

Treated Wood News



Spring 1997



Provided by Western Wood Preservers Institute

Project of Note



ANATURE PRESERVE AND PRESERVED WOOD BLEND TOGETHER BEAUTIFULLY

Jackson Bottom Wetlands Preserve is a 650 acre wildlife preserve located within the city limits of Hillsboro, Oregon. The Preserve is a tranquil sanctuary for both people and animals. The quiet open waters, rolling meadows and upland ash and fir woods are homes to thousands of ducks and geese, deer, otters, beavers, herons and eagles. Song birds and small mammals, as well as salamanders and wetland plants, are dependent on the marshes of the preserve.

This pristine location provides an excellent example for the proper use of treated wood in aquatic environments. Treated wood was used in the construction of boardwalks and stairways, bridges, benches, and wildlife viewing sites. Thousands of school children, bird watchers, families and community groups visit Jackson Bottom each year.

"Best Management Practices (BMPs)" should be specified when building in wetlands similar to this splendid project. For a copy of *Best Management Practices Of Treated Wood In Aquatic Environments*, contact WWPI.

Treater: Permapost Products Co., Hillsboro, Oregon

1997 PCBC WESTERN BUILDING SHOW

Western Wood Preservers Institute will be participating with a trade show exhibit at the 1997 PCBC Western Building Show, June 19-20, 1997, at the Moscone Convention Center in San Francisco. Stop by Booth #306 to learn what you should look for when building with treated wood and meet WWPI staff and members.

IS PRESSURE-TREATED WOOD SAFE TO USE FOR PLAYGROUNDS?

Yes. An eight-year review, completed in 1986 by the EPA, concluded that the benefits of pressure-treated wood outweighed any potential risk. Research studies by numerous independent agencies, including the Consumer Product Safety Commission (1990) and the California State Department of Health Services (1984), state clearly that CCA pressure-treated wood poses negligible risks to humans, plants, or animals. A recent article on playground equipment in *Consumer Reports* (May, 1996) concluded by saying, "there's nothing to fear."

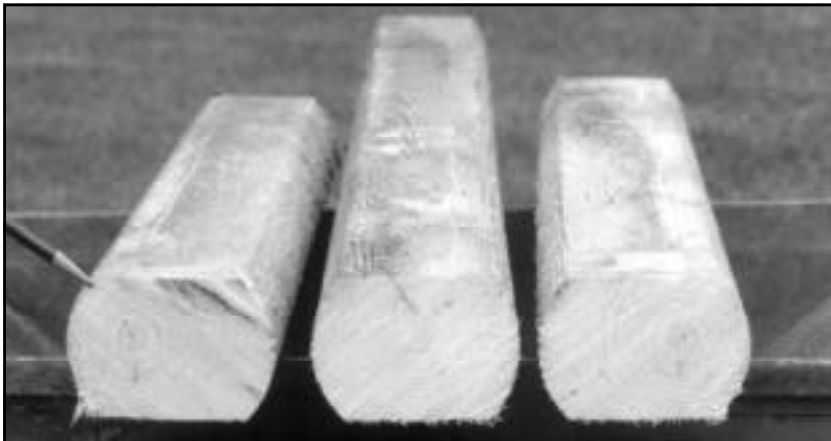
KNOW WHAT YOU ARE BUYING AND SELLING

Consumers as well as some customer service personnel for lumber yards and home centers are sometimes confused between pressure-treated landscape lumber and the cherry-toned, landscaping timbers.



What appears to be a bargain can be a very costly mistake.

The latter appear to be a real bargain because they are usually so inexpensive. Most believe they are purchasing a treated product that will last for many years. In fact, what they are purchasing are squared-off, peeler cores. (Note: Peeler cores are what's left of logs after being "peeled" for veneer in the manufacturing of plywood). The cores are then dipped in stain so as to have the appearance of a



Crosscuts of timbers show no penetration of a preservative; only a stained surface.

quality, pressure-treated, wood product. Commonly the material is placed in a ground contact or landscaping situation. After a year or two, the project that was thought to last, rots out or is eaten away by insects. What you have now is an unhappy, disappointed hobbyist whose hard work has gone for naught.

For backyard projects that will last for many years to come, it is recommended they be constructed out of pressure-treated wood products with a minimum net retention level of .40 pcf for ground contact; .25 pcf for above ground use. The product will be either "stamped" or "end-tagged" with the standard or manufacturer's warranty.

Treated wood products are somewhat more expensive than their imitations, however, as in most cases, there is no substitute for quality. Value can be measured in many different ways. In the long run, quality pressure-treated products are the real bargain.

THE SAFETY OF TREATED WOOD

In this age of chemical and environmental awareness, the Institute is often asked about the safety of treated wood. Like other pesticides, the preservatives used to treat wood are all subject to extensive health and environmental review by the Federal EPA which evaluates the risks and benefits before allowing their use. Most preservatives, in their concentrated form, are registered "restricted use" pesticides and can only be applied in the highly regulated wood treating plants. However, because of the low amount of chemical and low risks, treated wood is not classed as a pesticide. Guidance for appropriate uses and safe handling information is included in the treated wood Material Safety Data Sheets and the EPA approved Consumer Information Sheets available from producers and distributors of the products.

The most common types of treated wood in the construction and backyard markets are the arsenicals (CCA and ACZA). Outside the EPA, these preservatives have been examined by numerous researchers who studied treating plant workers, carpenters, laboratory animals, and applications such as playground structures, garden planters and marine piling. This research has been summarized in an article published by the American Council on Science and Health, Inc. (ACSH) which consists of 250 physicians, scientists, and policy advisors. The article appeared in the ACSH magazine, *Priorities for Long Life and Good Health* (Vol. 7 #5) in 1995.

The article concluded: *They [Consumers] can be assured of what sound science has demonstrated: that when properly processed and appropriately used, CCA-treated wood is harmless to humans, plants and non targeted animals.* Contact WWPI for a free reprint of this article.

The most stringent consumer warning requirements in the nation exist in California as a result of the voter approved Proposition 65 (The Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986). This act requires, among other items, public warnings on products which contain any of over 400 substances listed by the state as "carcinogens" or "reproductive toxicants."

In 1995, legal action was brought against the treated wood industry claiming arsenical treated wood products should carry a warning due to the presence of chromium and arsenic. The industry determined a negotiated settlement was prudent business.

As a result, all CCA and ACZA treated wood sold in California now carries a Prop 65 warning statement. The legal notice found in this newsletter was also required by the settlement.

Produced and used appropriately, treated wood is safe for humans and the environment!

ATTENTION

CALIFORNIA CONTRACTORS AND BUILDING TRADES

A Message From The Western Wood Preservers Institute

Proper Use of Treated Wood Products

The benefits of using pressure treated wood products are well known. Waterborne arsenical treated wood products, such as CCA and ACZA, when properly specified, quality assured, and utilized, can extend the useful life of wood for many years. The protection from wood destroying insects and fungus is made possible through the presence of chemical toxic to the target organisms.

As with all building materials, treated wood should be handled with care by workers. Eye protection and a dust mask should be worn when sawing and sanding. Waste treated wood should never be burned. Treated wood should not be cut, sawed or sanded over any source of drinking water.

A recent lawsuit has underscored the need for employers to comply with the Hazard Communication Standard to assure their employees use the products appropriately.

Proposition 65, a California law, requires warnings to California workers exposed to chemicals listed under that law, including Arsenic and Chromium, which may have been used to treat the wood you are purchasing. Treated wood producers provide their customers with Consumer Information Sheets and Material Safety Data Sheets that describe the nature of the wood preservatives used to treat this wood and the safe handling practices that should be followed by people who work with it.

The settlement of a recent lawsuit releases employers from Proposition 65 liability for exposure to wood treatment chemicals provided those employers incorporate Proposition 65 warnings about chromium and/or arsenic based wood treatment chemicals into the Hazard Communication Program required under Title 8, Cal. Code Regs. S 5194.

Employers may take advantage of this settlement if they provide the Proposition 65 warnings to their employees as required by California's Hazard Communication Regulation.

For more information about treated wood and its special decay-preventing properties, contact:

Western Wood Preservers Institute

601 Main Street, Suite 405, Vancouver, Washington 98660

Western Agencies Certified by ALSC

The American Lumber Standards Committee certifies five agencies that serve the West. Those meeting the ALSC criteria include:



B Inspection



California Lumber Inspection Service

CSI[®]

Canadian Softwood Inspection, Inc.

MCC



McCutchan Inspection Services

TP[®]

Timber Products Inspection

"Third party" agencies verify that pressure-treated wood was properly treated in accordance with AWPA standards. Third party inspection is not mandated by law, but is necessary to comply with the UBC. To be certain of receiving the treated wood that was specified, only accept or approve treated wood with a quality stamp or end tag of an accredited ALSC agency.



Printed in the USA on recycled paper.

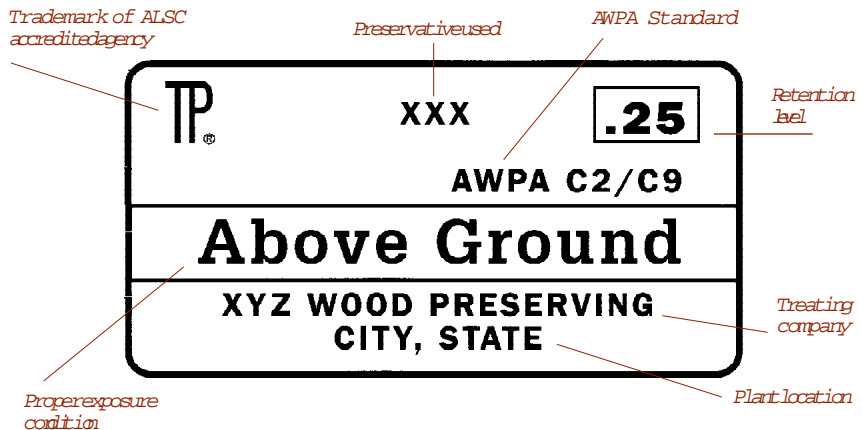
QUALITY ASSURANCE

INTRODUCTION

The American Lumber Standards Committee (ALSC) is responsible for the oversight and accreditation of third party inspection agencies for treated wood. In order to comply with the Uniform Building Code, treated wood must be marked with the quality stamp or end tag of an accredited ALSC agency.

The 1997 UBC reads: "All preservatively treated wood required to be treated under Section 2306 shall be identified by the quality mark of an inspection agency which has been accredited by an accreditation body which complies with the requirements of the American Lumber Committee Treated Wood Program, or equivalent."

INTERPRETING A QUALITY MARK



TREATING STANDARDS

APPLICATION	RETENTION LBS./CU. FT.	PENETRATION ASSAY ZONE	AWPA STANDARDS FOR WATERBORNE TREATMENTS
Above ground	0.25	0 - .60"	C1 General C2 Lumber-Timbers C5 Round Posts C9 Plywood
Ground Contact, Fresh Water Immersion	0.40	0 - .60"	C15 Light Frame Construction C16 Agriculture Use
In Ground (structural)	0.60	0 - .60"	C22 Permanent Wood Foundation (UBC SEC. 1810) C31 Out Of Contact With Ground and Continuously Protected From Liquid Water