

# A New Life for Old Maples

## Creating Taphole Maple Lumber

When a maple tree is tapped, it develops a column of stained wood surrounding the taphole to help prevent infections and then grows new wood on top of the old taphole. This amazing ability of maple trees to heal from tapping is what allows the production of maple syrup from the same trees year after year.

Niche markets for taphole maple lumber are growing, as many people prefer this beautiful and distinctive wood in a variety of finished products. As a direct result of past tapping practices, each board is unique and contains an interesting story behind its production. Maple trees that have been used to make delicious syrup for generations can be turned into beautiful lumber at the end of their life.

Taphole maple lumber is used for rustic and fine furniture making, flooring, countertops, mantle pieces, musical instruments, and other woodworking projects. What would you like to make out of taphole maple?



John Pietras from Adirondack High Peaks Custom Woods uses a portable bandmill to saw tapped logs from Cornell University's Uihlein Forest in Lake Placid./Michael Farrell



Steve Childs, NYS Maple Specialist, fells a previously tapped maple tree that was in decline in order to allow more growing space for the healthy trees surrounding it./Peter Smallidge



Taphole maple boards ready for further processing. This rough cut lumber will be kiln dried and surfaced before its ultimate use./Michael Farrell



Some of the taphole maple boards from Cornell's Uihlein Forest were utilized for the interior walls in their new education center, constructed in 2008./Mary Jeanne Packer

## Sustainable Forestry

Maple trees eventually die from natural causes. Sustainable forest management includes harvesting declining trees to create growing space for younger trees. Once they are no longer useful for syrup production, older maples can be sawn into valuable lumber. Utilizing taphole maple lumber from a portable bandsaw mill stimulates your local economy and creates a greater demand for tapped logs. This in turn creates more incentive to tap trees. With taphole maple lumber you can have your boards and eat them too!