

Structural Use Panel Thickness Labeling Changes

Weyerhaeuser produces structural plywood and OSB panels and both products are manufactured under two distinct industry consensus standards. Structural plywood is manufactured under *U.S. Voluntary Product Standard PS 1 Structural Plywood* and Weyerhaeuser OSB is manufactured under *U.S. Voluntary Product Standard PS 2 Performance Standard for Wood-Based Structural-Use Panels*. These standards are published by the U.S. Department of Commerce and have been successfully used to manufacture structural panels for U.S. markets for decades. As consensus standards, they are directly referenced in U.S. model building codes. Both standards describe product and/or performance requirements for structural panels used in residential construction applications. Among the requirements addressed are panel thickness tolerances.

PS 1 (structural plywood) thickness tolerances for sanded plywood are $\pm 1/64$ " for panel thicknesses of $3/4$ " or less, and $\pm 3\%$ for panel thicknesses over $3/4$ ". For unsanded, touch sanded, or overlaid panels the thickness tolerances are $\pm 1/32$ " for panel thicknesses of $13/16$ " or less, and $\pm 5\%$ for panel thicknesses over $13/16$ ".

PS 2 (Wood-Based Structural-Use Panels) thickness tolerances are $\pm 1/32$ " for panel thicknesses up to $13/16$ " and $\pm 5\%$ for panel thicknesses over $13/16$ ".

National, state, and local governments require that goods sold by weight, volume or dimension meet specific tolerances for consumers to make value comparisons and enable fair competition. These tolerances and requirements are enforced through each state's department of weights and measures. Like other states, the California Department of Food and Agriculture Division of Measurement Standards (DMS), applies specifications from the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) Handbooks 130 and 133 to goods sold in that state. NIST requirements specify that products sold by dimensions up to 1 yard, be within $\pm 3\%$ of the labeled dimension.

NIST and PS 1/PS 2 requirements are not consistent with one another, so panels that meet PS 1/PS 2 thickness requirements may not meet NIST requirements. In California, this inconsistency has led regulators to identify, or tag, quantities of panel products as being out of compliance with state regulations. Once product has been tagged, few options exist for the disposition of the product. DMS began tagging product at retail stores in April 2008. In response to this, structural panel industry representatives met several times with California state officials to seek a resolution. In May of that year, an agreement was reached to label panel products with a supplemental thickness designation that is consistent with the NIST 130/133 requirements and PS 1/PS 2. The nominal panel thickness is now designated as a "thickness category" and supplemental thickness information will be compliant with NIST requirements. Below are examples of new panel certification marks and a table listing nominal "category" thicknesses and the corresponding NIST recommended label thickness. In the coming months, structural panel producers, including Weyerhaeuser, will be changing their panel certification marks and adding the supplemental thickness label to their products in order to comply with California regulations.

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: As a result of this issue, will the PS 1/PS 2 standards changed?

Not at all. The requirements, including dimensional tolerances, will not change. The only change is how we label our products for thickness.

Q2: What is the difference between NIST requirements and PS 1/PS 2 requirements?

For a $3/8$ " thick panel, the PS 2 tolerance of $\pm 1/32$ " represents $\pm 8\%$ of the panel thickness, while for a $23/32$ " thick panel the same tolerance represents $\pm 4\%$ of the panel thickness. On the other hand, the NIST tolerance is always $\pm 3\%$ of the panel thickness.

Q3: Does the agreement require all panel producers to change their certification marks?

No. The agreement is voluntary. Panel producers may opt to change or not; however, it is expected that California DMS officials will continue their inspections of product in the field. Any manufacturer that does not make the change, risks having their product tagged as being out of compliance with California regulations.

Q4: Once tagged, what are the options for disposition of the product?

According to California regulations, there are only three:

1. Obliterate the mark and sell as non-certified.
2. Destroy the product.
3. Donate the product.

Q5: Besides California, has this issue been raised in other states?

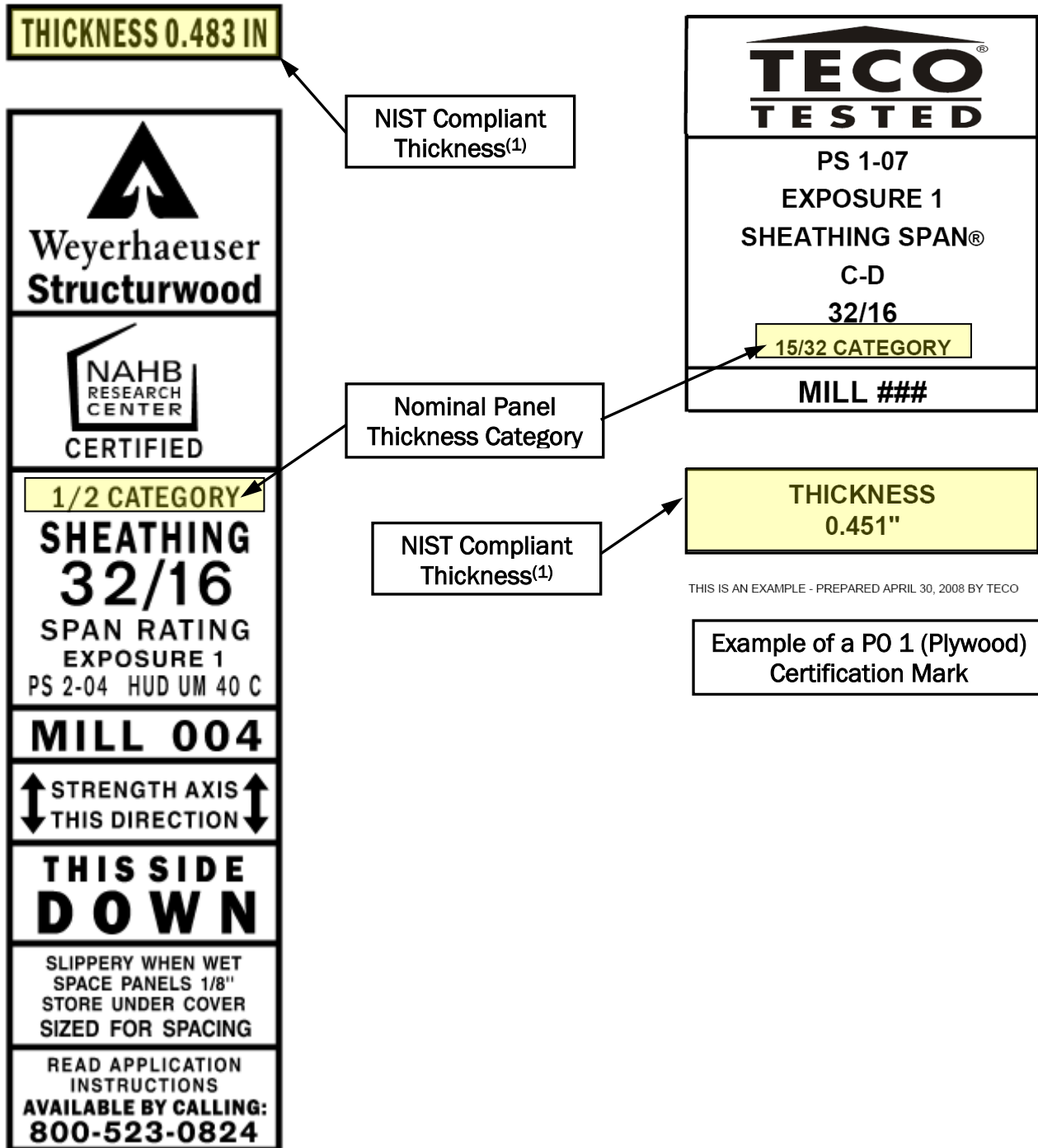
No. To date, this is an issue in California only.

Q6: Does that mean only products destined for California will show the thickness category?

No. All Weyerhaeuser structural plywood and OSB mills will use the NIST marking requirements. The requirements used by California DMS have also been adopted by other states.

LIST OF PS 1/PS 2 NOMINAL THICKNESSES AND NIST 130/133 COMPLIANT THICKNESSES

PS 1/PS 2 Category Nominal Thickness (in.)	Recommended NIST Labeled Thickness (in.)
1/4	0.225
9/32	0.258
5/16	0.290
11/32	0.322
3/8	0.354
13/32	0.386
7/16	0.418
15/32	0.451
1/2	0.483
17/32	0.515
9/16	0.547
19/32	0.578
5/8	0.609
21/32	0.641
11/16	0.672
23/32	0.703
3/4	0.734
25/32	0.758
13/16	0.788
27/32	0.818
7/8	0.849
1	0.970
1-3/32	1.061
1-1/8	1.091
1-1/4	1.213
1-1/2	1.455



Example of a PS 2 (OSB) Certification Mark

(1) Manufacturer's grade stamp with the NIST compliant thickness added. The NIST thickness designation is such that the minimum thickness allowed under PS 2 or PS 1 will always be greater than the NIST designated thickness -3%.