

CITW Facts by Fax

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ALTERNATIVE WOOD TREATMENT PRODUCTS APPROVED BY PMRA

Alternative wood treatment products Akaline Copper Quaternary (ACQ) and Copper Azole have finally been registered by the Pest Management Regulatory Agency, a decision that paved the way for Canadian wood preservative suppliers to agree to voluntary withdraw Chromated Copper Arsenate (CCA) pressure treated wood from residential markets by December 31, 2003.

Under terms of the accord, wood treaters will no longer use CCA to treat wood for non-industrial uses such as boardwalks, decks, patios, picnic tables, play-structures, residential fencing and walkways.

Wood, though, treated prior to December 31, 2003 can still be sold in stores and used in residential settings. As well, already-built structures containing CCA-treated wood are not affected by this deal. Further, CCA-treated wood may still be used for industrial and professional applications such as highway construction, railway sleepers, and utility poles and pilings.

And one more thing. Through it all, the PMRA -- as with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency -- has not concluded that CCA-treated wood products pose an unreasonable threat to health and the environment. Both agencies, however, will continue with their joint re-evaluation of CCA, a process expected to be completed by year-end.

CITW AGM A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

The CITW Annual General Meeting held at the Ottawa Marriott Hotel on April 10-12

turned out to be a lively and spirited affair, drawing more than 45 members from across the country.

Before settling down to business, acquaintances -- new and old -- took advantage of the evening reception on Wednesday, April 10th to mingle and socialize, catch up on the latest tidbits and officially welcome three new CITW members. They are Les Bois Traité MG of Montmagny, Quebec; Goodfellow Quebec Inc. with plants in Delson, St-André and Elmsdale, Nova Scotia; and Le Groupe Lebel which has plants in Rivière-du-Loup, Quebec and Kemptonville, Ontario.

Much was on the agenda at the AGM, especially since this year appears to be as eventful as last. Motions were passed, strategies discussed while guest speakers provided insights and views on things to come. Richard Martin, Senior Evaluation Officer, Environmental Risk Section of the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA), set the ball rolling with a presentation on the transition to alternative wood treatment products. He encouraged CITW and its members to be proactive, and make its presence felt in the marketplace by getting the message through about CCA and the alternatives. Curtis Englot, Senior Toxic Substances Officer with Environment Canada, also broached the subject of alternatives. He talked about the Strategic Options Process and the impact the recent transition to alternatives will have on Technical Recommendations Documents (TRD) Implementation Plans. While TRDs for alternatives are still in the draft stage, Environment Canada nevertheless expects treating plants to indicate by year end changes it has made to their facilities. Still on

the topic of alternatives, Timber Specialties Ltd., Chemical Specialties Inc., and Arch Wood Protection Canada Corp. each gave a presentation on their new products.

The keynote luncheon speaker could not have been more befitting, given all the media attention the industry has received over the past year. Tony Wilson-Smith, one of Canada's most respected current events reporters and editor of Maclean's magazine, provided invaluable insights on the media business, revealing what makes a news story, how stories are selected, and how it is developed. During his one-hour discourse, which was peppered with questions by audience members, Wilson-Smith also provided tips and suggestions on how to deal with the media. All in all a much appreciated presentation.

Executive Director Henry Walthert then took centre stage and provided an overview of CITW's activities during the course of the past year. "It was certainly an eventful year, with the industry being in the limelight," notes Walthert. "Even with the transition to alternatives, the battle is still being waged. Opposing forces are working diligently and we need to mobilize and counter them." That means that CITW and its members will be active on the political front, meeting with parliamentarians across the country to raise political awareness about the benefits and challenges the treated wood industry faces. And that's exactly what a number of CITW members did during the AGM when they paid a visit to several Members of Parliament. As points out Walthert, elected officials "can play an important role in helping to allay fears about our business. They can also play a

role in retaining pressure treated wood as an important environmental tool to preserve our Canadian forests. So we're certainly going to have a busy year."

Also keeping busy are CITW's four committees. The Technical Committee, headed by chairman Nigel Banks, discussed implementing a treating standard for the new preservatives as this seemed to be a requirement by PMRA for labeling the new products. While there was some concern by suppliers about establishing standards that would enable the registration to proceed, it appears at this point in time that the exercise can be achieved. On a different note, Ben Lucas revealed that the video production of the creosote project will be available for distribution by early this summer.

The Promotion & Education Committee too had much to discuss. Besides pointing out the need to enliven and update CITW's website, the committee recommended revamping a number of the organization's brochures that have been made redundant by recent regulatory amendments. As well, "lively discussions" were held when chairperson Mary-Anne Dalkowski raised the issue of blurring responsibilities between the P&E and Environmental Committees. The possibility of revising CITW's structure was raised during discussions, and it is something that will be further examined at a later date.

Meanwhile the Environmental Committee examined the need to step up political pressure and raise awareness among Canada's elected officials. Senior industry executives from the utility sector should also be approached, noted Henry Walther. Discussions were also held over the need to tag new preservatives.

The Pole Committee was renamed the Commercial/Industrial Committee. B. Lucas reported that the CSA 015 sub-committee has been hard at work trying to harmonize Canadian and American specifications around poles, "however it is proving to be elusive," noted Ben Lucas. The committee also deliberated over the need to effectively counter the steel pole industry. Lastly, the committee pointed out that there is a Utility Pole Structure Workshop that will be held in Winnipeg, Manitoba on June 17 and 18.

HAZARDOUS WASTE REGULATIONS RELEASED FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

A number of documents that deal with hazardous waste management have been released for public comment by the Transboundary Movement Branch (TMB) of Environment Canada.

A discussion paper that looks at proposed changes to the Export and Import of Hazardous Wastes Regulations (EIHW) is now available. The new regulations are expected to provide a distinct control regime for recyclable materials, improve federal-provincial and US-Canada harmonization, and strengthen links between import-export provisions, particularly toxic substances, under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act 1999 (CEPA). But before the final amendments to EIHW are enacted, Environment Canada intends to launch a study examining the potential socio-economic impact of the new regulations. The government body also intends to give stakeholders another opportunity to provide comments.

The paper can be accessed at <http://www.ec.gc.ca/CEPARRegistry/documents/participation/eihwrdisc.cfm>

The TMB is also inviting stakeholders to comment on two documents that deal with Federal Hazardous Waste Regulations (FHWR) before it gazettes it during 2002-2003. The new regulations will apply to federal institutions managing hazardous waste, including Federal Departments, Crown Corporations and Custodians; and Federal Works and Undertakings.

Both documents -- "Proposed drafting instructions of the Federal Hazardous Waste Regulations" and "Feedback Requested from Stakeholders on the Proposed Drafting Instructions of the Federal Hazardous Waste Regulations" -- can be accessed at http://www.ec.gc.ca/cepaRegistry/documents/participation/fhwr_inv.cfm

CCA LEAK HARMING HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

Ten shipping containers holding more than 200 tonnes of chromated copper arsenate (CCA) have leaked in Djibouti, Ethiopia, causing environmental havoc and serious health problems, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

The culprit appears to be plastic containers. "All previous shipments of this chemical have used steel drums and no leakage occurred," notes FAO expert Kevin Helps. "The party responsible for the leakage needs to be identified and held responsible." All the more because many workers were exposed to "unacceptable" levels of the chemical, added Helps.

The chemical was shipped from the United Kingdom to the Ethiopian Power Corporation.

ATLANTIC BUILDINGS MATERIAL SHOW

The Atlantic Buildings Material Show, held in Moncton, New Brunswick from Friday, March 22 to Sunday, March 24 gave Executive Coordinator Paul McKeogh a chance to meet new CITW members as well as an opportunity to exchange with some he had not yet met. McKeogh also discovered that retailers in the Atlantic provinces expressed little concern over the CCA issue.

A big thank you to Marcia Straatsma-Renie of Arch Wood Protection Corp. for the help in attending to CITW's booth.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Utility Pole Structure Workshop

presented by CEA Technologies Inc.
June 17-18, 2002
Winnipeg, Manitoba

CITW 2002 Fall Committee Meetings

October 22, 2002
Vancouver, B.C.

CWPA Meeting

October 23 - 24, 2002
Vancouver, B.C.

CSA 080

October 25, 2002
Vancouver, B.C.

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