

Local Engineers & Geoscientists
and



THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY

20th Annual Popsicle Stick Bridge Contest 2025

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. ***Return Of Our Annual Popsicle Stick Bridge Contest***

While our Popsicle Stick Bridge Testing Machine has had some intermittent use over the past couple of years, this current Popsicle Stick Bridge Contest is a continuation our Annual Popsicle Stick Bridge Contest in its original format. Popsicle Stick Bridges will be tested to destruction in a 'live' in-person event on **Saturday 2025 March 8**. For those uncomfortable or unable to attend the live event, we will be recording the testing on video and provide a link for viewing; however, we will not be able to broadcast the testing live.

2. ***Where can I buy popsicle sticks?***

Popsicle sticks can be purchased in bulk from various hobby stores. One example is *Michael's* in Kamloops. Dollar Stores also carry stock.

3. ***Can I use jumbo popsicle sticks or even make my own?***

No. The rules call for the use of "standard" popsicle sticks. Jumbo, tongue depressors, or custom-made sticks are not permitted.

4. ***Can I enter more than one bridge in the contest?***

Yes, you can enter as many bridges as you like; however, we will only award one prize per Category and Person.

5. ***Are you allowed to cut or split the popsicle sticks?***

No. The rules call for the popsicle sticks to remain intact. They must not be split or cut to length. Judges will be checking these details before your bridge is tested at the same time your bridge is weighed in and verified to use 100 or fewer popsicle sticks.

6. **Can epoxy based or “Crazy Glue” type adhesives be used?**

No. The rules call for white glue such as Elmer's, Bondfast, or any of a wide assortment of white woodworking glues available from any hardware store. Judges will be checking that only approved adhesives have been used when your bridge is weighed in.

7. **A group of us together built a bridge. How do I decide which category to enter?**

The oldest member of the group determines the category.

7. **I helped my young son / daughter built a bridge. How do I decide which category to enter?**

We expect Dads or Moms help youngsters. Deciding the category depends on the level of assistance given. To make it fair for all contestants, we ask is that you judge the level of assistance provided and choose between Elementary and Open. In case of dispute, our Judge's Decision is final.

8. **How accurately can the “Bridge Buster” actually measure the forces being applied to the bridge?**

The force is calculated by measuring air pressure being applied to the pneumatic cylinder which is stressing the bridge. The air pressure is measured with a sensor certified to +/- 0.1% accuracy. Accounting for small air leaks and something call “stiction” in the pneumatic cylinder, we are reasonably confident forces can be measured to within +/- 1%. This means a 500 lb measured failure force is 500 +/- 5 lbs. Sometimes the load on the Projection Screen differs from what the operator determines as the maximum load. Our Operator's Decision is Final.

Please check back. More questions and answers will be added as they come up.

Happy Bridge Building !!!!