

Timber Fact Sheet

Welcome

to the first edition of the Fletcher Challenge Forests Timber Fact Sheet. In this issue we focus on the numerous developments related to preservative treated timber. We intend keeping our customers accurately informed about developments and any potential impact on your work/business. We will update the FACT SHEET as new information becomes available.

Origin[®] Outdoor F7 Treated Timber

PERFORMANCE

Origin[®] Outdoor F7 is treated with CCA (copper chromium arsenic) preservative. This is a proven preservative for long-term durability, with more than 50-years application globally. It is an effective method of wood preservation, binding with the fibres of the wood, making it resistant to leaching and decay.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Results of extensive international evaluation conclude that, based on current evidence, CCA-treated timber does not pose a significant risk to public health. However, safe use and handling guidelines (over page) should be followed.



Australia - Current CCA Situation

CCA (copper chromium arsenic) treatment of timber is an approved and commonly used method of timber treatment in Australia. It has a long history of effective use.

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (previously known as the National Registration Authority) is currently considering the registration of preservatives and formulations containing arsenic, to ensure that their continued use:

- does not pose undue hazard to people handling them or their residues; and
- is unlikely to have any harmful effects on people; and
- is unlikely to have unintended effects on animals, plants, or the environment.

This review is expected to produce a draft report for public comment by mid 2004.

View APVMA website: www.apvma.gov.au

New Zealand - ERMA Review of CCA Treatment

In New Zealand, ERMA (Environmental & Risk Management Authority) fulfills a similar role to that of the APVMA in Australia.

On May 2nd 2003, ERMA released its findings into a study of CCA treated timber. Industry players have welcomed the report which declared that "based on currently available evidence ERMA has concluded that CCA-treated wood does

not pose any significant risk to the public. Nevertheless, arsenic is a known human carcinogen and, thus, it would be prudent to avoid unnecessary exposure ..."

ERMA further states "currently there is not sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the health risks associated with the current population's exposure to CCA treated timber warrant the substance being reassessed."

Fletcher Challenge Forests and key NZ industry organizations agree with ERMA that there is a need for consumers to be well informed regarding the safe use and handling of treated timber. An enhanced consumer and retail education programme on the safe use and handling of all treated timber is in the final stages of preparation. www.ermanz.govt.nz

Fletcher Challenge Forests will continue to take a proactive and leading role with regards to treated timber. We place real importance on the health and safety of our employees, our customers, the public and the environment.



Q&A

Treated Timber

Question: Is CCA treated timber dangerous?

Answer: The EPA (USA) & ERMA (NZ) looked extensively at this issue and concluded that there is no evidence that CCA treated timber poses an unacceptable risk to health when used and handled correctly.

Question: Who treats timber with preservative?

Answer: Only registered treatment plants are permitted to use preservatives to treat timber. These plants operate within rigorous control standards.

Question: What is the Woodmark logo stamped on treated timber?

Answer: It is an independent New Zealand quality assurance programme that ensures suppliers comply with established treatment and environmental standards. Suppliers must also be registered with relevant State Forestry Departments in Australia, which conduct regular in-market product testing.

Question: What safety precautions apply to treated timber?

Answer: In working with any wood-based building product, health and safety guidelines should be followed - these are covered opposite.

Question: What options are there for preservatives used in the treatment of timber?

Answer: The most common preservatives are:

- CCA - copper chromium arsenic; proven in Australia and NZ for over 50 years
- LOSP - light organic solvent preservative; used in Australia and NZ for 25 years, predominantly in painted exterior joinery applications.
- Over the last 10 years other formulations have been introduced to the market.

USA - EPA Update

In the USA, the Environmental Protection Agency and the preservative manufacturers, have agreed to a staged phase out of CCA treated timber for residential applications, in favour of more recently developed alternatives. The phase out will be completed by December 2003.

We note that, in conducting their review the EPA concluded that CCA-treated timber "...did not pose an unacceptable risk to health and safety". The EPA has agreed to the continued use of CCA for Permanent Wood Foundation (PWF) systems and rural applications eg fencing. Further, it is not requiring the removal of existing structures.

European Union

In January 2003, the European Union posted notice of restrictions and modifications in the use of arsenic in wood preservation along broadly similar lines to the US EPA. Further details can be found at the European Union web site: <http://europa.eu.int/com/enterprise/chemicals/markrestr/ongowk/recentmodif.htm>

LOSP Treatment Standards Australia Review

It is widely accepted that LOSP (Light Organic Solvent Preservative) treated timber for outdoor structural use, should be painted for optimum long-term durability. A proposed guidance note has been released for public comment - this advises caution when using tin-based (TBTO or TBTN) LOSP in applications prone to water entrapment or where maintenance can not be ensured. A decision on this "note" is expected at the end of July '03. However, the development of more robust LOSP products is currently well advanced.

Consumer Information for Handling All Preservative Treated Timber

- Do not burn preserved wood
- Wear a dust mask P1 or better (AS NZ 1716) and goggles when cutting or handling wood
- Wear gloves when working with wood
- All sawdust and construction debris should be cleaned up and disposed of after construction
- After working with wood wash exposed areas thoroughly
- Work clothes should be washed separately from other household clothing before wearing again
- Preserved wood should not be used where it may come into direct or indirect contact with drinking water except for uses involving incidental contact such as fresh water docks and bridges
- Do not use preserved wood under circumstances where the preservative may become a component of food, animal feed or beehives
- Do not use preserved wood for mulch
- Only preserved wood that is visibly clean and free of surface residue should be used for patios, decks and walkways
- Do not use preserved wood shavings or sawdust as animal litter
- Use light spirit based preservative or sealing agent on all cut, notched or drilled surfaces

Sealing cut ends

It is a condition of all guarantees supporting treated timber that any cuts, holes, or other incisions into the surface of the timber, must be coated with an appropriate brush-on preservative. This ensures that any exposed timber is effectively sealed against insect or fungal decay.

Intended applications

CCA-treated timber has a proven track-record of durability in both structural and non-structural outdoor construction.

LOSP was originally designed for outdoor timber used in visual (non-structural) applications. As noted opposite, Standards Australia is considering a cautionary note on the use of current LOSP formulations for structural applications. New LOSP formulations designed for structural timber are expected to be available in late 2003.

Identifying Preservative Treated Timber

• Colour

CCA-treated timber is recognised by its distinctive green colour. While some LOSP formulations include a green pigment to identify the wood as "treated", LOSP is actually colourless.

Colour is not a reliable indicator of treatment type

• Producers' tags and running brands

Preservative treated timber must carry end-tags or running brands that identify the intended application (H-class), preservative type (in Australia CCA Oxide is 01, H3 LOSP is 62) and treatment plant number.