

CITW Facts by Fax

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CCA PRESSURE TREATED WOOD IN RESIDENTIAL APPLICATIONS

The treated wood industry in the U.S., under pressure from political, consumer and special interest groups, has come to an agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for a voluntary transition away from CCA-treated wood. This agreement is purely market driven and in no way reflects upon product safety. This is a voluntary transition in the U.S. designed to reduce the amount of arsenic released in the environment by replacing it with a new generation of wood preservatives.

CITW and the preservative manufacturers have been in contact on a preliminary basis with PMRA regarding the possible affects of the U.S. decision on the Canadian industry.

The Institute has also been active in forming a coalition of stakeholders in support of the industrial/commercial uses of CCA pressure treated wood.

Canadian discussions are in the early stages of development and we will be keeping members informed through bulletins and updates at the AGM.

CITW ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Time to pencil in April 10 to April 12 into your agenda as CITW's Annual General Meeting is just around the corner. Plans have to be finalized but here is a broad outline of what will take place in Ottawa during those three days.

The AGM will be held at the Ottawa Marriott, 100 Kent Street, Ottawa, Ontario.

On Wednesday, April 10th, a reception will be held in the evening, giving all an oppor-

tunity to meet with old acquaintances and a chance to strike new ones. The following day will be a busy one. On the agenda is the annual general meeting as well as a luncheon with a guest speaker. We anticipate participation by several federal government representatives as we seek updates and their views on the future of our industry. A President's reception and dinner on Thursday evening will be the main social event. On Friday, the four committees -- Environmental, Pole Producers, Promotion & Education, and Technical -- will be brainstorming and developing programs/activities for 2002.

Stay tuned for more details.

TRD IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

It wasn't easy, far from it -- all the more reason congratulations are in order to all members of the CITW. All but one of 66 wood treaters across the country submitted the Technical Recommendations Document Implementation Plan in time to meet the deadline of December 31, 2001.

"The exercise was viewed by Environment Canada as a huge success," noted CITW Executive Director Henry Walthert. "We astonished more than a few people because they didn't think we would get them all. Obviously the U.S. agreement and the subsequent reaction in Canada will have some bearing on how we will proceed, however Environment Canada has indicated that they still expect treating plants to come into compliance with the TRD. A TRD for ACQ and one for borates already exists."

The SOP Manufacturers/Treaters Steering Committee will be meeting to determine how changes to the Implementation Plans, as a result of the shift to alternative wood preservatives, will affect the response and timeframes for treaters.

The TRD plans will be reviewed by industry expert Friedl Brudermann to determine whether it responds to the shortcomings found in the plant assessments. Wood treaters will be contacted by Brudermann's assessment team if deficiencies in the TRD plans are unearthed. Once given a sign of approval, wood treaters will receive the promised rebates.

"The TRD incorporates the toughest design and operating standards for any wood preservation in the world," notes Brudermann, who will hand a report to the Manufacturers/Treaters Steering Committee by this April after reviewing all of the TRD plans. "With the possible exception of the nuclear industry, no other Canadian industry will operate under more stringent standards."

Meeting the standards, adds Walthert, will impose "some real hardships" on wood treating facilities across Canada -- and that makes the effort by CITW members "all the more remarkable since the outcome of the assessments may require significant expenditures to upgrade their plants."

It is estimated that renovations to plants will exceed \$100 million, a sizable sum considering total sales volume for the wood preservation industry stands at \$750 million. Yet, the industry is quickly forging ahead, with some plants expected to complete their requirements by the end of this year.

The assessment program will provide a benchmark for the industry, and an industry benchmark for Environment Canada. By 2006, the steering committee will review and measure the success of the voluntary program. It will also review the effectiveness of the TRDs in reducing CEPA toxic substance releases.

CITW ON THE FOREFRONT OF A CONSUMER AWARENESS PROGRAM

CITW is forging ahead with the consumer awareness program as agreed. The program is necessary regardless of changes that may occur in the future for residential applications of CCA pressure treated wood.

The consumer awareness program designed to mitigate growing public concerns about CCA treated wood products is will be in full force this spring. At the behest of the Pest Management Regulatory Agency of Health Canada, CITW and wood treaters across the country have initiated a voluntary labeling program targeting CCA pressure treated wood products.

The signage, which includes bundle tags, hanging tags, lumber end tags and stickers, provide consumers with basic safety handling tips and information. The labels also encourage consumers seeking more information to ask for a Consumer Safety Information sheet, dial a toll-free line (1-866-679-0957) or visit the web site www.ccasafetyinfo.ca.

To promote the voluntary information program, the CITW is embarking on a nationwide tour and participating in major retail home-improvement exhibitions. On January 18-19, Henry Walthert paid a visit to the show sponsored by Western Lumber Association in Saskatoon, followed by a show in Toronto on February 3-5. Next in line is an exhibition in Moncton on March 22-24. The CITW is working hard at trying to ensure its presence in a major Quebec show as well.

REGISTRATION OF ALTERNATIVE WOOD PRESERVATIVES

A meeting with the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) of Health Canada in late January over the use of alternative wood preservatives signaled a step in the right direction.

A growing demand for alternative treatments have left Canadian wood treaters in a lurch as none of the handful alternative wood preservatives have yet been registered. Making matters worse is that the alternatives are available in the U.S.

"We need to be prepared for the market shift," notes CITW Executive Director Henry Walthert. "Canadian treaters have to have access to the alternative preservatives. We're going to see the alternatives coming

here in Canada regardless, except it's going to be treated by someone else to the detriment of the Canadian industry if we don't move fairly quickly."

To raise the level of concern, Walthert -- accompanied by CITW Executive Coordinator Paul McKeogh, CITW Board Member Jim Mogan from Coventry Forest Products and CITW Board Member Tom Moryto of RAM Forest Products -- met with PMRA Chief Registrar Wendy Sexsmith and Janet Taylor, the organization's head of re-evaluation.

"It was a positive meeting," says Walthert. "They understand the issues. They understand the need for alternatives, and they are willing to work with CITW and the prospective product registrants to get those new products into the country. The U.S. agreement has elevated the need for quick action."

New developments will be passed your way as quickly as possible.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION PROPOSING TO BAN ARSENIC WOOD PRESERVATIVE

The European Commission sought feedback from industry players over its plans to issue a draft Directive that would ban CCA-treated wood in the residential market and restrict its use to essential industrial activities.

The European Commission recently classified CCA-treated wood as hazardous, thereby compelling municipal, construction, and industrial waste wood to dispose of it properly. Now the EC is taking it a step further and considering restricting its use only for electricity and telephone poles, industrial cooling towers and railway sleepers. That means it would no longer be used for bridge and constructional timber, fencing, jetties, noise barriers, playground equipment or stakes for agricultural growing.

But before forging ahead, the EC solicited over the past two months input from stakeholders to get their views about the proposed directive and the impact it will have on the treated-wood industry, the economy, employment and the general competitiveness of the European industry. The EC also welcomed comments about alternatives to CCA wood preservatives such as copper and boron, chromium trioxide, and copper and phosphoric acid, among others. It is estimated that the minimum investment cost for a treatment plant to use CCA alternatives

would hover around \$30,000 in order to buy a new a tank, pump and fittings. The tab for larger operations would be approximately \$315,000, a figure that takes into account purchasing a pressure cylinder, tank fittings, automatic controls as well administrative and training costs.

There are currently three CCA wood preservative producers in the European Union, and an estimated 700 wood treating companies using CCA preservatives. All told, the industry employs approximately 4,000 people. The EU market for CCA has been steadily declining. In 1996, it was estimated to be 11,000 tonnes per year, a 50% drop compared to 1989.

INTRODUCING CITW'S NEW EXECUTIVE COORDINATOR

Good tidings came to bear with the dawn of the new year as the CITW is pleased to announce the appointment of Paul McKeogh as the new Executive Coordinator. McKeogh brings with him impressive and impeccable credentials, having served as a senior officer in the Canadian Navy for 30 years, followed by a two-year stint as an employment counselor with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London, England, and a two-year mandate as project manager in Moscow, Russia.

Welcome aboard, Paul.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

CITW 2002 Annual General Meeting

April 10-12, 2002, Ottawa Marriott
Ottawa, Ontario

American Wood-Preservers' Association

April 21-24, Peabody Hotel
Memphis Tennessee

Canadian Wood Council Annual General Meeting

June 5-7, 2002
Halifax, Nova Scotia

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