

TECHNICAL NOTE NUMBER 161

FOREST PRODUCTS LABORATORY - U. S. FOREST SERVICE - MADISON, WISCONSIN

OREGON STATE
AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

PROGRESSIVE AND COMPARTMENT DRY KILNS COMPARED

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All dry kilns now on the market are either progressive or compartment kilns. In the progressive type the drying conditions increase in severity from one end of the kiln to the other, the material being moved into severer conditions as it dries. In the compartment type the same temperature and humidity prevail throughout the kiln at any one time, beginning with mild conditions and increasing in severity as the material becomes dry.

The kiln-drying data and experience of the Forest Products Laboratory indicate that each type has particular advantages on certain points, as follows:

The progressive type of kiln requires less skill in the operator. It consumes less heat per pound of water evaporated from the wood, but the saving of steam possible should not be considered so important as the best results. The progressive kiln reaches its greatest heat efficiency in drying from the green state and is most useful in circumstances which permit of its being supplied continuously with green lumber of one thickness and class. It is, however, impracticable with this type of kiln to give individual attention to special loads of lumber.

The compartment type of kiln is more flexible and affords greater control over the drying conditions, permitting less change in temperature, humidity, and circulation in the kiln with variations in the wind and weather. It is better adapted to meet the varying requirements of different kinds of material and is most useful where exact and careful drying is required, as in the handling of refractory woods.