



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lumber mill utilization fell 6% from Q1 2019 – Q2 2023; pulp/paper and OSB utilization dropped 9%, and plywood declined 15%.

WATKINSVILLE, GEORGIA – December 5, 2023 – Mill utilization trends show forest products industry responses to Covid-19 and end-product price shifts. “Utilization measures the percent of name plate capacity used to produce a product, and trends vary significantly by forest products sector,” notes Pat Jolley, Product Manager of Forisk's Mill Capacity Database. For example, lumber utilization from Q1 2019 through Q2 2023 declined 6%, while pulp/paper and OSB each dropped 9% and the plywood sector fell 15%. While mill utilization rose during end-product price increases in 2021 and into 2022, the longer-term trend declines. “We combine utilization estimates with mill capacity data from our Forest Industry Capacity Database to understand local wood use,” added Mr. Jolley.

“Tracking North America's forest industry mill utilization aids regional planning and decision making for mill and land managers,” says Dr. Shawn Baker, Forisk's VP of Research. “For example, lumber utilization varied significantly across the U.S. during the last four years.” Utilization for Northern sawmills fell 2% from Q1 2019 through 2023, while the South and West declined 5% and 8%, respectively. Lumber utilization peaked in all three regions in Q3 2021, in response to high softwood lumber prices, before declining in 2022. The South and North gained over 1% from Q2 2022 through Q2 2023, while the West declined an additional 9%.

Forisk's [North American Forest Industry Capacity Database](#) (“Mill Capacity Database”) compiles mill capacity for softwood and hardwood lumber, structural panels (OSB and plywood), engineered wood products, pulp, veneer, wood pellets, and chip mills by region across five North American geographies – U.S. North, U.S. South, U.S. West, Eastern Canada, and Western Canada. The underlying data, which is updated quarterly, includes mill-by-mill details for over 2,200 facilities, including location, mill type, wood use estimates, and species, with ownership and capacity data by year for 2011-2022 and estimates for 2023 and 2024. Forisk's Mill Capacity Database is available as an annual subscription or as a one-time purchase.

For more information or to subscribe to Forisk's Mill Capacity Database, contact:
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About Forisk Consulting: Forisk delivers forecasts and analysis of forest industry markets and timberland investments. Firms participate in Forisk's research program by subscribing to the *Forisk Research Quarterly (FRQ)*, *Forisk Wood Fiber Review*, *Forisk Market Bulletin*, or the North American Forest Industry Capacity Database; supporting benchmarking studies related to forest operations and mill capacities; and attending educational workshops and the annual “Wood Flows & Cash Flows” conference. www.forisk.com.