

# TOWNSEND LUMBER FSC certification signifies sustainability



JEFF TRIBE/TILLSONBURG NEWS  
Dave Townsend examines damage done to a log by invasive Emerald Ash Borers. Townsend Lumber, a three-generation family business employing around 130 at its Tillsonburg location, achieved FSC certification February 25, 2014. In laymen's terms, it represents an internationally-recognized standard of responsible forestry.

JEFF TRIBE  
Tillsonburg News

Dave Townsend knelt beside a pile of 2,000 ash logs 10 feet high and 220 long, representing an estimated 130,000 board feet of sawn hardwood.

Some were a couple of feet or more in diameter, like those Townsend Lumber has harvested for decades. Others however were well below that standard, cut standing dead in what essentially was a salvage operation. And in their midst, Townsend was able

to sum up the massively-devastating effects of the Emerald Ash Borer with one finger and a single sentence.

"No water, no more photosynthesis, no more nothing - it just strangles," Townsend said, indicating trails through what formerly was formerly sapwood in a healthy ash tree.

Tearing a section of bark off one log, Townsend traced interlocking sawdust trails crisscrossing the exposed surface.

"It's the by-product of them eating the tree," he explained,

adding the borer's effects are going to be felt even more harshly, given ash is the dominant species in most bush areas throughout Southern Ontario.

"This is going to be devastating to the woodlots."

It's safe to say Townsend knows a thing or two about lumber, given he has been around it since age 10 when his dad Robert started Townsend Lumber in 1959 as a winter business extension to tobacco farming.

"That's all I've ever done - lumber and logging and grading

lumber," said Dave.

There have been significant changes in the company's 55-year history since it started up in Glen Meyer with around a dozen employees. A destructive fire there initiated a move to its current location southeast of Tillsonburg on Jackson Sideroad just off Highway #3 in 1984, but even that proximity to town manages to hide the sprawling size and scope of its contemporary operation.

Home to a variety of wood-related operational equipment

fueling three or four times. There is also the possibility of a CFI8 demonstration plane, which requires 6,000 pounds of fuel every time it flies. A quick calculation reveals \$20,000 in potential fuel sales compared to modest living expenses, a positive balance of trade in anyone's books.

The potential dates coincide with Furdifest (June 13/14/15) and the Tillsonburg Relay for Life (June 6/7/8). Given the Snowbirds like to be active in their host community, touring downtown and meeting with youth, their arrival could be a crowd multiplier and experience enhancer for the first event, and not directly conflict with the latter's Friday overnight schedule.

The Snowbirds are also flexible in their performance time, said Brisson, in response to a question from Councillor Dave Beres.

"Basically, when we want them to fly."

There would not, however, be the likelihood of coordinating a downtown or other off-site performance. Brisson stated in response to a query from Councillor Marty Klein, given regulations which essentially dictate flying over an airport.

Brisson had approached council seeking Town of Tillsonburg support in the form of financial backing and insurance coverage, for the Saturday, August 23 South Coast Air Show. The show has to date, raised \$11,000 of its \$30,000 budget through sponsorship, but needed what was in effect, a guarantor for a balance it anticipates covering and surpassing in additional sponsorship and ticket sales.

There was a sense of urgency to his request, said Brisson, "because if we wait much longer, we will lose the performers."

There was a greater sense of urgency with regards to the Snowbirds, given hosts basically have one opportunity to say "yes".

If the military calls back and says "yes," we have to say "yes" now, not later; or they'll go somewhere else," said Brisson.

Following financial discussion on the former, and enthusiastic support for the latter, council sup-

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## 'Good potential' for return to Tillsonburg

JEFF TRIBE  
Tillsonburg News

"There is good potential," the Snowbirds demonstration team will make a return to Tillsonburg this summer, said Andre Brisson, Chair, Ontario's South Coast Airshow 2014.

Brisson dropped the good news 'bomb' on the tail end of a request for support to council during Monday evening's open meeting.

Snowbirds officials made initial contact said Brisson, indicating the possibility of two 45-minute shows on either the June 13/14 or June 6/7 weekend.

There is much to like about the possibility, said Brisson, and not much to not like. Apart from the precision flight team's well-earned reputation for excellence and star-level drawing power, the fact the Snowbirds are a military unit means expenses to bring them to town are largely limited to accommodation and meals.

Brisson estimated the Snowbirds' Canadian-built Canadair CT-114 Tutor aircraft would require



TILLSONBURG NEWS FILE PHOTO

There is 'good potential,' the Snowbirds will make a return to Tillsonburg this summer, says Andre Brisson, Chair, Ontario's South Coast Airshow 2014. Brisson has been contacted by Snowbirds officials regarding the possibility of two 45-minute shows the weekend of June 14/15 or June 7/8. Brisson was at council Monday evening, successfully seeking support for the Saturday, August 23 Ontario's South Coast Airshow 2014.

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Ottawa	rain/snow	9/-4	p.cldy	2/-3
Quebec C.	rain/snow	5/-2	p.cldy	1/-4
Regina	p.cldy	-5/-9	flurries	2/-13
Saint John	showers	4/1	showers	8/-3
St. John's	p.cldy	-2/-4	fz rain	2/-3
Toronto	rain	11/-2	p.cldy	2/-3
Vancouver	rain	9/8	rain	10/7
Whitby	sunny	-3/-17	sunny	1/-14
Winnipeg	p.cldy	-6/-11	flurries	0/-13
Yellowknife	flurries	-9/-27	p.cldy	-14/-28

Aspen	sunny	33/22	sunny	33/22
Barbados	showers	29/24	showers	29/24
Bermuda	cloudy	19/15	p.cldy	21/18
Caracas	p.cldy	31/25	sunny	31/25
Cuba	showers	30/20	showers	30/20
Dom. R.	p.cldy	29/23	p.cldy	28/23
Monteregio B.	showers	30/24	showers	30/24
Nassau	p.cldy	28/22	showers	28/23
Puerto Rico	p.cldy	27/25	p.cldy	27/25
Trinidad	showers	32/23	showers	31/23

Prague	showers	17/4	p.cldy	20/6
Rio de Jan.	m.sunny	29/21	cloudy	29/22
Rome	sunny	18/6	sunny	19/6
Singapore	showers	30/26	showers	30/26
Stockholm	p.cldy	9/0	sunny	12/1
Sydney	showers	23/21	showers	24/21
Tel Aviv	sunny	25/13	sunny	26/15
Tokyo	sunny	18/9	p.cldy	20/11
Marsaw	m.sunny	15/6	sunny	11/3
Zagreb	cloudy	16/7	m.sunny	18/6

@The Weather Network 2014

# TOWNSEND LUMBER Sustainable practices good economics

Continued from A1

In Canada in conjunction to the fact Townsend Lumber has always embraced a sustainable approach as good business.

"It's the only thing that ensures a long-term timber base."

But recently, the company moved to make the approach 'official,' seeking Forest Stewardship Council Canada (FSC) certification. The process is a five-step one, beginning with contacting a certification body, constructing an application form and agreement, completing an onsite audit, certification approval, and finally, an annual audit. Putting together Townsend Lumber's package took roughly two months said Buchner, prior to an audit by the Rainforest Alliance in January, 2014 and certification on February 25.

In laymen's terms, said Buchner, FSC certification is an internationally-recognized standard of responsible forestry. He cited the example of a woodlot, where decades ago, the approach would have been to harvest all appropriate logs. Today, practices require leav-

"Because they are considered uncontrolled," said Buchner, "versus controlled where there are forest management standards in place."

Other requirements include not being from a clear cut, and having trees approved for harvest by a forestry technician using approved practices. For example, butternut trees are considered endangered, and can only be cut as standing dead, and flowering dogwoods are protected, and adequate shade for them to flourish must be left around them.

"It's not just about diameter cut," said Buchner. "It's about protecting the habitat and environment of the forest."

Additionally, in some areas of Quebec, carbon and their habitat including trees are also protected.

"It's local industry, it's local jobs, it's good for the environment," Buchner summed up. "It's (FSC certification) definitely more effort, but it's well worth it."

Zach Buchner

Sales Associate/Business Analyst/FSC Program Manager

Townsend Lumber has expanded to four sawmills, two (main and pallet) in Tilsonburg, a third operational near Kitchener and a fourth inactive in the Langton area; along with flooring (Breezewood), retail outlets in Tilsonburg, near Kitchener and Orillia. All told, combined operations employ around 156 (including around 130 in Tilsonburg) says Sales Associate/Business Analyst/FSC Program Manager Zach Buchner, in addition to subcontracted log crews.

"Now it's a pretty massive company, it's big, big business."

The logs at the bottom of the pyramid are sourced in what effectively was the company's backyard, the five surrounding counties in Robert Townsend's day. Today they are cut in the main from Niagara to the Detroit River to Orangeville in the north. Dave points to the fact Norfolk was the first county to implement tree-cutting by-laws, and also site to the first reforestry farm (St. Williams)

"You'll end up with a bush lot that is worth as much as it is now or more 20 years later."

There are criteria for a FSC certification, including exclusion of harvesting or purchasing logs from designated 'high-risk' areas known for unsustainable practices.

"It's all-encompassing," said Buchner. "FSC certification does create an increase in paperwork to track and document where and when logs were harvested and related costs. But there are also offsetting benefits, including opening up new markets."

"It's local industry, it's local jobs, it's good for the environment," Buchner summed up. "It's (FSC certification) definitely more effort, but it's well worth it."

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# IN PICTURES

## BOARD STIFF

PHOTOS BY JEFF TRIBE/TILLSONBURG NEWS

Townsend Lumber is processing between 10,000,000 and 11,000,000 board feet of lumber annually, says Sales Associate/Business Analyst/FSC Program Manager Zach Buchner, and employs around 130 in its Tillsonburg location. These production shots were taken onsite Wednesday morning.



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