

The Link

Newsletter | June 2024



What's New at the HMA?

by Ian Faight

Executive Vice President, HMA



It's hard to believe that it's already June. The year is flying by and things are as busy as ever at the HMA office.

We're fresh off the Hardwood Federation's Fly-In, which brought more than 60 industry stakeholders to Washington, D.C. It was an excellent opportunity to meet with policy makers and their staff to discuss the issues facing our industry

and impacting your businesses. And several members of HMA's NextGen Leaders Council were able to make the trip for their first Fly-In. From talking to them, it was a valuable and informative experience all around.

Next week, I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at HMA's Spring Regional Meeting in Franklin, Tennessee. We have several great tours lined up that'll cover a lot of miles in the Volunteer State. I know it's difficult to take time away from the office, so it's encouraging to see such a strong turnout. If you have been on the fence about registering, there's still time, but I encourage you to act fast as hotel rooms are limited. All the details can be found online at HMAmembers.org.

I also want to give a special shout out to our meeting sponsors for their incredible support and helping to ensure our event is enjoyable for all. They're listed on page 3, so join me in thanking them when you see them around next week.

On June 25, 10 am Eastern, we'll host our 2025 NatCon planning call. We're asking for about an hour of your time to hear your thoughts on the topics you'd like to learn more about, ways you've recently improved your operations, equipment upgrades you're considering, and potential event themes. To sign up, send me a note at ian@hardwood.org and I'll make sure you receive the Zoom details. For now, please save the date for our 2025 National Conference and Expo, which will take place June 10-12, in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Volner Sawmill Joins HMA

Join us in welcoming **Volner Sawmill, Inc.**, Parsons, Tennessee, to the HMA ranks!



Our main contacts are:

Stephen Dorris, President & Owner
sdorris@volnersawmill.com

Grant Dorris, Mill Manager
sdorris@volnersawmill.com

We are looking forward to seeing Stephen and Grant at our Spring Regional Meeting.



**To all the dads out there,
Happy Father's Day!**

Spring Regional Meeting Tour Sites

HMA's Spring Regional Meeting is set for Franklin, Tennessee, **Wednesday–Thursday, June 12–13**, and there are four exciting tours lined up. Keep reading for a sneak peek of each location. And if you haven't yet registered, there's still time to take care of business. Visit HMAmembers.org for all the details. The costs are as follows:

- **\$275** for HMA members, Promotion Contributors and 2024 NatCon Sponsors and Exhibitors
- **\$600** for Non-Members

A limited number of rooms are available at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Nashville South Cool Springs (820 Crescent Centre Dr., Franklin, TN 37067). Make a reservation online at Hilton.com or call **615.515.5151**.

Thompson Appalachian Hardwoods | Huntland, TN

Founded in 1993, Thompson Appalachian Hardwoods has grown from a small green sawmill to a full-service forest products company with a fully optimized sawmill, dry kilns, concentration yard, planer mill, and comprehensive timber procurement program. The family-owned company is committed to full

forest utilization as an integrated forest products manufacturer, producing high-quality hardwood lumber, industrial products, and wood biomass to serve regional and global manufacturers of furniture, flooring, and millwork, along with crosstie treaters and the pulp and paper industry.



Mayfield Lumber Co. | McMinnville, TN

Mayfield Lumber Company began operations in 1971 as a wholesale business, and transitioned into a concentration yard in 1980, specializing in red and white oak, ash, hickory, and poplar. Today, the company has 900,000 square feet of kiln capacity and S2S planing capability. Their most recent upgrade is a grading line sorter system by Froedge Machine & Supply Co.



Clark Hardwoods | Erin, TN

Part of Clark Lumber Company, Clark Hardwoods was established in 2018 after the purchase of J.V. Averitt Lumber Co.—a family-owned operation with a 114-year history—and has since increased production by 80% by focusing on increasing yield and efficiency.

The facility features state-of-the-art saws, lumber handling equipment, and dry kilns, including a brand new optimized edger and a new carriage—both by Cleereman Industries. They are currently installing a new grading line with a sling sorter by Froedge Machine & Supply Co. for both green and kiln-dried lumber, which may be operational during the tour.



Middle Tennessee Lumber Co. | Burns, TN

Back in the 1930s, Middle Tennessee Lumber Company (MTL) founder Bill Cockrall operated a sawmill on Cleveland Street in downtown Nashville. As the business grew, he expanded with two additional mills on the city's outskirts.

Word of the timber spread and its demand gave MTL the ability to move to their current 22-acre location in Burns.

Since becoming a family-owned business in 1985, MTL has successfully become one of the most diversified hardwood companies marketing lumber, flooring, and mouldings across the U.S. and internationally.

More details are available at HMAmembers.org.



Recognizing Our Sponsors

Thank you to the following companies for signing on as sponsors for our Spring Regional Meeting. Your extra support is truly appreciated and helps ensure our event provides a great experience for all attendees.



fcma.com



frankmiller.com



koppers.com



mayfieldlumber.com



mcgriff.com



midtnlumber.com



newriverhardwoods.com

Two Training Opportunities From NTC

HMA's partner in education, Northcentral Technical College, is offering two training opportunities at its 27,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art Wood Technology Center of Excellence in Antigo, Wisconsin.

Kiln Drying Short Course

Calling all kiln operators, purchasers, sales representatives, production supervisors, plant managers, and all who deal with wood moisture related issues. NTC and the Great Lakes Kiln Drying Association are offering a Kiln Drying Short Course, **August 13-15**.

The workshop will focus on drying systems, controlling lumber quality, species specific drying, wood structure and drying science. With more than 20 breakout sessions, participants will be prepared for maintaining a successful kiln operation.

For more information and to register, visit ntc.edu.



Band Saw Filing Certificate Program

NTC is offering their accredited Band Saw Filing Certificate Program, **September 16-October 11**. Designed for current saw filers, saw filer trainees, and sawmill managers, this program provides an opportunity to get hands-on, intensive training to prepare learners for careers in the saw filing profession. The four-week program focuses on:

- Safety and handling saws
- Effective use of measuring tools and equipment
- Applying trade-based formulas
- Benching band saws (level and tension)
- Fitting band saws (swage/shape/grind)
- Welding band saws using MIG & Oxy Acetylene torch equipment
- Maintaining saw guides
- Maintaining, aligning, & timing band saw grinders
- Aligning band mills

The program is limited to eight participants. Learn more and register at ntc.edu.

Staying Social with Real American Hardwood

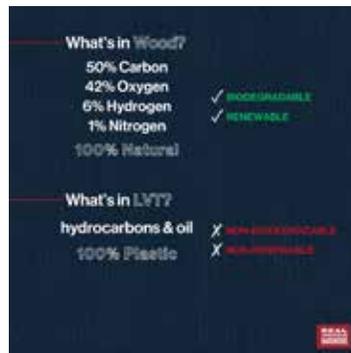
by Ian Faight

Executive Vice President, HMA | Digital Community Manager, RAHC

In May, the Real American Hardwood Coalition (RAHC) continued telling our industry's many stories on social media through a series of informative posts. Following is a brief overview in case you missed them:

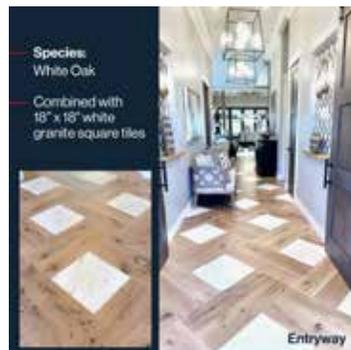
Separating Fact From Fiction

There's a lot of misinformation out there when it comes to flooring products. To help homeowners make an informed purchase decision, the RAHC shared a post to show how Real American Hardwood stacks up against LVT. See the post on [Instagram](#).



Making a Design Statement

The RAHC continued its Hardwood Makeover series by featuring a stunning floor. Installed by Rock Solid Hardwoods Inc., the project paired the natural beauty and character of white oak with white granite inlays and expert craftsmanship. Take a look on [Instagram](#).



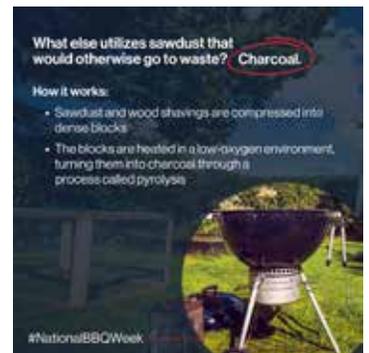
Representing Our Industry on Capitol Hill

More than 60 representatives from the hardwood industry traveled to Washington, D.C., for the Hardwood Federation Fly-In. The RAHC shared a photo and told followers about the day and meetings with U.S. senators, congressmen, and congresswomen to discuss issues and policies that could have a positive impact on small businesses, educational institutions, communities, and the entire industry. See the post on [Instagram](#).



Real Wood Adds Real Flavor

May is known as National BBQ Month and the RAHC took the opportunity to educate its followers on how byproducts left over from lumber production are transformed into sustainable fuel for BBQ pits, smokers, and grills. Whether as pellets or charcoal, Real American Hardwood adds rich flavor to summer cookouts—naturally. See the post on [Instagram](#).



Follow Along

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- @RealAmericanHwd
- @RealAmericanHardwood



The Latest from Capitol Hill

by Dana Lee Cole

Executive Director, Hardwood Federation



USDA Drops \$74 Million on Grants for Wood Products

Drawing from the Inflation Reduction Act and infrastructure law, on May 14, USDA **announced** it would make nearly \$74 million available to promote wood products, including through the wood innovations grant and community wood grant programs.

The Administration's outlay will support **171 project proposals** across the public, private and non-profit sectors. Highlights include funding for installation of "cutting edge equipment in sawmills," mass timber projects, and "converting heating systems to sustainable biomass boilers."

Congress Moves to Strike Corporate Transparency Act

On April 29, the Hardwood Federation joined nearly 100 trade associations representing small business to sign a **letter endorsing legislation** introduced by Rep. Warren Davidson (R-OH) to repeal the Corporate Transparency Act (CTA). The bill would end reporting requirements that target small and family-owned businesses. The CTA took effect this year and requires small businesses and other covered entities to report the personal information of their owners and managers to the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network at the Treasury Department, creating red tape for business owners with little demonstrable benefit for law enforcement.

November Election Sets Up Tax Debate

With reduced tax rates for individuals, large corporations and small business from the 2017 tax reform law set to expire at the beginning of 2025, whoever controls the legislative and executive branches come January will have an immediate impact on bottom lines for business and individuals. A central feature of the 2017 tax law reduced the corporate income tax rate from a top rate of 35% to a single flat tax rate of 21%, a provision most Democrats and some Republicans are placing in the crosshairs. Also, the new law created the 20% small business deduction for Qualified Business Income (QBI), an effort to place small business on an even playing field with larger corporations. As for individual filers, the top rate was reduced from 39.6% to 37% after tax reform. Barring legislative intervention, the small business deduction will disappear while the rates for corporations and individuals will revert to their higher levels in 2025.

Farm Bill Updates

The House Agriculture Committee reviewed, marked up, and moved its version of the Farm Bill out of Committee on a surprisingly bipartisan vote. The bill is positive for the Hardwood industry in several ways:

- The Market Access and Foreign Market Development programs which are reauthorized at double current funding levels, a high-level priority for the Federation.
- The bill includes language specifying forest-based biomass energy as carbon neutral, an issue the Federation has been aggressively working on for years. Although the language applies only to Department of Agriculture policymaking, we are encouraged that we have a toehold in the underlying bill and will look to broaden the provision's scope to other departments as we move along in the process.
- Provisions of the Jobs in the Woods Act, supported by the Federation, also are included in the Farm Bill. Forestry and forest products sectors are added to the Rural Innovation Stronger Economy (RISE) program—an existing program at USDA that focuses on workforce development through issuance of grant funding.
- Reauthorization of the Community Wood Grant Program for another five years as well as the Wood Innovation Grant program were moved forward. These two initiatives have funneled millions of dollars in grants across the country on construction projects utilizing mass timber, as well as energy efficiency and equipment upgrades at sawmills.
- The bill also includes provisions authorizing broad Categorical Exclusions (CEs) to expedite forest management projects on federal forestlands.

The Farm Bill weighs in at more than 900 pages, and the Federation team continues to wade through its many provisions. It is unclear when the legislation will be considered on the House floor and approval is far from certain as the bill has come under withering criticism from Democrats over its treatment of SNAP—the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program that provides food benefits to low-income families to supplement their grocery budgets.

EPDs Prove Real Wood Floors are the Natural Choice

by Sara Skwaryk
 Communications and Administrative Coordinator, HMA

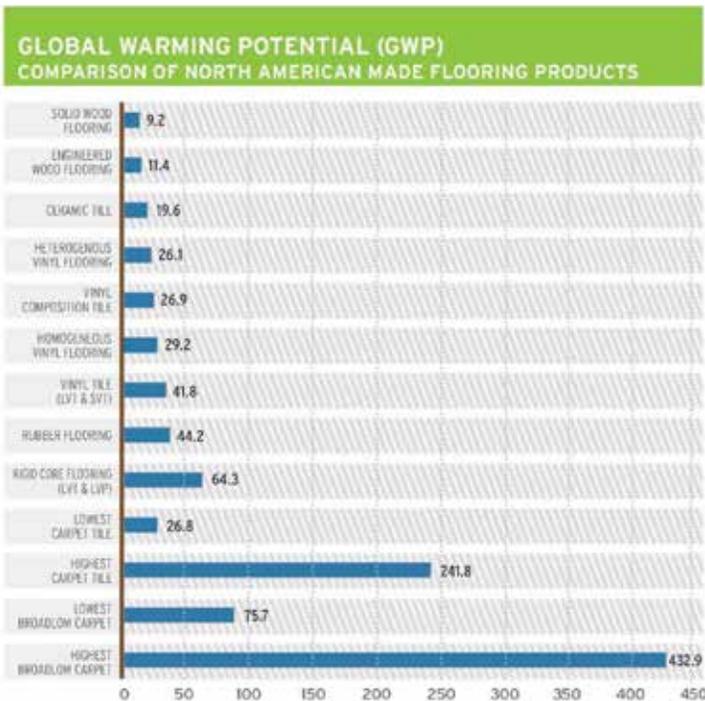
For architects and designers who are looking to specify environmentally friendly flooring materials, there's only one natural choice: real wood. And now, Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) are available from the National Wood Flooring Association (NWFA) and the Decorative Hardwoods Association (DHA) that compare wood flooring to wood-look alternatives and other products. These resources provide insight into a product's environmental impacts through objective, scientific data that details how a product is made and its impact on the environment throughout its entire life cycle.

EPDs allow for transparency into impact through allowing data to be digested in an accessible and comparable way. When set against all other flooring product categories that have released EPD data, solid and engineered wood flooring boasts a considerably smaller carbon footprint, or Global Warming Potential (GWP). Because EPDs are required to report impact categories such as global warming potential, ozone depletion, smog creation, and land/water pollution, companies can communicate unbiased information about products confidently.

Michael Martin, NWFA president and CEO, says that until now, flooring manufacturers have marketed their products as environmentally friendly, but concrete data to support these claims remained to be seen. "Now," Martin says, "these tools offer a straightforward way to cut through the confusion and identify environmentally responsible, real wood flooring products that will withstand the test of time and add value to a home."

Additionally, EPDs act as a resource for builders, architects, and specifiers to meet requirements for green building rating systems such as LEED v4.1. They also have led to the establishment of an industry benchmark that product-specific EPDs can be measured against, incentivizing manufacturers to design and build lower impact products.

For more information and to review the complete EPD results for solid and engineered wood flooring, visit NWFA.org.



GWP impact data was taken from industry averaged EPDs in all flooring categories except Carpet Tile and Broadloom Carpet, which are not available. Carpet impact data was collected from a search of publicly available product specific EPDs. GWP impact data is presented in kg of CO2 equivalent gases per square meter of flooring.



The Link is published each month exclusively for members of the Hardwood Manufacturers Association. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the HMA; HMA staff welcomes comments and questions.

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