

Western Pallet

Magazine for WPA Members
August 2019

Magazine

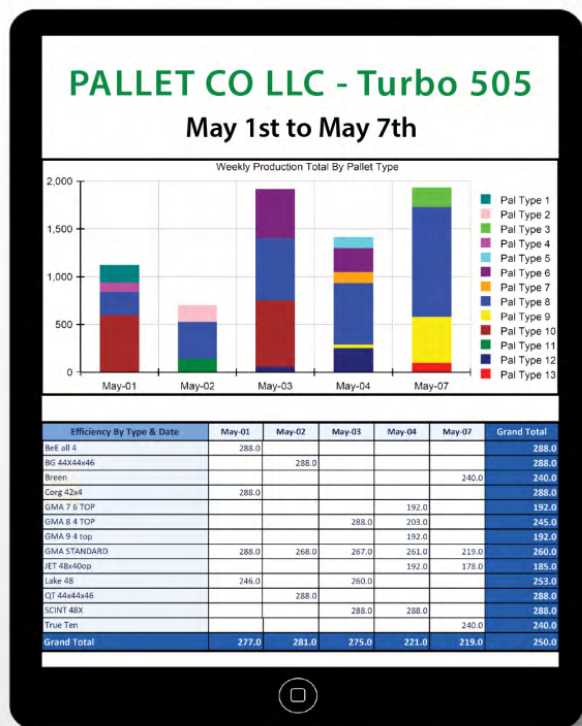


**Stockton Posts Cease & Desist Notices at 6 City
Pallet Operations**

Moreno Pallets, Oregon Pallet Struck by Fire

WPA Creates New Vision for the Future

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North American Softwood Prices

Softwood prices listed as of August 21, 2019, courtesy of NRCAN.

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Residential Construction Update

U.S. housing start information for July 2019.

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Diesel Fuel Update

New information updated August 26, 2019.

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WPA's Future Vision

The WPA Board met with an experienced industry consultant this May to draft a vision statement and to create a vivid description of a desired future.

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Stockton Orders Closure of 6 Pallet Companies

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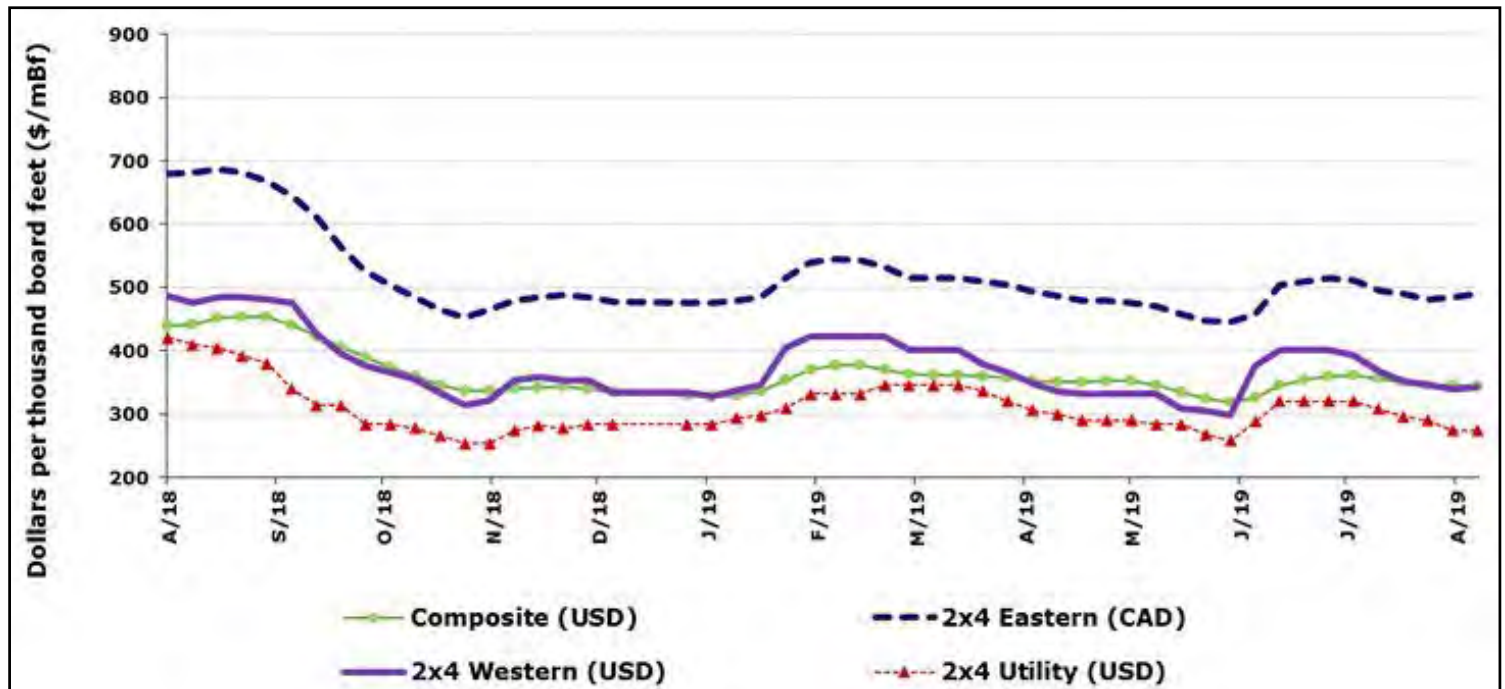
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North American Softwood Prices

Weekly softwood lumber prices to August 21, 2019 are shown below, sourced at <http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/forests/industry/13309>.



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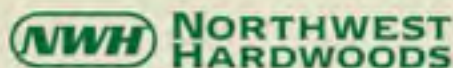
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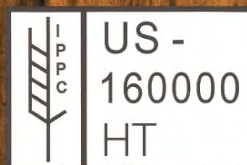
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Residential Construction, July 2019

Released August 16, 2019 (www.census.gov)

The U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development jointly announced the following new residential construction statistics for July 2019:

Building Permits Up 8.4%

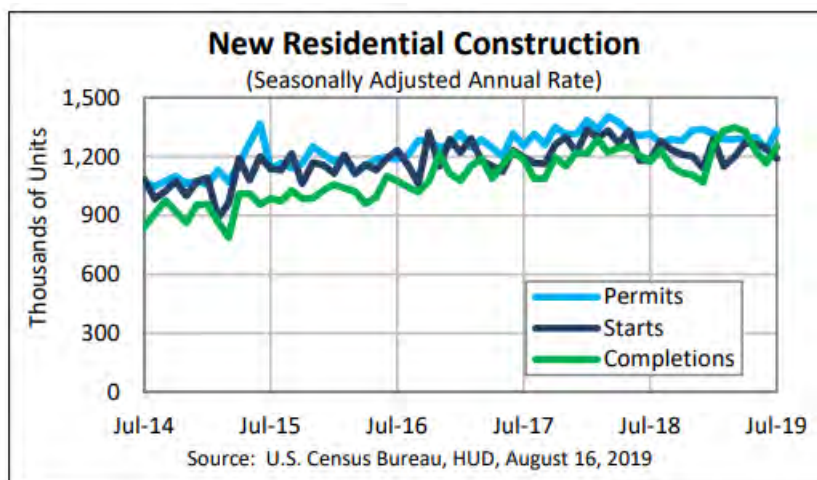
Privately-owned housing units authorized by building permits in July were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,336,000. This is 8.4% above the revised June rate of 1,232,000 and is 1.5% above the July 2018 rate of 1,316,000. Single-family authorizations in July were at a rate of 838,000; this is 1.8% above the revised June figure of 823,000. Authorizations of units in buildings with five units or more were at a rate of 453,000 in July.

Housing Starts

Privately-owned housing starts in July were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,191,000. This is 4.0% below the revised June estimate of 1,241,000, but is 0.6% above the July 2018 rate of 1,184,000. Single-family housing starts in July were at a rate of 876,000; this is 1.3% above the revised June figure of 865,000. The July rate for units in buildings with five units or more was 303,000.

Housing Completions

Privately-owned housing completions in July were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,250,000. This is 7.2% above the revised June estimate of 1,166,000 and is 6.3% above the July 2018 rate of 1,176,000. Single-family housing completions in July were at a rate of 918,000; this is 4.3% above the revised June rate of 880,000. The July total for units in buildings with five units or more was 321,000.



EPA Diesel Fuel Update

Updated August 26, 2019

Pending Home Sales Climb 2.8% in June

Pending home sales continued to ascend in June, marking two consecutive months of growth, according to the National Association of Realtors®. Each of the four major regions recorded a rise in contract activity, with the West experiencing the highest surge.

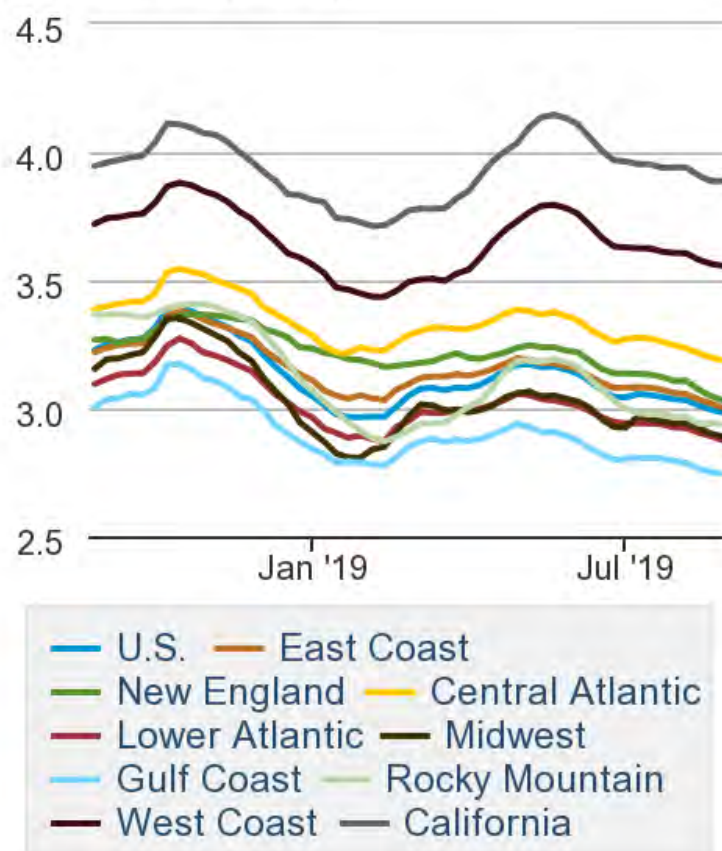
Lawrence Yun, NAR chief economist, said the 2.8% increase can be attributed to the current favorable conditions and predicted the rise is likely the start of a positive trend for home sales. "Job growth is doing well, the stock market is near an all-time high and home values are consistently increasing. When you combine that with the incredibly low mortgage rates, it is not surprising to now see two straight months of increases," he said.

Yun notes June's contract signings indicate that buyers are both enthusiastic about the market and of the potential wealth gain, but he added that home builders need to increase inventory. "Homes are selling at a breakneck pace, in less than a month, on average, for existing homes and three months for newly constructed homes," he said.



On-Highway Diesel Fuel Prices

(dollars per gallon)



Source: Energy Information Administration

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WPA to reveal its strategic planning initiative at the 2020 WPA Annual Meeting

Camas, WA – The WPA Board will reveal the results of its recent strategy planning efforts for the association at the 2020 WPA Annual Meeting in Rancho Las Palmas, California. The meeting, titled "Pallet Focus: Building a Sustainable Future," takes place January 17-21, 2020, and will be held once again at the Omni Rancho Las Palmas Resort.

At the meeting, members will hear the results of work completed to date. The process began in earnest when several members of the WPA Board met in May to develop a long range vision for the Western Pallet Association. Paul Meyer, an association planning consultant, was hired to facilitate the process. Paul had worked with NWPCA and The Pallet Foundation to develop their long-range plans. Several of the WPA board members were in those meetings.

During the day and a half meeting, the board worked through a process to develop a vision statement and a vivid description of the desired future of the association. This started with a discussion about conditions, trends, and assumptions about the future that would have implications to the future direction of the WPA. The board is very excited about the vision and description statements that were developed.

While the vision statement is a great start, without an implementation plan it is all just talk. The next part of the process was to develop a set of 3-7 year goals that would achieve the vision that had been set. Initially 10 areas of focus were discussed in several small breakout groups. These were shared with the whole group.

While the vision statement is a great start, without an implementation plan it is all just talk.

Four key goals were chosen and the beginnings of an implementation plan for each were discussed. The objectives were ranked according to immediate, maybe, and later timing and impact. The board is excited about the results and is eager to present the vision and goals to the members at the 2020 Annual Meeting. This year the opening event on Saturday evening will be a dinner at which time the long range plan will be unveiled.

(Cont'd on Page 14)



**January 17-21, 2020
Rancho Las Palmas
Resort**

(Cont'd from Page 13)

A key part of the plan is to have more ways members can be involved in the association. The four key goals will be driven by separate committees.

"We urge members to help us create the WPA of the future by volunteering for one of the committees," stated Dave Sweitzer, WPA Executive VP. "We hope you will be

as excited for our future as we became during the planning session."

The WPA encourages all members to attend this milestone event, to be held Saturday, January 18 at the 2020 WPA Annual Meeting in Rancho Mirage.



Stockton Posts Cease & Desist Operations Notices at 6 City Pallet Operations

The City of Stockton acted on the morning of August 21, 2019 to close six local pallet yards. According to a statement from Richard Edwards, Stockton Fire Marshal, "the pallet operations pose a significant threat to public safety, due to the volume of wooden pallets and how the pallets are stored."

Edwards explained that the City of Stockton requires pallet yards to store idle pallets within 150 feet of a water supply and develop a site plan that identifies pallet storage areas, all fire hydrant locations (on-street and on-property), and fire access roads. "The business owners ordered to stop operations today have received repeated education, information, instructions, inspections and violation notices, and all have failed to make corrections and submit plans to operate safely," he said.

There are 15 pallet companies within Stockton. Six of them have failed to meet compliance requirements, according to information.

These businesses include:

*AA Universal Pallets – 1621 Navy Dr.
California Pallets – 235 W. Scotts Ave.
Central Pallets – 1881 E. Market St.
G. Pallets – 1717 Sanguinetti Ln.*

*New Star Pallets – 2150 E. Fremont St.
Pallet Guy – 1030 N. Union St.*

Since January of 2019, the City has assigned a Special Inspector in the Fire Prevention Bureau to specifically address pallet yards, working with partners in code enforcement to ensure consistency between inspections.

"The goal is initially to educate our businesses to what those codes are, how to interpret those codes and how to apply them correctly," Edwards stated. "Beginning in June of this year, we also gave each pallet operator a formal letter stating what the requirements were for their operations."

The letter specifically addressed items such as hydrants for fire suppression capabilities. All pallet yards are required to store their pallets within 150 feet of a fire hydrant within the city of Stockton. Additionally, all pallets need to be stored within 150 feet of an access road. "That's an improved all-weather surface through either concrete or asphalt so that we can actually get our fire apparatus to those pallets when they're burning," he added. The letter instructed pallet companies to provide documentation back to the fire department within 30 days.

(Cont'd on Page 14)



Richard Edwards, City of Stockton Fire Marshal

(Cont'd from Page 13)

"After that 30 days, most of these businesses that were listed were unresponsive to our request to comply with the fire code and the Stockton municipal code," Edwards continued. The non-compliant were ordered to stop all operations involving pallet intake, repair, manufacturing or recycling. The only activity they are allowed to perform is to remove existing pallets to reduce risk to neighboring businesses and the surrounding areas.

"Pallet businesses are a very unique operation in that their commodity, the pallets, turn over almost daily," Edwards said. "As you can imagine inspecting only once a year, what we see today is going to

be significantly different tomorrow."

"What we found was that because of that turnover of pallets, while sometimes they would be compliant, we would go out days later, and they wouldn't be just because of the sheer volume of pallets that are there," he continued, resulting in the enforcement action.

I don't own the property. I don't have the fire hydrants," said Mary Dela Rosa of New Star Pallets said to ABC10 in reaction to the closures. "So, today, I thought they would give me more lead time like, yeah they've been telling us what we need to do to be in compliance. But, all of a sudden with no notice today, it was immediately shut down."

"They did give us some warnings, but we at least need more time," Alexander Zavala also commented to ABC10. "We have so many people that's working. We just need the time, little bit more to be able to keep operating so we can let our customers know, as well as our employees to find new jobs."

everybody was educated about the code requirements for these businesses and give them ample time to make the necessary adjustments." After almost 60 days after the June letter had been issued, however, he stated that the pallet companies had been unresponsive, and that is why the city took action.

For its part, Edwards maintained that the initial enforcement activity was about education. "We wanted to make sure



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Pallet Companies in Oregon and California Hit by Fire



News report includes interviews with Atlas Pallets and Moreno Pallets after the Caliente Fire

This August has seen major fires hit pallet operations in California and Oregon.

On August 1, fire struck Atlas Wood Products and WPA-member Moreno Pallets at Otay Mesa in the San Diego, California area after a fire started in a nearby ravine, burning almost 500 acres. The fire initially did not appear to be a threat. "Far away, we saw that the little fire started, and then a fire truck was nearby, so at that point I thought everything was under control," Atlas Pallets owner Francisco Ramirez told ABC10. However, the canyon's shape and

sudden gusts of wind fanned flames and put them in a collision course with pallet inventories at the two operations.

"The canyon has a different amount of fuel, so you get a change in the fuel. And also how the wind traverses or travels through a canyon affects the rate of spread," San Diego Fire-Rescue Deputy Chief Chris Heiser told ABC.

According to Pancho Ramirez of Atlas Pallets, the yard, equipment and pallet inventory took the brunt of the damage. Approximately 60,000 pallets were lost.

Saúl Moreno-co-owner of Moreno Pallets, told the San Diego Union-Tribune that before leaving every afternoon, employees were tasked with checking cables or the plugs on the property, and there were fire extinguishers in every place as required by law. In this case, however, the Caliente fire started a few miles away.

"(I feel) sadness," Moreno told the newspaper. "These are things that happen, but I have faith that we are going to get ahead. Now all we have to do is start all over again."

While both had insurance, it didn't cover certain materials such as wood, according to the report. Moreno's daughter, Evelyn Moreno, opened a GoFundMe campaign calling for community support to rebuild the two businesses, which collectively employ more than 30 people.

Oregon Pallet Fire: We'll Be Back, Bigger and Better

On August 19, a fire took place at Oregon Pallet in Salem, Oregon. The fire began about 3 am on a Monday morning after the plant had been closed for the weekend. A majority of the plant's inventory was lost, while an excavator, a grinder, 11 trucks and a yard goat were also destroyed in the blaze. Total losses estimated in the range of \$2.5 million.

Carly Taylor of Oregon Pallet, told a local newspaper that the company is fully insured and will rebuild.

Bryce Taylor of Oregon Pallet told Western Pallet Magazine that he has been overwhelmed by the support his company has received from customers and the overall community. And he said that his crew has gone above and beyond in the recovery effort.

After acquiring new trucks from multiple states, the company has quickly recovered. It is successfully making all of its deliveries in the second week following the blaze.

In 20 years, Oregon Pallet has only previously ever called the fire department on one occasion for a very small fire.

Bryce said that the company moved into its current structure in 2016, and a lot of effort was taken at that time to ensure that fire safety planning was in place, contributing to the building being saved in the August 19 fire.

While the company was well insured, there is always a case for more. "Whenever you think you have enough insurance, buy more," Bryce said. He is looking forward to catching up with WPA members at the 2020 Annual Meeting.



Workers Comp Insurance: Look Beyond the Cheapest Quote

When it comes to buying workers compensation insurance for your pallet business, don't make the mistake of just going for the lowest quote, according to John Tillery, managing partner of WPA-member Whiteboard Risk & Insurance Solutions.

"A lot of companies think the best way to get the lowest quote on their workers compensation is by going to multiple brokers for quotes, and then whoever brings in the lowest one gets the deal," Tillery cautioned. He believes that not enough attention is given to understanding the impact of claims on insurance premiums, and how that low-cost initial premium can escalate out of control in subsequent years in the absence of proactive claims management.

The problem with workers comp is that every participating party, from doctor to lawyer to insurance company to insurance broker, has a direct financial incentive to drive up the cost of your claims, Tillery emphasizes. Doctors may feel at liberty to order additional tests or therapy, for example, while workers comp lawyers are often hired on a contingency basis. You only pay the lawyer if they win the case, so lawyers

are incentivized to go for the largest permanent disability settlement possible. The insurance company makes more money as premiums mount in succeeding years, and for the insurance broker, the larger your premium becomes, the more money they make on their 10 to 15 percent commission.

While two identical pallet companies may start off with an identical insurance premium, they can vary significantly as a result of claims over time. To sketch an example, Tillery describes two operations that start at the same rate of \$100,000. Then, however, claims take place - more for one company than the other.

An EMR of 1.0 is the average claims experience for a company in a particular industry. The company with low claims costs might drop to an EMR of 0.80 or \$80,000 - or lower than the industry average, while the plant with higher claims (higher than average) might jump to an EMR of 2.0 or \$200,000.

"If nobody's proactively managing claims for your company, a \$5,000 claim can turn into a \$20,000 claim," Tillery said. "And because of the way the experience model works, for every dollar the insurance company pays out, up to what's called a

company is going to charge the pallet company over a three year period \$4 for every \$1 they have had to pay.”

The insurance companies get to recoup the work comp claims cost for medical and disability payments only, Tillery notes. None of the money insurance company spends defending you or investigating the claim can ever come back to hurt your EMR at all. This means it's much better for the pallet operator that the insurance company spends \$50,000 in defense and investigation than it is to settle that same claim for \$5,000.

As a result, while it might seem cheaper for pallet operators to settle a claim rather than to investigate, this approach is a false economy. Operators will ultimately pay a lot more in aggregate over succeeding years.

Tillery emphasizes the importance of choosing an insurance provider based on the value that they bring, not the quotes. To start, he advises looking for a provider that offers proactive claims management, 24-hour nurse triage, and EMT response.

For more information, visit www.whiteboardrisk.com.



The Membership Drive Is On!

This year's membership drive is now underway, and as always, the competition will be intense.

In addition to valuable cash prizes, the winner now also receives the membership plaque, presented at the Annual Meeting. With the highly successful 2019 Annual Meeting now in the books, it is time to work toward 2020.

When you recruit new members, the entire WPA membership is the winner!

New members can join and pay on the website. Here is the link: www.westernpallet.org

Global Pallet Market to Reach \$88.69 Billion by 2026

The rising standard of operations in goods transportation is helping to increase the practice of palletization and is driving the growth of the global pallet market.

As per Fortune Business Insight's newly published report, titled "*Pallets Market: Global Market Analysis, Insights and Forecast, 2019-2026*", the pallet market, which was valued at almost US\$ \$60 billion in 2018 is anticipated to expand at 5.1% CAGR between 2018 and 2026 to reach nearly \$89 billion. These global standards are expected to necessitate the adoption of pallets during the forecast period.

Wood Pallets Cover the Maximum Share

Among different types of pallet materials such as plastic and corrugated, wood pallets are anticipated to account for the largest share in the global market during the forecast period. These pallets are preferred over others owing to their massive benefits such as reduced startup cost and less response time in terms of customized designs. Other benefits offered by wood pallets is that they can be repairable and have high strength.

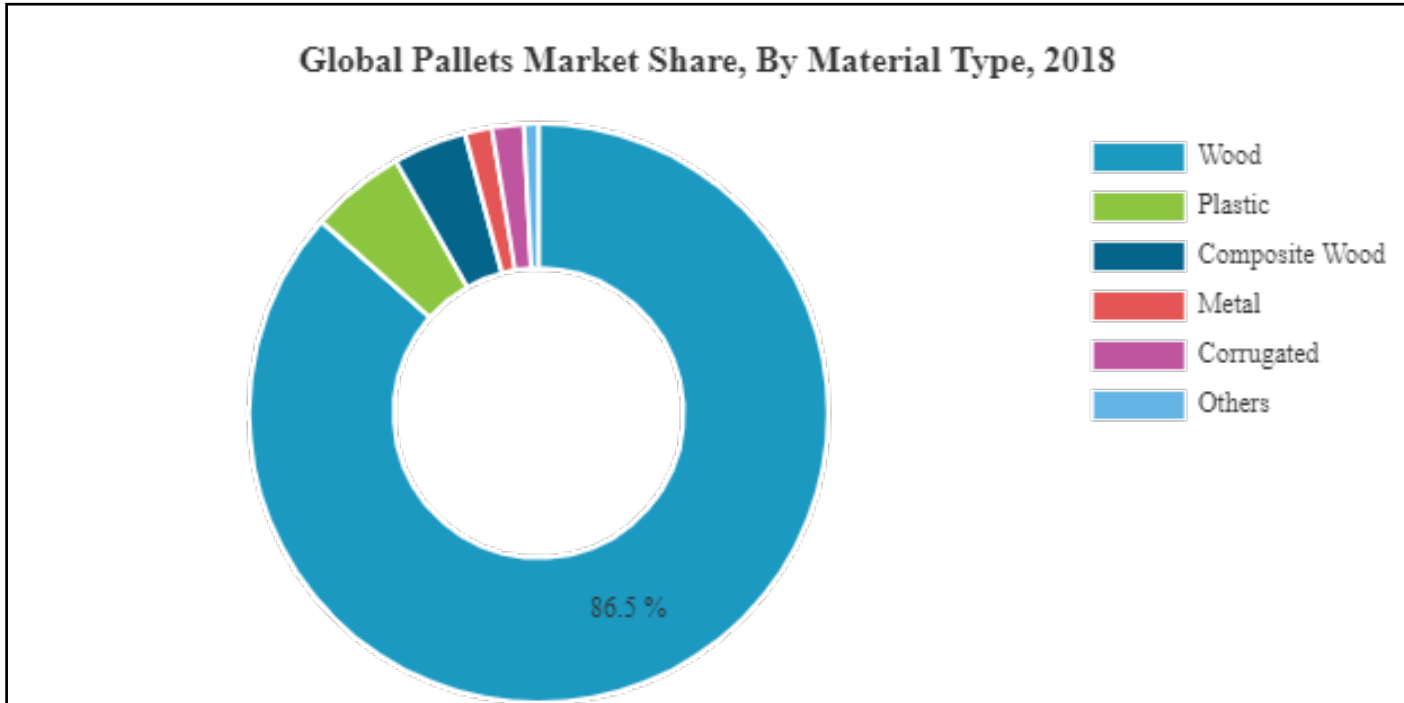
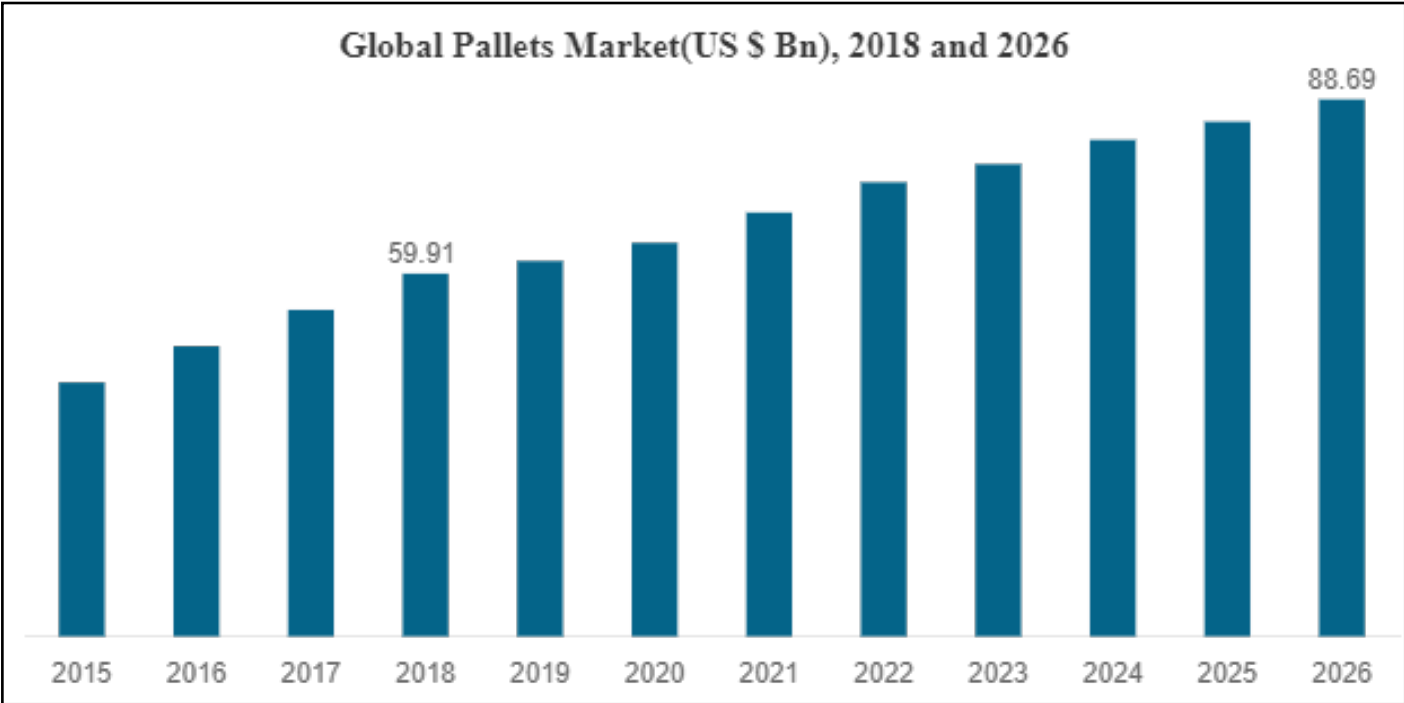
On the other hand, wood pallets have limitations regarding direct food contact for food safety compliance. Also, plastic pallets can offer improved durability, and as such are likely to gain traction in the forthcoming years. Plastic pallets are


more durable and lightweight, which will augment their demand among consumers.

Market Registers Impressive Growth in MEA Owing to Saudi Arabia's New Waste Management Technologies

The pallet utilization is expected to be high in Asia Pacific during the forecast years. In 2018, the market was valued at almost \$15 billion and is anticipated to lead the global pallet market in the next few years. The region registers the highest adoption of plastic and wooden pallets for massive imports and exports of goods. Countries such as China and India are likely to be the most progressive markets in the forecast years.

The market in the MEA (the Middle East and Africa) generated a value of \$6 billion in 2018. The market is expected to grow in this region owing to the rising adoption of plastic pallets, especially in the logistics and transportation industry. Among countries in MEA, Saudi Arabia adopted novel technologies for waste recycling management. Furthermore, the country produced around 15 million tons of municipal waste every year. It is planning to continue adopting new technologies in order to reproduce and recycle plastic products for material handling equipment and industrial handling equipment.



Source: Pallets Market: Global Market Analysis, Insights and Forecast, 2019-2026. 

Social Media Roundup

What's new in social? Click on images to check.

Kathleen Dietrich liked a post in National Wooden Pallet & Container Association



Annette Ferri • 1st

National Wooden Pallet and Container Association (NWPCA)

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Pallet Design System™ training was extended down under with a two day course in Melbourne from August 22-23. Led by Dr. Brad Gething, class attendees learned all about pallet design and even got a glimpse of a soon-to-be release - PDS V6.0 - which will include a unit load analysis for corrugated boxes. [#pallet](#) [#training](#) [#palletsmovetheworld](#)



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National Wooden Pallet and Container Association (NWPCA) ✓

Yesterday at 8:02 AM · 🌐 · 📍

Brian Williams references wooden pallets during a discussion on leading economic indicators. That's something we can agree on, and our total \$31 billion economic impact was recently proven with NAMs recent research. <https://bit.ly/2zoTKdl>
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Keta Kosman • 1st

Owner at Madison's Lumber Reporter

23h

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Lumber Industry Hoping for Improved Sales in September

All thoughts were on Labour Day and the final throes of summer 2019 last week, as North American construction framing softwood lumber sellers were able to hold firm on pricing for most solid wood commodities. Many players were out-of-office enjoying this waning August. Following a very confusing US home building season, which saw significant curtailments and down-time at several large British Columbia sawmills, the supply-demand balance has corrected.

The price of benchmark lumber commodity Western Spruce-Pine-Fir KD 2x4 #2&Btr last week gained \$4, or 1.2%, to close the week at US\$346 mfbm compared to \$342 the week before.

FULL STORY: <https://lnkd.in/gysqK-w>

#sawmill #wood #forest #building #lumber #construction #softwood #housing

Lumber Prices: Current Compared to Recent and Historical Highs, and to Recent Lows

		2014		to 2019					
d board feet	Current:	Recent High:	%	All Time High (Previous or Current)		% Change: Current vs. All Time High			
	08/26/2019	June 2018	Change						
	\$ 381	\$ 550	-30.7%	3Q2005	\$460	-17.2%			
	\$ 346	\$ 622	-44.4%	2Q2004	\$443	-21.9%			
	\$ 430	\$ 690	-37.7%	2Q 2004	\$529	-18.7%			
	\$ 380	\$ 590	-35.6%	2Q 2004	\$500	-24.0%			
	\$ 275	\$ 445	-38.2%	2Q 2005	\$445	-38.2%			

Lumber Industry Hoping for Improved Sales in September

madisonsreport.com



Northwest Hardwoods

1,885 followers

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Despite the losses, wood product manufacturing is still a large industry in Oregon and is especially important to rural areas of the state. <https://bit.ly/2LoNhF1>



Oregon wood product industry a shadow of former self, but still huge in rural areas

woodworkingnetwork.com



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AUGUST 2019

Brambles: Strong revenue momentum offsets inflation and cost challenges

Brambles says it delivered a solid FY19 result in a challenging economic and operating environment. Sales revenue momentum was strong, with growth of 7% exceeding the company's mid-single digit revenue growth objective. It managed impressive volume growth in spite of strong competition in every market and a moderation in like-for-like volumes in line with the slowdown in most major economies and the global automotive industry.



Underlying Profit growth of 2% was achieved despite the inflationary environment and the continuation of broader cost challenges in the CHEP Americas segment. Despite a moderation in the rate of transport and lumber inflation increases, price realization continued to lag input cost increases during the Year. The company anticipates this dynamic to persist into FY20 given industry expectations for ongoing transport, labor and property inflation.

"In CHEP Americas, the rollout of our US margin improvement initiatives, including the accelerated automation program, is progressing well," stated Graham Chipchase, Brambles CEO. "We continue to expect these initiatives to help offset cost pressures from network capacity constraints and changes in customer behavior to deliver progressive margin improvement over the next three fiscal years."

Commenting on the FY20 operating environment, Chipchase said: "Volatile global trading conditions and political instability which have led to a slowdown in organic growth in core European markets such as the UK, France and Germany in FY19 are expected to continue. Similarly, the contagion effect of the US-China trade war has the potential to lead to a broader slowdown in global underlying economies in FY20."

Chipchase added: "While competition remains rational in most markets, the retail landscape continues to evolve and challenge our customers' established business models, leading to additional demands upon suppliers. At the same time, while industry expectations around broader inflation expectations vary, we anticipate sustained inflationary pressures in labor, transport and property in core markets such as the United States and Europe."

Robert Holliger re-elected President of EPAL



The General Assembly of the European Pallet Association e.V. (EPAL) unanimously confirmed the appointment of the incumbent President, Robert Holliger, and the entire EPAL Board, for a further three years in office. Robert Holliger is a founding member of EPAL and since 2010, has been President of the international umbrella association for exchangeable load carriers such as the Euro pallet and Box pallet. In his role as EPAL President, Mr Holliger has decisively contributed to the development and continuing success of the world's largest quality assurance association for load carriers.

With currently more than 500 million EPAL Euro pallets in the open exchange pool and over 100 million EPAL Euro pallets produced and repaired annually,

the open Euro pallet pool has developed into the world's largest, and therefore most efficient, load carrier pool in the past five years. A system based on reusability, it contributes enormously to sustainability.

Under Robert Holliger's presidency, the "EPAL in oval" branding has become an international trademark of quality and safety. Trademark protection and combating counterfeiting are therefore also important cornerstones for maintaining the quality of the world's largest open pallet exchange pool in the future. Furthermore, the development of an intelligent (IoT) pallet in cooperation with the Fraunhofer IML, is an important step towards digital load carriers, which will expand the EPAL portfolio by using the pallet as an information carrier.



News Briefs

WPA-member insurance brokers offer coverage tips

Increasingly, pallet companies are finding it difficult to obtain and afford insurance coverage. Experts identify ways that you can lower your rates and improve chances that carriers will bid for your business. In this article, Brian King and Paul Quandt of Hub International share tips for getting more for less. [Read more.](#)

Damages sought from 2018 pallet factory explosion

When Sonoma Pacific Co. experienced a major fire in 2018, an exploding propane tank took flight and damaged a 35-foot RV at a nearby property. Now the RV owner is suing. [Read more.](#)

Thomas Dambo builds 7 giant trolls made from reclaimed wood in Belgian forest

Using old shelves, pallets, and branches from fallen trees, Dambo has built the giant wooden trolls. the installation marks the 15th anniversary of the electronic festival as a gift to the local community. over 200 volunteers helped to collect the materials needed before Dambo and a crew of 15 people spent 25 weeks building the sculptures.



*One of Dambo's latest trolls.
[Read more.](#)*

Knowing and controlling costs a key for trucking operations

Knowing your cost per mile and managing trucking operations to maximize efficiency enables a company to be competitive in pricing the cost of delivering finished goods and controlling transportation costs. [Read more.](#)

Connect with Western Pallet Association!



Upcoming Events

9/11/2019 - 9/12/2019 Western Hardwood Association Annual Convention, Portland, Oregon
www.westernhardwood.org

9/23/2019 - 9/25/2019 Pack Expo Las Vegas, Las Vegas NV

10/1/2019 - 10/2/2019 NWPCA Fall Plant Tours, Toronto, Ontario. www.palletcentral.com

10/9/2019 - 10/11/2019 FEFPEB Congress, Hamburg, Germany. www.fefpebcongress.org/

1/17/2020 - 1/21/2020 WPA Annual Meeting, Rancho Mirage, California
www.westernpallet.org

3/4/2020 - 3/6/2020 NWPCA Annual Leadership Conference, Naples, Florida
www.palletcentral.com

In case you missed them...

(Click on back issues to read or download)

