

TECHNICAL NOTE NUMBER 158
FOREST PRODUCTS LABORATORY - U. S. FOREST SERVICE - MADISON, WISCONSIN

LUMBER VALUE OF PINE TREES NOT AFFECTED BY TURPENTINING

The operation of turpentineing pine trees does not lower the strength or resin content of the wood, according to information obtained by the Forest Products Laboratory at Madison, Wisconsin. The crude turpentine, or oleoresin, is not drained from a store in the tree, but is manufactured under the stimulus of the wound by living cells in the sapwood immediately adjacent to the cut on the trunk. No turpentine is produced by the heartwood because all of its cells are dead. The heartwood may be saturated in places with pitch but this does not readily flow out as does the resin freshly formed in the sapwood. The major part of the tree is not appreciably affected, and the loss due to death of trees or to a reduction or degrading of lumber is very small when the proper method of turpentineing is followed; this loss is more than offset by the additional revenue obtained through turpentineing. The greater part of the wood that is chipped away would not have become finished lumber, but would have gone into slabs and edgings at the sawmill. With proper treatment, the turpentineed faces remain healthy, and the wood underneath does not become saturated with resin to any great extent.