



## Certified Tropical Hardwood

This fact sheet describes a Fort Collins building code change effective January 1, 2012. The requirements apply to all new residential and non-residential construction.

### **Code reference**

*International Building Code (IBC) Sec. 3602.2* – applies to nonresidential and all multifamily housing.

*International Residential Code (IRC) Sec. R324.3* – applies to single-family detached housing, duplexes, townhomes.

*“All tropical hardwoods used in new construction, additions and alterations requiring a building permit, shall be certified by the Forest Stewardship Council or other approved agency. Certification demonstrating compliance shall be required with delivery of such materials and shall be available for inspection”.*

### **What is “certified wood?” and why is it important?**

Many wood product users have little information about the source of their lumber. Some forest management practices cause environmental damage such as habitat loss, increased erosion and stream sedimentation. Some wood products begin with illegal logging operations.

Programs have been developed to certify wood that comes from forests that are responsibly managed and harvested. For example, the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC, [www.fsc.org](http://www.fsc.org)) is an independent, non-governmental, not-for-profit organization established to promote the responsible management of the world’s forests. FSC-certified forest products are verified from the forest of origin through the supply/custody chain. FSC officials maintain theirs is the most rigorous forestry certification system to ensure responsible forest practices are maintained, including environmental protection, social equity & economic viability.

The FSC and other certification programs based on recognized responsible forest management practices cover an array of wood products, from construction-grade framing lumber, custom cabinetry and interior finish wall paneling, to applications such as durable interior flooring and weather-resistant outdoor decking.

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### **How do I comply with the code requirement?**

The Fort Collins building code requires that all **tropical hardwoods** used in new construction be certified by the FSC or other agency approved by the Building Official. The main uses of tropical hardwood in Colorado are for decks (examples: Garapa, Ipe, Mayan Mahogany, Santa Maria) and hardwood flooring (examples: eucalyptus, tigerwood, bamboo, Brazilian cherrywood). All of these varieties can all be obtained as certified products.

The building permit holder/authorized representative must provide appropriate certification documentation available upon request by the Building Inspection Division. FSC-certified products are sometimes clearly identified with the FSC logo. The retailer/yard can ask their supplier to stamp the material with the FSC label. However, to ensure the product is FSC certified, verify that the invoice from the certified retailer/yard states their FSC CoC code and FSC claim (ie: FSC-Mix)

The City of Fort Collins encourages building owners, designers and contractors to use other certified wood products as well.

### **Where are complying materials available?**

Most Fort Collins area building-supply centers and local lumber dealers can provide certified tropical hardwood products from wholesale outlets across the country. Check to see whether products are stocked or special order. Additional sources are located in the Denver metro area.

Search for FSC-certified products and species and certificate holders on-line. Note: the only web site with up-to-date information on the validity of a FSC certificate is <http://info.fsc.org/>.

### **For more information**

- Forest Stewardship Council – United States: [www.fscus.org](http://www.fscus.org)
- Sustainable Forestry Initiative: [www.sfiprogram.org](http://www.sfiprogram.org)
- American Tree Farm System: [www.treefarmssystem.org](http://www.treefarmssystem.org)
- Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Systems: [www.pefc.org](http://www.pefc.org)
- Sustainable Forest Management Program, Canadian Standards Association (CSA): [www.csa-international.org/product\\_areas/forest\\_products\\_marking/](http://www.csa-international.org/product_areas/forest_products_marking/)

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