training on structural timber grading and labeling. The program may be provided by a public post-secondary educational institution;

(2) develop a state-specific system to grade and label structural timber based on the system used by the American lumber standard committee;

(3) issue a structural timber grading certificate to a person who completes the program; and

(4) promulgate rules to carry out the provisions of the Timber Grading Act, including for the:

(a) awarding of certificates;
(b) training components of the program;
(c) qualification of program instructors; and

(d) grounds and processes for the suspension or revocation of certificates.

B. The division may charge a fee not to exceed two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) for the issuance of a certificate.

C. A certificate shall include the name of the recipient and the date of issuance and shall expire after five years.

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D. The division may suspend or revoke a certificate for good cause as provided by rule. The grader shall be given notice of the reason for suspension or revocation and given the opportunity for a hearing. Procedures for the notice, hearing and final decision shall be provided by rule in conformity with the Uniform Licensing Act. A final agency decision may be appealed as provided in Section 39-3-1.1 NMSA 1978.

SECTION 4. [NEW MATERIAL] STRUCTURAL TIMBER GRADING LABEL--USE OF STRUCTURAL TIMBER IN CONSTRUCTION.--

A. A grader shall prepare a label for structural timber that has been graded and shall provide the label to the purchaser of the structural timber. The label shall include the following information:

- (1) the name of the grader;
 - (2) the name and location of the sawmill where the timber was processed;
 - (3) the name of the timber species;
 - (4) the quantity and type of structural timber that was graded and labeled;
 - (5) the location where the timber is to be used;
 - (6) the date that the timber was cut and processed;
 - (7) the date on which the timber was graded;
- and

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(8) the moisture content of the timber at the time of grading.

B. A grader shall only grade and label structural timber that the grader has processed at the sawmill the grader owns or is employed by.

C. Structural timber that has been graded and certified in-state may be used in all residential and commercial buildings in the state.

D. The end user of structural timber that has been graded and labeled in-state shall provide the label to the building inspector in lieu of a grade stamp, and the label shall be accepted as proof of grading. Timber that has been graded and labeled in-state is equivalent to structural timber grade stamped by an accredited lumber grading or inspection agency.

HAFC→~~SECTION 5. APPROPRIATION. --One hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the energy, minerals and natural resources department for expenditure in fiscal year 2026 to contract with timber grading experts to establish the structural timber grading certificate program and to develop curricula for the program. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2026 shall revert to the general fund.~~←HAFC

- 5 -

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