NEW TOOLS FOR FINDING INFORMATION

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The internet has become the “go to” place for finding information. There is a lot of good information on the internet and a lot of poor information. One site is WoodWeb (http://www.woodweb.com/). Under the WoodWeb is a forum on sawing and drying (http://www.woodweb.com/cgi-bin/forums/sawdry.pl) The neat thing about this forum is that Gene Wengert, Professor Emeritus at the University of Wisconsin monitors the site for accuracy. He often provides answers to questions. While the site is very interesting and educational, if you are looking for specific information it is not likely to show up.

There are several resources to search for specific information. Of course you can do a general web search using a search engine such as Yahoo or Google. When you do this you will get dozens of hits, most of them wanting to sell you something. I’d like to point out four other resources that are much better for obtaining information.

One is Google Scholar at: http://scholar.google.com/advanced_scholar_search?q=hemlock+drying+lumber+warp&hl=en&lr=. This site locates technical papers. For example, putting in the keywords “hemlock drying lumber warp” yielded 184 results. That sounds like a lot, but in about an hour you could read through all the titles and get a very good feel for what has been done in this area. One caution on most electronic searches, however, is that they miss much of the older literature. For that you still need to go to a library with an indexing database such as “Forest Science.”

Another source is the Forest Products Society at http://www.forestprod.org/agreement.htm. There you can search all of the Forest Products Journal articles from 1948 to present plus some other publications. Members can get the publications for free. Non members pay a fee.

For Forest Service (including Forest Products Lab) publications, try searching at http://fsinfo.fs.fed.us/cgi-bin/gw/chameleon. Typing “hemlock” and “drying” into this engine turned up 28 references.

Finally, the one I really want to talk about is a project I have had the opportunity to coordinate between the Oregon State University Library and the West Coast Dry Kiln Association to put all of the proceedings from this meeting on line. The West Coast Dry Kiln Association voted at a meeting last spring to pay for half of the cost to do this because it falls within their mission of information dissemination. The OSU Library is contributing the other half. Some papers are available now and by August or September of 2007 you should be able to access any paper from any of the Western Dry Kiln Association or Western Dry Kiln Club meetings from 1948 to present. There are a couple years when the meeting did not occur. We are only missing two years (1948 and 1950) when there was a meeting and we think there should be a proceedings but we cannot locate a copy.
The papers can be found at: http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/dspace/handle/1957/4574. They are searchable by author, date, title. The advanced search page (http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/dspace/advanced-search) allows you to search by words in the text. This is a very powerful feature when trying to find information on a particular subject.

The site is there for your use, it is free, and the full text of any paper will be available to you from the site. It will keep you entertained for hours. A word of thanks has to go to OSU Librarian Bonnie Avery and the Digital Production Unit of Oregon State University Libraries. It would not have happened without their hard work.