Interpreting a Grade Stamp

In accordance with Voluntary Product Standard 20 (PS-20), when American Lumber Standard (ALS) program lumber is grade marked, the grade marking shall consist of a minimum of five elements to assist the consumer in identifying the (1) Moisture Content, (2) Product Grade, (3) Species or Species Grouping, (4) ALSC-Accredited Supervisory Agency, and (5) Unique Mill Number ID or Mill Name. Please refer to the sample NELMA grade mark below for further information:

(1) Moisture Content – Heat Treatment
“KD” and “S-Dry” = 19% or less moisture content.
“MC-15” or KD 15” = 15% or less moisture content.
“S-GRN” = a moisture content greater than 19%.
“HT” = meets the Heat Treatment Requirements.
Note: Air Dried Lumber may not be stamped “KD”.
(Moisture Content details are provided in Section 2 of the “Standard Grading Rules for Northeastern Lumber.”)

(2) Product Grade
The grade of lumber is shown by number, name, or official abbreviation. (Refer to the “Standard Grading Rules for Northeastern Lumber” for a complete list of product grades.)

(3) Species or Species Grouping
The species or species group of the product is indicated by its officially recognized name or abbreviation. In this example, SPFs = Spruce-Pine-Fir (south). (See the full list of Northeastern Species and Species Groups in Section 1 of the “Standard Grading Rules for Northeastern Lumber.”)

(4) ALS Supervisory Agency
Indicates that the product has been graded under the supervision of an accredited ALSC agency, such as NELMA.

(5) Mill Number or Name
A unique number assigned by the Grading Agency. May also be the Mill Name. (Use the online “Member Locator” to identify a manufacturer by mill number.)