

NEW CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS SAVE TIME

When your company is building more than 600 new homes a year, finding more efficient, quicker and cost effective ways of working can make a real difference to your business and your customers.

And although researching new construction methods and materials takes time, it's time well spent, according to Dale Alcock Homes' Managing Director, Dale Alcock.

"Although the building industry has been so busy over the last few years, we always make time to review construction methods and find more efficient methods of building," Dale said.

"Our experience at Dale Alcock Homes has shown us that it is always a worthwhile investment of our time. Finding out about new materials and different ways of working can save us and our customers' money and time in the longer run."

Dale Alcock Homes has been building houses for over 22 years and was a winner of the prestigious 2008 Housing Industry Association's National Professional Major Builder of the Year award.

Since early 2008 the company has changed the way in which it designs and constructs roofs, switching from predominantly steel roof beams (strutting beams) to using Wesbeam Laminated Veneer Lumber (LVL).

Wesbeam LVL is an engineered timber product manufactured in Western Australia from plantation pine.

Wesbeam LVL uses less embodied energy to manufacture than steel, according to Wesbeam's Sales and Marketing manager Denis Cullity.

"Compared with some other building materials, the production of wood often requires less energy in the harvest, transportation and manufacturing processes," Denis said.

"Substituting LVL for another material such as steel can be an easy and economical way to reduce the carbon footprint of a new house."

LVL is also easier to work with, according to Dale Alcock Display and New Product Estimator Peter Arcus.

"Wesbeam LVL is strong, straight and light – so easy to work with both from a design point of view and for the roof carpenters who actually construct the roof," said Peter.

"We now use LVL throughout our house designs, which means that we have been able to reduce the amount of steel we need. As a result, we save on crantage – although we can't eliminate cranes from building sites altogether, we have been able to reduce our reliance on them."

Wesbeam LVL can also be cut and drilled on the construction site – so if minor alterations are needed to the beams the carpenters can do this themselves, without having to wait for a steel welder to arrive on site. This can prevent delays in the house construction.

Changing the way in which a house is designed and constructed can be a lengthy and complex process for volume builders.

Wesbeam helped to speed up the process by taking a number of Dale Alcock house designs and reworking the drawings to incorporate LVL. These designs are constantly used as a reference point by the drafting team.

The technical and sales team from Wesbeam have also been very involved in training Dale Alcock staff to work with LVL.

"Wesbeam have visited our offices several times to train our draftsmen and schedulers in how LVL works in stick roofs," Dale said.

"We also have round the clock access to the technical support team at Wesbeam, so we know that if we have a query they are just a phone call away. This has helped the transition to LVL go very smoothly."

For more information about Dale Alcock Homes go to www.dalealcock.com.au For more information about Wesbeam LVL go to www.wesbeam.com

ENDS