



American
Wood
Council

AWCNews

A News Release from the American Wood Council

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AMERICA'S LEADING WOOD BUILDING PRODUCTS COMPANIES PLEDGE TO HELP HAITI REBUILD STRONGER, SAFER BUILDINGS

Group Calls on Federal Officials to Focus Reconstruction on Earthquake-Resistant Wood Instead of Less-Resistant Materials

WASHINGTON – Today the American Wood Council, a trade group comprised of America's leading wood building products companies, pledged its assistance to help Haiti rebuild safer, more earthquake-resistant buildings in the wake of its recent devastating earthquake. AWC also offered its technical expertise to U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton as reconstruction plans are developed and urged her to help prevent a recurrence of the devastation by focusing on building materials and methods that can effectively resist earthquakes, such as wood.

"The devastation we've seen is so complete, and the human suffering is so severe that it's difficult to look at. I can't comprehend how difficult it must be for those who have and continue to suffer through this tragedy. Lessening the effects of a future earthquake in Haiti means helping the country rebuild with smarter materials and building methods than those employed in the past, and that means utilizing wood," said AWC's Robert Glowinski.

"Much of the severe devastation we've seen is from collapsed, older unreinforced concrete and masonry structures and could have been prevented if these structures had been built from wood. Unfortunately, unreinforced or lightly reinforced concrete and masonry structures can't dissipate seismic energy or provide ductility under earthquake loads the way wood construction can. A recent full-scale test in Japan demonstrated that a six-story wood apartment building can withstand a 7.5 magnitude earthquake—considerably more severe than the one that struck Haiti," Glowinski added. A video of the test can be seen at: http://www.awc.org/HelpOutreach/faq/FAQfiles/Seismic_Design.html.

In addition to the critical structural capability wood provides, wood's renewability, low life-cycle environmental impacts, and ability to sequester carbon provides the optimal combination of green building and stability for earthquake-prone areas. Additionally, as compared to other construction materials, wood is also more affordable to transport and easier to handle on-site.

AWC publishes the construction industry's authoritative ANSI-accredited standards for wood construction, including standards for building with wood in earthquake-prone areas. AWC pledged to provide its earthquake construction guides to U.S. and Haitian reconstruction officials free of charges, as well as to make its construction engineers available at no cost to provide technical advice to those helping to rebuild the country.

Also, in a letter to Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, AWC chairman Marc Brinkmeyer made AWC's building expertise available to U.S. government officials as plans are developed to help the country rebuild.

A copy of the letter is attached to this press release.

For more information on AWC, visit awc.org.

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American
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Traditional and Engineered Wood Products

February 3, 2010

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20522-0112

Dear Secretary Clinton:

On behalf of America's wood building products companies, I am writing to pledge the American Wood Council's (AWC) assistance to you, your staff, and other U.S. federal government officials, as you initiate planning for our nation's effort to help rebuild Haiti in the wake of that nation's recent devastating earthquake.

AWC serves as the industry's technical experts on building with wood. We publish the ANSI-accredited standards for all wood building construction in the U.S., including standards directly referenced in U.S. building codes for building with wood in areas prone to special risks, such as high wind and earthquakes.

Our industry wants to be part of the efforts in Haiti to assist those who have suffered through this tragedy. Critical to preventing a recurrence of such wide-scale loss will be helping Haiti rebuild with more earthquake-resistant materials and building methods than those employed in the past.

Much of the severe devastation we have seen is from collapsed, older unreinforced masonry structures and could have been prevented if these structures had been built from wood. Unfortunately, unreinforced or lightly-reinforced masonry and concrete structures are unable to dissipate the energy or provide the ductility under earthquake loads the way wood construction can.

In addition to the critical structural capability wood provides, wood's renewability, low life-cycle environmental impacts, and ability to sequester carbon provides the optimal combination of green building and stability for earthquake-prone areas. Additionally, as compared to other construction materials, wood is more affordable to transport and easier to handle on-site.

To help Haiti rebuild with safer wood materials, AWC pledges to make available to those involved in the rebuilding effort its ANSI-accredited design guides for wood construction, including standards for building with wood in high wind and earthquake-

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prone areas. We also pledge to make available our design engineers to provide technical advice to those helping to rebuild, all at no cost.

The outpouring of support to Haiti from around the world has been inspirational and generous. The wood products industry looks to do its part, as well, and believes that AWC's wood building construction resources and its 107 years of construction expertise can be a valuable resource to not only help rebuild Haiti, but help rebuild it safer and better than before.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions or comments about our offer. In the coming days I will be following up with members of your staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marc Brinkmeyer", written over a horizontal line.

Marc Brinkmeyer
Chairman, American Wood Council
Chairman, Idaho Forest Group

cc: Dr. Rajiv Shah, Administrator, USAID