

North Idaho Lumber Prices Rise as Demand Builds



By Fox 28 Spokane
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Lumber prices are up more than 300 percent this year. That mixed with the influx of people moving into the North Idaho region is making life tough for home builders. "People think 'oh this is a great time for builders,' it's really not," said Brandon Johnson, owner of Affordable Custom Builders in Coeur d'Alene. Mike Moore with the President of the North Idaho Builders Association said, the sawmills can't keep up the demand. "It's like pouring gasoline on the fire, with all of those elements it's made for the perfect storm The Census Bureau's Home Preservation manual, said in May of 2020, 50,000 dollars' worth of lumber could build about 10 homes. 50,000 dollars' worth of lumber in 2021, will only build about two and one-tenth homes, according to the study. Moore said the prices hike also raises the price of new homes— up to 50 grand. "It's definitely cramping people's financial style for sure," said Johnson. Most of the industry blame COVID for this demand, causing layoffs for social distancing

purposes, and shutdowns at sawmills, making the number that they can produce much smaller. "It's a little sparse with how many people they can have there due COVID restrictions," said Moore. Johnson said he thinks it's also due to mass exits from big cities and low interest rates. So, when will this end? "I don't see a slowdown in that any time soon and it's really putting a bind on the builders," said Johnson.