

Freight Rail & Construction: From Soaring Skyscrapers to Family Homes

America has always been about building things. From erecting the world's first skyscrapers to constructing the suburbs that opened up home ownership to millions, America continues to build today in order to create a more prosperous tomorrow.

U.S. freight railroads play a critical role in the nation's ability to build. For residential and commercial construction, railroads transport a variety of building materials, including steel, stone, non-metallic minerals, wood products and plastics. And at the end of the residential construction process, a newly built dwelling is filled with durable consumer goods such as household appliances — carried by rail.

- **Lumber:** Rail shipments of lumber go hand-in-hand with the construction of new homes. In 2019, U.S. Class I railroads moved 1.3 million carloads of [lumber, paper and other forest products](#).
- **Steel:** Approximately 20% of all [steel products](#) go directly into construction after they have been processed at steel rolling mills.
- **Stone, Sand & Gravel:** Raw materials like [crushed stone, sand, gravel](#), limestone and gypsum are used in virtually every construction project, from roads to runways to buildings and sewer systems.