

Crossties



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THE RTA TIE GRADING SEMINAR
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March/April 2002

The Magazine For Producers And Users Of Treated Wood Crossties And Related Products.

FORWARD *To Wisconsin*

With Madison, Wis., as the backdrop, RTA will explore the Forest Products Lab, Webster Industries & other sites in June.



Plus: RTA goes on track to learn more about alternative treatments.

Special Reports

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Today's Biggest
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Myths**

**RTA Charts Course
For Productive &
Focused Year Ahead**

**FST Seminar Raises
Awareness Of
Infestation Issues**

***To Borate Or Not To
Borate?* RTA Seeks
Answers To Question**

**2002 Tie Grading
Seminar Set For
Bangor, Wis.**

Forward To Wisconsin

With Madison, Wis., as the backdrop, RTA field trip participants will explore the Forest Products Lab, Webster Industries & many other interesting sites.

Photo Courtesy Wisconsin Historical Society

RTA members are invited to join in this year's annual RTA field trip to the Badger State. And, what a very special trip it will be.

Attendees will fly or drive to Madison, Wis., for committee meetings on Sunday, June 2, and a two-day, intense tour of the Forest Products Lab, Webster Industries' primary operations, the Mid-Continent Railway Museum, the Wisconsin Central Locomotive Shops, a Wisconsin Southern Railroad maintenance project, and area sawmills—one of which is a historic reconstruction powered by a hydropower turbine.

The goal of this field trip is to provide a significant learning experience for sawmill, treating plant and railroad personnel in the areas of manufacturing, material handling and safety. To achieve this goal cost effectively and in a timely matter, RTA members have traveled as much as 600 miles in a 48-hour time period in recent years.

"This field trip is RTA's second-largest event after the annual convention," said Jim Gauntt, RTA executive director. "We consider it one of the most important and interesting educational activities we can offer to members."

One might imagine the annual field trip grew out of the activities of the Education Committee. However, it is a source of pride that it is the child of the Manufacturing, Safety, Resources and Statistics Committee (MSRS). Each year, for the better part of four decades, this committee has hosted the event.

"To be the most efficient industry possible, sharing the knowledge of the wide variety of unique operations that exist within it is very significant, said Harry Bressler, MSRS Committee chairman. "No one goes home without having seen or formulated some new tangible idea that will improve their own operations."

This value extends to railroaders, too. Over the past few years, a conscious effort to include railroad facilities has increased railroad participation dramatically. Tie gangs on the CP Railway in British Columbia and the Union Pacific's De Soto, Mo., car shop have been stops in recent years.

This year, the field trip attendees will find similar diversity. From the base of operations in Madison, day trips are planned that cover a lot of ground.

Day one will focus on the extensive operations of Webster Industries. Starting with the Webster plant in Westby, participants will view a red oak moulding operation that features a pre-finish line that uses ultra violet light to provide instantaneous curing of the applied finish. Curved and elliptical mouldings are capabilities also featured in Westby.



Above: RTA field trip participants will visit the water-powered Robinson Herrling Sawmill, which is a reconstruction of the mill that operated on a seasonal basis from the 1850s through the early 1900s.



Photo Courtesy Forest Products Lab Lab

Left: Future pigmented emulsified creosote systems may offer alternatives for wood tie treatment. Field trip participants will learn more about this Forest Products Lab research.

Then it will be on to Bangor to view Webster's dedicated tie mill, which is the largest tie mill in Wisconsin. This circle mill produces ties and pallet cants as well as grades of hardwood lumber and floor-

ing. Also unique to this operation is the manufacture of high-grade oak parts for stair treads, cabinets and solid wood doors.

While in Bangor, participants will view Webster Wood Preserving's treating facility. This state-of-the-art plant was rebuilt in just four months after a devastating fire in 1999. It now features complete computer-controlled operation of its 100 percent closed-system handling of creosote for the treatment of wood ties.

The last stop of the day will be the Mid-Continent Railway Museum, where visitors will ride in a steam locomotive powered train (vintage 1900). The Mid-Continent Railway Museum has several major steam engine renovations to its credit and is a wonderful site to explore. Readers can learn more at www.mcrwy.com.

Day two will see attendees travel a short distance from their Madison hotel to the Forest Products Laboratory. Doug Crawford and Dr. John Watkins, presenters at the fall 2001 RTA Convention, are expected to help participants explore the subject of their convention presentation, the emulsified creosote treating process. Also, a complete tour is arranged to view new engineered wood products and other wood treatment technologies. Research highlights are available for review at www.fpl.fs.fed.us/highlights.htm.

Later, the tour will focus on railroad operations. First up will be a track maintenance project along the tracks of the Wisconsin & Southern Railroad Co. (WSOR). *Railway Age* magazine's Regional Railroad of the Year for 2001, WSOR operates more than 645 miles of track throughout south central Wisconsin and northern Illinois. It also operates a website at www.wsorrailroad.com and even has its own fan club.

After lunch, the tour will proceed to the Wisconsin Central Railroad's locomotive shop in Fond du Lac for an extensive look at those operations.

Finally, the group will visit the Robinson-Herrling Sawmill, which is located on the site of the Wisconsin Historical Society's Wade House.

The Wade House is an 1850s stagecoach inn that served travelers of the old plank road connecting Sheboygan and Fond du Lac. The historic site's Wesley Jung Carriage Museum houses Wisconsin's largest carriage collection.

In spring 2001, the Wisconsin Historical Society dedicated a fully operational reconstruction of the water-powered Robinson-Herrling Sawmill on the Mullet River at the Wade House site. Jeff Schultz, site director, is especially excited about the project, he said, because

"the sawmill with the Wade House tells the whole story of how a pioneer town developed."

According to Schultz, the Robinson-Herrling Sawmill typified the family-operated, water-powered sawmills that produced lumber in southeastern Wisconsin to the time of the Civil War. It operated on a seasonal basis from the 1850s through the early 1900s, producing primarily sawed hardwoods for the local market.

The RTA field trip agenda is sure to hold interest for railroaders and tie producers alike. It, like so many recent trips, is expected to be well-attended, so early registration is encouraged. Registration is \$75 and will cover transportation and other costs associated with the trip. Participants should make their own hotel reservations at the Marriott Madison West at (608) 831-2000. A fee of \$89 per night for a single guest has been arranged. An agenda is provided.

Contact Debbie Corallo at RTA at dcorallo@rta.org or (770) 460-5553 for more information. §

RTA Field Trip Agenda - June 2-4

Sunday, June 2

Arrive Madison, Wis., at the Marriott Madison West	MSRS Committee Meeting
2-4 p.m.	
5:30 - 6:30 p.m.	Reception (Sponsored by MiTek)
6:30 p.m.	Dinner On Your Own

Monday, June 3

7 - 9 a.m.	Travel from Madison to Westby
9 - 10 a.m.	Tour Webster Industries' Westby Plant
10 - 10:30 a.m.	Travel from Westby to Bangor
10:30 - 11:30 a.m.	Tour Webster Industries
11:30 - 12:30 p.m.	Lunch
12:30 - 2 p.m.	Tour Webster Wood Preserving
2 - 3:30 p.m.	Travel from Bangor to Baraboo
3:30 - 4:30 p.m.	Tour Train Museum
4:30 - 5:30 p.m.	Return to Madison

Tuesday, June 4

8 - 10 a.m.	Tour Forest Products Lab
10 - 11 a.m.	Travel from Madison to Horicon
11 a.m. - noon	Update on Wisconsin & Southern RR Track Maintenance Project
Noon - 1 p.m.	Lunch
1 - 1:30 p.m.	Travel from Horicon to Fond du Lac
1:30 - 3 p.m.	Tour Wisconsin Central Locomotive Shops
3 - 4:30 p.m.	Tour Water Powered Sawmill
4:30 - 6:30 p.m.	Return to Madison

Field Trip Notification Form

Yes, I will attend RTA's Annual Field Trip to Madison, Wis.

Name: _____

Company Name: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Arrival Date: _____ Departure: _____

(Fax to RTA at 770-460-5573)

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