



Why Dead Standing Logs?

If you are interested in a log home, you've probably read about or heard various explanations about log drying or log moisture content. Arguably, this is the single most important consideration in selecting logs.

Unfortunately, a great deal concerning the drying process has been discussed and published, while the real issue is often overlooked. That issue is – what is the moisture content of your logs at the time they are milled and subsequently put to use in your home.

The method of drying is not particularly important to you, the home owner. Each of the three primary techniques – air drying, kiln drying and use of dead standing wood – can achieve the same moisture content. Each has its advantages and disadvantages, *to the processor*, not to you, the home owner! You gain an advantage when you are assured that your logs have a low level of moisture content. So, the question that should be asked is not whether the logs are air dried, kiln dried or dead standing, but rather, *what is their moisture content!*

What are dead standing logs? They are trees that have been killed by NATURAL causes such as forest fires, lightning strikes, etc. They remain standing for long periods, often years. Their bark falls off allowing them to dry slowly and thoroughly, before they are cut down and delivered to processors.

When a manufacturer uses dead standing wood with a low moisture content, you are assured you will receive logs that will not shrink, check, twist, bow, crook or move appreciably. This means you won't experience future structural problems, settlement, gaps, window and door operating problems and other unsightly wall conditions.

Wood House Homes uses only dead standing, dry logs in its homes! In short, building a Wood House Home assures you of future peace of mind because your home will be built with dry stable logs of the highest quality available in the industry.

There is another issue involved with the use of dead standing logs; *this is the issue of log quality*. Dead standing logs are harvested primarily in the Pacific Northwest where conditions and seasons are more suitable to growing the highest grade timber.



Less than 20% of the companies in the industry grade their logs under the watchful eye of an independent grading agency. Why is grading important? First, because it is required by all national model building codes, which have been adopted by every building code authority in America.

Second, because the grades give you a clearer picture of the quality and strength, and therefore the long term performance expectation over time. The factors on which the grades are determined indicate the current and long term structural and other performance expectations.

The fact that your logs are graded is good – this assures you that you will meet code requirements in your locale. The fact that your logs are actually very high grade is even better – this assures you that the long term performance of your logs will exceed the minimum standards and will out perform lower grade logs. As in drying, it's not the process that's important, but the level of moisture content achieved. So too, in grading, it's not just whether the logs are graded, it's what grades are the logs.

The grading system consists of seven grades in two categories: dry and unseasoned, or "green." The grades are, from the highest to the lowest: Premium, Select, Rustic, Wall Log 40, Wall Log 30 and Wall Log 27. Each grade is determined by the presence and degree of various wood defects. Obviously, to receive the highest grade the log must have the fewest defects or the lowest level of defect allowed. To be graded and stamped "Dry" the logs must be below 19% moisture content. *If the logs are not stamped "Dry," they are not dry, no matter what the supplier says he/she did to the logs.*

Wood House Homes has consistently supplied over 90% of its logs in the two highest grades, and 100% are graded "Dry!" According to the Timber Products Inspections, a third party grading agency, Wood House Homes has consistently provided logs of the highest grades – Premium, almost 80% of the time; Select, almost 17% of the time and no logs are below Wall Log 40.

Building a Wood House Home guarantees you a log home with the driest and highest quality logs used in the industry. This guarantees you a beautiful, sound, long term investment in the home of your dreams.

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