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Using Wood as a Building Material

Wood has been used as a building material for centuries, but some question if timber is the best option. Wood has many advantages over other building materials. Benefits such as being environmentally friendly, cost effective, and locally available, make timber a universal choice.

Compared to other materials, lumber leaves a smaller carbon footprint, and doesn't emit carbon dioxide when cut. Using the sun for energy allows wood to let off only a small amount of greenhouse gas. Wood is a biodegradable, natural, renewable, and eco-friendly material.

Building with lumber is more economical than using other building materials. Wood is easy and reasonable to modify for creativity. Wood buildings that are properly managed are low maintenance, providing a great choice for low cost building needs.

Wood is locally grown, easily available, and helps improve the economy. Forty percent of Idaho is forest, providing many forest-related jobs. According to Idahoforests.org, "There are about 15,800 jobs directly related to forest management, harvest operations and wood, paper and furniture manufacturing. Another 13,300 jobs support the industry." They also give back through "endowment" forests, supporting schools and institutions.

Decay, termites, and water damage are disadvantages of wood, which can be solved by the finishing process of KDAT, where wood is placed in a kiln after pressure treating. The treated lumber has less warping, and is protected against mold and moisture. One thing that discourages people from using wood is that it can burn. CLT is strips of wood layered different directions and glued together, slowing burn time and making it safer. Since all wood's disadvantages are treatable, it continues to be a favorite option.

Franklin Roosevelt said: "A nation that destroys its soil destroys itself. Forests are the lungs of our land, purifying the air and giving fresh strength to our people." Thanks to trees, we have oxygen, less carbon dioxide, and wood products such as paper, tables, and houses. We must ensure new trees are planted when mature trees are harvested so there will always be enough wood. Overall, if forests are well maintained, using wood as a building material is an excellent choice.

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