

FIRE PROTECTION HISTORY-PART 263: 1818 (NATIONAL LUMBER MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION REPORT)

By Richard Schulte

The twenty-second Annual Meeting of the National Fire Protection Association was held in Chicago in May 1918. The presentations made at this meeting included an update on the activities of the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association relative to fire protection and fire safety. The following is the transcript of the Lumber Manufacturers' Report:

"Report of National Lumber Manufacturers' Association.

Mr. R. S. Whiting: Prof. C. E. Paul has asked me to read this report.

The Engineering Bureau of the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association has devoted a large part of its time since May, 1917, in determining the best methods for using wood in building so that the structures in which it is used may be as fire-resisting as possible. The object has been to find the manner in which wood can be used properly and safely and to correct details of construction which have been criticized or found to be faulty. Fire-stopping of walls in frame buildings and the proper isolation of timbers near chimneys and flues have been given considerable thought. A campaign for better flues and chimneys has also formed a part of this work.

The work relating to the proper use of wood in mill construction buildings has been carried to further development and an attempt has been made to establish standards throughout the country which will agree with the recommendations suggested by boards of underwriters and engineers of experience in that type of building.

*The Bureau has co-operated with fire marshals and building code committees in 141 cities in revising old building codes and forming new ones. **Our work has been in the nature of recommendations in regard to the proper use of wood as it appears in these codes and the protection and safe location of buildings in which wood is used.***

An investigation was made in regard to the value of lightning rods for isolated buildings and the results published in the form of a technical letter for free distribution.

Extensive investigations in regard to the proper use of wood shingles, proper thicknesses and methods of fastening, and satisfactory protection by means of fire-resisting coatings have been made and preliminary results also published in the form of technical letters.

Remembering the resolution passed several years ago by the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association as to wooden shingles in which the desirability of restricting their use in high hazard districts was recognized, it is felt that the results of the investigations dealing with fire-resistive wooden shingles will prove a great public benefit. A full report on these investigations will be published during the coming month."

Based upon the report above, it would appear that the lumber industry was involved in conducting extensive fire research on lumber products in order to improve the acceptability of the use of lumber in building construction.

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Source: *"Proceedings of the Twenty-Second Annual [NFPA] Meeting"*, Chicago, Illinois, 1918.

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