



The Big Event Each Fall

By Donna Harman, President and CEO, AF&PA

This fall our country will undertake an important event that will recognize how far we've come. We'll consider our progress and make important decisions about the work ahead.

While the rest of the world is focused on the U.S. Presidential election, the forest products industry is busy educating public officials, community stakeholders, and employees about the value we bring to consumers and communities across the country.

National Forest Products Week, recognized each year during the third week of October, is an opportunity to bring focus to the enormous contributions that the more than 900,000 Americans who work in our industry make to the country.

This year in particular those contributions go well beyond making world-class products. National Forest Products Week 2016 will be a chance to acknowledge the measurable progress on the paper industry's sustainability leadership.

Sustainable practices are the foundation of the forest products industry. AF&PA members are committed to promoting sustainable manufacturing practices and ensuring our resources will be as available for future generations as they are today. That commitment is what led to the creation of our *Better Practices, Better Planet 2020* sustainability initiative, which includes one of the most extensive sets of sustainability goals established for a U.S. manufacturing industry.

This year our biannual sustainability report documents significant progress on many of these goals, including: a record high recovery rate for paper of 66.8 percent; and exceeding our goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (achieving 16 percent reduction) and improving our workplace safety inci-



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dent rate (reducing the rate by over 40 percent).

Our commitment to environmental sustainability is equally matched by our commitment to maintain and grow our economic contribution to our country and foster the well-being of the communities in which we operate. The products we

make are at the center of that economic commitment and National Forest Products Week.

Forest products really are essential to society. Lumber, joists and particle board are essential to building energy efficient, sustainable houses. Hand written cards and letters are cherished by friends and loved ones.

We use paperboard to safely and hygienically package milk, cereal and other food items. Then we use Kraft paper to create the recyclable, renewable paper bags with which we carry those groceries out of the store.

We help others protect valuable shipments when using corrugated boxes. And our products protect against transfer of germs through gauzy textured paper converted to napkins, paper towels, facial and bathroom tissue.

Pulp serves as the feedstock for the entire Christmas wish list experience. Pulp is used to produce paper for magazines and catalogues that companies and consumers rely on for the latest product developments. Pulp is used to produce paper and envelopes for kids to send their wish lists to Santa Claus. And of course paper is used for Santa's list that he checks twice.

In fact, even mornings don't really work without paper products. Coffee filters and k-cups or paper tea bags are used to fill paper cups on the way out the door to work, school or errands. Add a newspaper and maybe a napkin for a muffin. Take the paper products away from mornings and you have a caffeine free, uninformed – and messy – start to the day.

The list of forest products extends into almost every corner of our lives and the Americans who go to work every day to make them extend into almost every corner of the country. Employees in more than 5700 facilities produce \$238 million in products every year. That's one reason why the forest products industry is among the top 10 manufacturing sector employers in 45 states.

Overall, these statistics tell an incredible story about the nation's forest products industry. This October 16 to 22, National Forest Products Week will help provide a megaphone for that story to tell Americans of all political stripes how far we've come and where we plan to go. I hope you join us in telling our story to celebrate forest products this year by using #CelebrateFP.

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