



The Lender Documentation Kit

Borrower Talking Points | Bank FAQ | Construction Loan Checklist | Appraiser Comparables Guide

Helping to Secure Construction Financing & Mortgages

Why This Kit Exists

Banks, credit unions, and mortgage lenders classify hempcrete as 'non-standard construction,' making construction loans and end mortgages difficult or impossible for most borrowers. Appraisers lack comparable sales data and may undervalue the finished home. Most borrowers don't know what documentation to bring to a bank meeting — and most loan officers have never seen a hempcrete project before.

This kit solves that. It is built from the documentation approach used in real hempcrete construction loans that have been approved in the United States. Every section is designed to be handed directly to a lender, appraiser, or loan officer.

Who Should Use This Kit

Owner-builders taking out a construction loan to build their own hempcrete home
Residential developers financing a hempcrete spec home or small project
Architects and contractors who want to help their clients navigate financing
Anyone who has been told 'we can't finance this' by a conventional lender

This kit contains:

- Section 1: Borrower Talking Points — what to say at your first bank meeting
- Section 2: Lender FAQ — the 10 questions banks ask and how to answer them
- Section 3: Understanding the Construction Loan Process for Hempcrete
- Section 4: What the Bank Will Want — complete documentation checklist
- Section 5: Appraiser Guidance — how to help your appraiser value the project
- Section 6: Construction Draw Schedule Template for Hempcrete Projects
- Section 7: Lender Outreach Letter Template — to send before your first meeting

Section 1: Borrower Talking Points

These talking points are designed for your first meeting with a bank loan officer. Keep them conversational. You are not defending an unusual choice, you are presenting a well-documented, code-compliant, high-performance home.

Opening Statement

Starting your first meeting:

"I'm building a hempcrete home using Bison BIND/R — a patented binder that's been tested to national ASTM standards. Hempcrete is recognized in the 2024 International Residential Code (Appendix BL), which is the same code body that governs all residential construction. I've brought a full documentation package that covers the material specs, code authority, builder credentials, energy performance, and project comparables. I'd like to walk you through it."

Key Points to Make

Topic	What to Say
Is this legal?	Yes. Industrial hemp (under 0.3% THC) was federally legalized by the 2018 Farm Bill. Bison's hemp is US-grown and fully compliant. This is no different than building with any agricultural product like straw bale or wood.
Is this code-approved?	Hempcrete is in the 2024 IRC (Appendix BL). The same code organization (ICC) that governs wood frame, concrete, and steel construction also governs hempcrete.
Is it structural?	The structural frame is conventional — timber or steel — designed and stamped by a licensed PE, same as any home. Hempcrete is insulating infill. The bank is lending on a conventionally framed home with a premium insulation system, not an experimental structure.
Has it been financed before?	Yes. Hempcrete construction loans have been approved in GA, NC, CA, CO, OR, MA, NY, NE, and many other states. We're happy to provide reference contacts from prior projects that have received financing.
What's the value?	Hempcrete homes achieve 30–60% lower energy bills, superior indoor air quality, and 60+ year material life. Independent appraisers have valued hempcrete homes at a premium over equivalent conventional homes in markets where sustainable building is valued.
What if it's unusual for your underwriting team?	I understand — I've prepared a summary document designed for your underwriting team that describes the material, code authority, and completed comparable projects. I'd also be happy to arrange a call with Bison Biocomposites' technical team if that would help.

Section 2: Lender FAQ

These are the most common questions bank loan officers and underwriters ask about hempcrete. These answers are designed to be read directly or shared as a leave-behind.

Bank / Underwriter Question	Answer for Lender
What exactly is hempcrete?	Hempcrete is a biocomposite building material made from industrial hemp hurd (woody core fibers) mixed with a mineral binder and water. It is used as non-structural insulating infill within a timber or steel structural frame. Think of it as a premium, natural alternative to spray foam or fiberglass insulation — not a replacement for concrete or the structural frame.
Is hemp legal to use in construction?	Yes. The 2018 Farm Bill (7 U.S.C. 5940) federally legalized industrial hemp containing less than 0.3% THC. Bison Biocomposites' materials are fully compliant. Hemp used in construction has no psychoactive properties and poses no controlled substance risk.
What building code covers it?	The 2024 International Residential Code (IRC) Appendix BL specifically addresses hempcrete. IRC is the model code used in 49 states. In jurisdictions that haven't adopted Appendix BL, the IRC's Alternative Materials provision (R104.11) provides a pathway for approval. A structural engineer has stamped the plans confirming code compliance.
What is the structural frame? Who stamped it?	The structural frame is [TIMBER/STEEL/LIGHT WOOD FRAME] designed per standard IRC structural provisions and stamped by [PE NAME], a licensed Professional Engineer in [STATE]. The structural system is conventional and independent of hempcrete. Hempcrete adds no structural load to the frame.
How does it affect property value?	Hempcrete homes in comparable markets have appraised at a premium due to superior energy performance (30–60% lower utility bills), indoor air quality benefits, and longevity. An independent appraiser familiar with high-performance buildings should be used. We have provided appraiser guidance and comparable project data in this package.
What if the material fails? What's the replacement cost?	Hempcrete has a life expectancy of 60+ years — significantly longer than fiberglass (25 years) or spray foam (20–30 years). If replacement were ever needed, hempcrete can be removed and recast; the structural frame remains intact. Replacement cost is comparable to premium insulation replacement on any home.
Has this been financed before? Any comparable loans?	Yes. Hempcrete construction loans have been approved by community banks and credit unions in multiple states including Georgia, California, Colorado, New York, Oregon, North Carolina, Massachusetts, etc. Bison Biocomposites can provide documentation of prior completed and financed projects on request: info@bisonbiocomposites.com .
Who is building it? Are they qualified?	The project will be built by [INSTALLER NAME], a Bison Certified Installer with [X years] of construction experience and specific training in BIND/R hempcrete installation. Bison Certified Installer credentials are attached.

What are the comparable sales / comps?	The appraiser guidance section of this package (Section 5) provides direction on identifying comparable sales for a hempcrete home, including which green building certifications and energy performance ratings to use as valuation inputs. We recommend requesting a HERS-rated appraiser or an appraiser with green building experience.
How do we underwrite something non-standard?	The key is that the structural system is entirely standard — this is a conventionally framed home with a premium natural insulation system. Underwriters should evaluate the loan on the structural frame (which meets all standard requirements), supplemented by the attached IRC code authority and engineer stamp. Hempcrete is the insulation, not the structure.

Section 3: Construction Loan Process for Hempcrete Projects

The construction loan process for a hempcrete home follows the same general structure as any construction loan, with two key differences: (1) more upfront documentation to establish the material's legitimacy, and (2) draw schedule adjustments to account for BIND/R's 72-hour cure time (vs. 6 weeks for lime-based hempcrete).

Typical Construction Loan Stages

Stage	Hempcrete-Specific Notes
Pre-Application: Bank Selection	Target community banks and credit unions first — they have more flexibility than national banks for non-standard materials. Bring this full kit to your first meeting. The borrower's existing relationship with the banker is the most important factor in approval.
Application: Documentation Submission	Submit: this Lender Kit, PE-stamped structural plans, Bison Certified Installer credentials, project budget with hempcrete line items, energy model or HERS rating, and comparable project references. See Section 4 checklist.
Appraisal	Request an appraiser with green building experience or LEED/HERS familiarity. Provide the appraiser with Section 5 of this kit. Emphasize the energy performance data and 60+ year material life in your appraiser brief.
Underwriting	The underwriting team will focus on: structural engineer stamp (standard), builder qualifications (attach BCI credentials), and comparable market data (attach Section 5). Hempcrete should be described as 'premium natural insulation system within a conventionally framed structure.'
Construction Draws	BIND/R hempcrete cures in 72 hours — significantly faster than lime-based systems. Draw inspections can be scheduled on a normal construction timeline. See Section 6 for a sample draw schedule with hempcrete phase milestones.
Final Inspection & Conversion	Final inspection confirms: structural frame completion, hempcrete infill complete and cured, plaster finish applied. Certificate of occupancy follows standard local requirements.

Section 4: Complete Documentation Checklist for Lender Submission

Assemble all items below into a single organized binder or PDF package before your bank meeting. Completeness is the single biggest factor in getting an unfamiliar lender to say yes.

Tab 1: Project Overview

✓	Item
☐	1-page project summary: address, square footage, structural system, hempcrete scope, estimated cost, timeline
☐	Site plan with lot boundaries, setbacks, and building footprint
☐	Architectural plans (floor plans, elevations, sections) — showing hempcrete wall locations clearly labeled
☐	Itemized project budget — with hempcrete materials, BIND/R binder, and installer labor as separate line items
☐	Project timeline — with hempcrete installation phase (typically 1–3 weeks) and cure phase (3 days for BIND/R) clearly marked
☐	Borrower financial summary (for construction loan pre-approval): income, assets, credit history — same as any construction loan

Tab 2: Material & Code Authority

✓	Item
☐	This Bison Lender Documentation Kit (full)
☐	Bison BIND/R product data sheet with tested R-value, fire performance, moisture data (request: info@bisonbiocomposites.com)
☐	2024 IRC Appendix BL summary or link (codes.iccsafe.org)
☐	PE-stamped structural drawings confirming the structural frame is independent of hempcrete loading
☐	PE engineer letter (from Bison Permit Kit, Section 5) describing hempcrete as non-structural infill
☐	Building permit approval letter or pre-application confirmation from local AHJ (if available)

Tab 3: Builder Credentials

✓	Item
☐	General contractor license (state-issued, current)
☐	Bison Certified Installer (BCI) credential — certificate issued by Bison Biocomposites
☐	Liability insurance certificate (GL policy, minimum \$1M per occurrence)
☐	Builder's risk insurance policy covering hempcrete construction phase
☐	Prior project photos or references (at least 2 completed projects of similar scope)

Section 5: Appraiser Guidance

Appraisers unfamiliar with hempcrete may undervalue the finished property by treating it as a standard home without accounting for its energy performance, material durability, and market premium in sustainable building markets. The guidance below is designed to be shared directly with the appraiser.

Memo to Appraiser

Subject: Valuation Guidance — Hempcrete Construction at [Project Address]

This property is being constructed using Bison BIND/R hempcrete as the insulating infill within a [STRUCTURAL FRAME TYPE] structural frame. The following information is provided to assist in an accurate valuation.

Key Valuation Inputs for Hempcrete Properties

Valuation Factor	Appraiser Guidance
Energy Performance	The home is designed to achieve a HERS rating of [X] (request from builder/architect). Comparable sales should include other HERS-rated or LEED-certified homes in the market. Research by the Appraisal Institute has found that each HERS point improvement adds approximately \$2,000–\$5,000 in market value.
Material Durability & Life Expectancy	Hempcrete has a documented life expectancy of 60+ years for the insulating infill — significantly longer than fiberglass batts (25 years), mineral wool (40 years), or spray foam (20–30 years). This reduces long-term maintenance liability and should be reflected as a positive contribution to the property's condition rating.
Indoor Air Quality / Health Premium	Hempcrete is vapor-permeable, non-toxic, naturally mold-resistant, and free of VOCs and synthetic petrochemicals. Homes with demonstrably healthier indoor environments command a premium in markets with health-conscious buyer demographics. Note this in the property description and cost approach.
Market Comparables	Look for comparable sales among: (1) LEED-certified homes, (2) Passive House certified homes, (3) high-performance homes with HERS ratings below 60, (4) natural building homes (straw bale, ICF, SIP) in your market. If no local comps exist, expand the geographic scope and make appropriate adjustments for location.
Cost Approach — Replacement Cost	Hempcrete material + BIND/R binder + certified installer labor: estimate \$18–\$28 per sq ft of wall area installed (varies by region and project scale). Use the attached Bison BIND/R product data sheet for material cost inputs. Replacement cost should be compared to equivalent premium

	insulation systems (spray foam, mineral wool), not fiberglass.
Green / Sustainable Building Addendum	The Appraisal Institute Form 820.05 (Green and Energy Efficient Addendum) should be completed for this property. This addendum allows for explicit documentation of energy efficiency features and their contribution to value.

Section 6: Construction Draw Schedule Template

This template shows a typical 5-draw construction loan schedule for a hempcrete home. Modify the percentages and milestones to match your specific project scope and lender requirements.

Draw #	Milestone	% of Loan	Hempcrete Phase Notes
Draw 1	Foundation complete. Framing started.	15%	N/A — hempcrete installed after framing complete.
Draw 2	Structural frame complete. Rough-in (plumbing, electrical, HVAC) complete.	25%	Frame inspection confirms hempcrete-ready. All utilities in wall cavities confirmed before infill.
Draw 3	Hempcrete infill installed and cured. Exterior plaster/render applied.	25%	BIND/R cures in 24 hours. Inspector confirms infill quality before plaster. Exterior plaster is weather barrier — critical milestone.
Draw 4	Interior plaster complete. Windows, doors, roofing complete.	20%	Interior lime plaster applied after hempcrete cure. Building envelope complete.
Draw 5 (Final)	Certificate of Occupancy issued. All punch list items complete.	15%	CO confirms hempcrete installation met permit requirements. Final lender inspection.

Section 7: Lender Outreach Letter Template

Send this letter (by email or mail) to the bank loan officer 3–5 days before your first meeting. It sets professional expectations, demonstrates preparation, and gives the loan officer time to review materials before you meet.

[YOUR NAME]
[YOUR EMAIL]
[DATE]

[LOAN OFFICER NAME]
[BANK NAME]
[ADDRESS]

Dear [LOAN OFFICER NAME],

I am writing to introduce a construction loan opportunity for a high-performance residential project at [PROJECT ADDRESS]. I have an appointment scheduled for [DATE/TIME] and wanted to send you an advance overview of the project and the documentation I will bring.

Project Overview:

I am building a [X sq ft] single-family residence using a [TIMBER/WOOD/STEEL] structural frame with Bison BIND/R hempcrete as the insulating infill system. The structural frame is conventionally designed and PE-stamped. Hempcrete is the insulation, not the structure.

Why Hempcrete:

Bison BIND/R hempcrete is recognized in the 2024 International Residential Code (Appendix BL) and achieves Class A fire performance (ASTM E84) and R-2.4 per inch thermal performance (ASTM C518). The home is projected to achieve a HERS rating of [X], delivering 30-50% lower energy costs than a code-minimum build.

Documentation I Will Bring:

I have prepared a complete documentation package including: IRC code authority, BIND/R product specifications and test data, PE-stamped structural drawings, builder credentials (Bison Certified Installer), an itemized project budget, comparable project references, appraiser guidance, and a sample draw schedule.

I look forward to presenting this project. Please feel free to contact me before our meeting if you have any preliminary questions.

Sincerely,
[YOUR NAME]
[PHONE] | [EMAIL]

Questions? Contact Bison Biocomposites.

Bison Biocomposites can provide additional technical documentation, prior project financing references, or a direct conversation with our technical team to support your loan application.

Email: info@bisonbiocomposites.com | Website: bisonbiocomposites.com