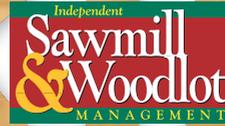


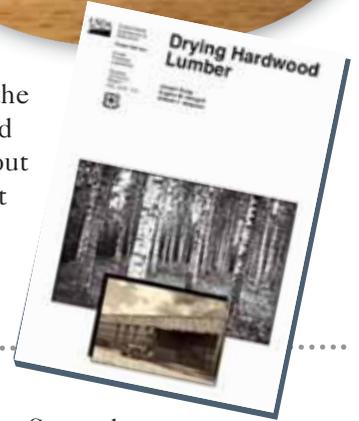
# Ask@



S A W M I L L M A G . C O M

**Q** Where can I find a copy of *Drying Hardwood Lumber*?

**A** This U.S. Forest Service publication is, indeed, the most useful book on drying hardwood lumber and contains many practical procedures. It has been out of print for years, but it is available online. You can print it yourself, but a better idea is to give the web address to a copy store and then have them print it, two-sided, and have them spiral bind it too, often for under \$20.



**Q** I have had trouble drying 8/4 and thicker hardwood lumber, especially with checks, but also stain. Help!

**A** The problem with thick wood is that air drying is too variable, due to the changes of the weather. Some days here in Georgia the last two years, we have had relative humidities under 35% in the afternoon. The forecast has even included warnings about the low humidity. Then we have days with rain and 100% RH. We seem to think that air drying, even with a shed, is a "set it and forget it" operation. With 8/4 and thicker hardwoods of many species in a small air yard, we need to use special techniques every day (like plastic burlap, roofs with large overhang, end coating) to control air drying and protect the wood from drying too fast, or perhaps too slowly as well. In an air-drying shed, I suggest hanging curtains in the open wall that can be pulled shut on dry days and opened on more humid days and closed again when it is raining and windy. Remember that all defects except cup are high-MC defects, so the initial drying of wood is the most critical for high quality.

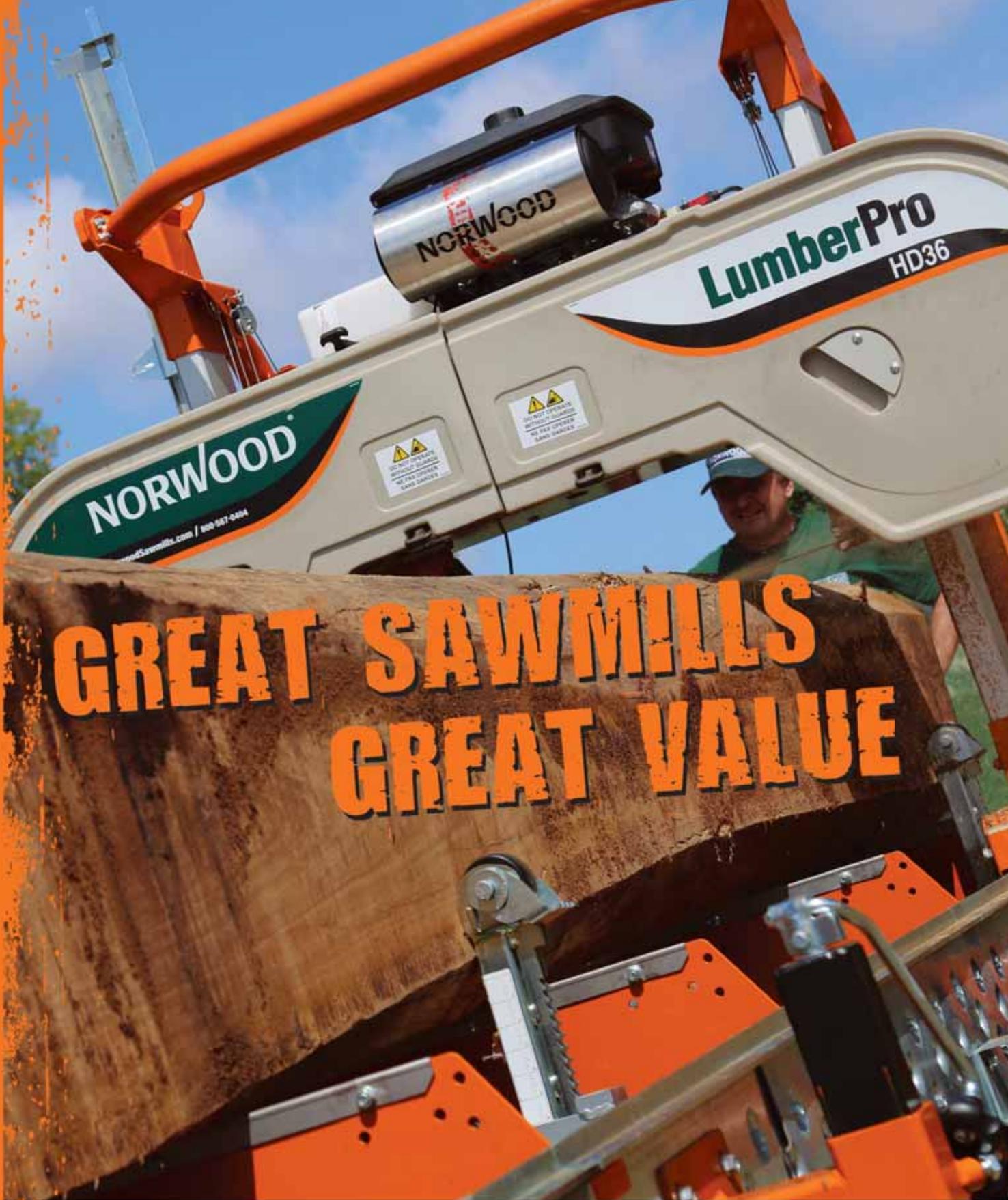


Obviously, a good kiln, drying green from the saw, can perfectly control the environment we need. But drying times are so long that this option is very expensive. The key in the kiln is achieving the desired and correct humidity, temperature, and airflow; these settings vary with MC. With some 8/4 and thicker, it may be necessary to shut off the kiln for a few hours every day initially to let the lumber rest. Daily MC measurement and daily calculation of the drying rate are needed, using properly prepared kiln samples and weighing equipment.

**Q** We end coat our oak lumber but still get end check—big, and long splits. Why?

**A** Properly applied end coating (thick enough and before end checks appear or before drying starts) will control 100% of the drying end checks. But, there are also checks and splits that develop due to the internal stresses in the tree and log called growth stresses. They will be wider than 1/4 inch and often a foot long or longer. End coating does not control these.

Gene Wengert answered this month's questions. Please submit any questions you might have to [Ask@sawmillmag.com](mailto:Ask@sawmillmag.com). One of our authors will answer selected questions each month.



**GREAT SAWMILLS  
GREAT VALUE**

**FREE CATALOG & DVD**

Toll-free 800-661-7746 Ext 394

**NORWOOD<sup>®</sup>**  
SAWMILLS

NorwoodSawmills.com



3 STRAND  
LOG INFEED  
DECK

# SAWMILL ACCESSORIES

SAVES TIME. LOWERS LABOR.  
INCREASES PRODUCTION.

**BAKER**  
*Products*



LASER  
LIGHT  
SYSTEM



TIMBER  
SLIDE



SLAB  
RACK



STATIONARY  
EDGER



PORTABLE  
EDGER



REVERSE  
EDGER  
SYSTEM

