

Dead Standing Timber for Stability in Log Homes

High in the Canadian Rocky Mountains, vast tracts of timber have been killed by periodic beetle epidemics. The beetles kill green trees, but do not harm the wood, leaving a tree dead but still standing and sound. There, at high altitudes, where the humidity is low and the precipitation is mostly snow, trees stand for years, sometimes decades. Over time, this dry climate and natural curing process thoroughly dries dead-standing trees.

Dry wood is necessary for dimensionally stable lumber and house logs. Wood used in conventional home construction is dried, usually by kiln or air drying. This process works fine for lumber and boards, but with sizable pieces of wood, such as house logs, the results are far from satisfactory. While kiln or air drying logs yields a certain degree of dryness, it's difficult to dry large house logs all the way to the center by duplicating the natural aging process.

All logs shrink, warp, and crack to some extent during the drying and aging process. With Avalon Log Homes "ALH" Logs, the shrinkage and warpage have already occurred *before* the logs are used in your house. Our house logs, made from dead-standing timber, are stable.

By building with ALH Logs, you get benefits in both in the long run with the stability of your home, and in the short run with labor and freight savings due to lighter weight.

House logs from dead-standing timber greatly simplify every phase of construction. Builders using green logs must take extraordinary precautions to allow for settling and shrinking. Openings for doors and windows are built oversized and with special designs so that over the years the settling logs do not press down on windows and doors. Hundreds of joints have to be routed and splined to prevent gaps as the house ages and to keep logs from splitting. Corner systems have to be engineered to keep corners from separating.

With ALH Logs made from dead-standing timber, we don't have to make these allowances for drying and aging wood because our logs have been thoroughly cured before they are ever used in a house. ALH Log Home construction is simple and straightforward, practical for do-it-yourself builders or professionals, and much less labor-intensive than green construction.

We are one of the few log manufacturers who qualify to use the word "dry" on our gradestamp, indicating moisture content of less than 19%. Fact is, most of the house logs we mill are less than 14% moisture content.