



CITW PRESSURE POINTS

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GOOD NEWS MONTH

There are a number of positive developments that have occurred over the past few weeks. This edition of CITW PRESSURE POINTS will attempt to provide an overview of these items. A good way to move towards the end of a great summer.

TORONTO – CITY COUNCIL DEFERS ACTION OVER ARSENIC TREATED WOOD

We would like to think that our intervention with the city authorities was, at least in part, responsible for this result.

Excerpts -Toronto Star, Wednesday July 31, 2002, Ontario Edition: Paul Moloney, city of Toronto parks and Recreation, “Toronto playground structures made of arsenic-laced pressure-treated wood are not so dangerous that they require immediate action” city

council has decided. The city used sealant on one High Park structure after The Star reported in May that nearby soil tests showed arsenic levels 15 times higher than federal safety guidelines of 12 milligrams per kilogram. But council held off yesterday on sealing some 260 other play structures, pending tests expected by November on at least 82 sites.

The council debate revolved around the wisdom of spending \$300,000 or more to apply penetrating oil-based sealant to playground equipment when tests may show it is not necessary. The tests are expected to cost about \$90,000. At the same time, the public health department has issued a "fact sheet" advising citizens to seal decks or play equipment made of pressure-treated wood, and to reapply sealant every one or two years. "This can help reduce the amount of

arsenic released by as much as 90 per cent," the document says. "Consult your local hardware or building store for appropriate (sealant) products."

CouncillorMihevc called for sealing all structures - "Here we are telling the public that the prudent thing to do is seal it, and we should be following the same course of action," he said. Council disagreed, voting down Mihevc's call for immediate action by a 21-17 margin. The majority of council sided with Mayor Mel Lastman, who urged further tests. Lastman said quick action could alarm the public, many of whom have pressure-treated wood at home.

"Please understand, this is the same wood that people have on their decks in their backyards, this is the same wood that they have on their barbecues, this is the same wood that they have on their

fences, this is the same wood on their sheds and so on," he said. "Let's make sure we know what we're doing. Let's make sure of the message we're sending out to the public so they don't start being afraid and getting rid of the wood that they have there when they don't have to." Councillor David Shiner, the city's budget chair, joined Lastman in urging council not to overreact. "This is a problem that was blown up in the media more than anything else," said Shiner (Ward 24, Willowdale). "Just to go out now and to have a knee-jerk reaction because there was a newspaper article that did some identification is wrong."

FLORIDA MEDICAL EXPERTS CONFIRM SAFETY OF CCA-TREATED WOOD

Fairfax, Virginia, August 6, 2002 - The Florida Physicians Arsenic Workgroup, a panel of six physicians appointed last year by the Florida Department of Health, has concluded that "the amount of arsenic that could be absorbed from playground soil and CCA treated wood is not significant compared to natural sources and will not result in detectable arsenic intake." As a result, the physicians note that the level of "arsenic in or around CCA-treated wood in playgrounds and recreational facilities does not appear sufficient to adversely affect the health of children or adults."

The panel of six physicians,

which was appointed last year to study the issue at the request of the Florida Department of Health, noted, "Used since the 1960s, CCA-treated wood has never been linked to skin diseases or cancer in children exposed during recreational use." The expert panel also expressed agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's statement that "EPA does not recommend consumers replace or remove existing structures made with CCA-treated wood or the soil surrounding those structures."

The Florida Physicians Arsenic Workgroup conducted an extensive review of the medical literature concerning the toxicity and carcinogenicity of arsenic, its environmental and natural occurrence, bioaccessibility and bioavailability, and past medical uses. A copy of its report is available at www.preservedwood.com. This news was carried by the Associated Press (AP) State and Local Wire. It appeared in the BC Cycle and the Orlando Sentinel on August 08, 2002. CITW will be producing a press release this week for the Canadian Media outlets.

CALIFORNIA WASTE MANAGEMENT – MORE ON THE ROMEO BILL

AWPI reports on the Latest From California: California State Senator Gloria Romero has filed an amended SB1393 that is highly problematic, to

say the least. This latest version, dated August 5, can be downloaded as a PDF file at http://info.sen.ca.gov/cgi-bin/postquery?bill_number=sb_1393&sess=CUR&house=B&site=sen.

The problems with this version of the bill, in a nutshell: 1) There's no solution to the disposal issue, and in fact it would lead to classification of at least some CCA-treated wood waste as hazardous waste; 2) A mandate has been added for removal of arsenically treated wood from publicly owned facilities where it might come into contact with children; and 3) The bill is unclear about what authority Cal EPA has (to regulate or to recommend regulations) after a review that Cal EPA will conduct with the University of California.

The AWPI is of course, strongly opposed to this bill. They are also aware that its likelihood of becoming law in its present form is not very high. The bill now acknowledges that it contains unreimbursed state mandates, which are highly unpopular. Via lobbyists and coalitions with other groups, AWPI is continuing to lobby to correct or to eliminate the bill's problems - either legislatively or via the regulatory route.

WOOD 'THE' GREEN BUILDING MATERIAL

The idea of "Green Building" or "Sustainable Building" is gaining support by designers,

builders and governments and new Green Building programs are popping up all over North America. Every magazine related to construction seems to feature “Green Building” and national and international conferences and seminars are devoted to the topic. But what exactly is “Green Building”? The concept of “Green Buildings” is to lessen the demand of buildings on the environment through careful design and material choices. All construction will have some effect on the environment but “green building” favors choices that reduce energy use, reduce the use of non-renewable materials, and reduce the pollution caused by the manufacture of materials. Through careful selection, designers and builders are able to minimize the impact or “environmental footprint” of a building.

Wood products are a natural fit for environmentally conscious designers. Wood makes a major contribution to improving the overall environmental performance of any commercial or residential building by reducing energy use, reducing resource use, and reducing environmental impacts as demonstrated by life-cycle analysis. These systems seem to hold wood to a higher standard than steel or concrete. Steel is recognized as green based on a recycled content but is not required to account for the high air and water pollution that is caused in its manufacture. On the

other hand, wood, a renewable, sustainable resource with low embodied energy and whose manufacture has low impact on air and water pollution, is only recognised as environmentally friendly if it is “certified sustainable” by the FSC. This is required even though the UN Report on the State of the World’s Forest confirms that North America’s forests have increased by 20 million acres over the last 30 years.

There are many sustainable forestry standards throughout the world written by recognised standards organisations including ISO, CSA, PEFC and SFI. Canada has the largest area of certified forests in the world but FSC has not yet developed its standards for Canadian forests. Canada also has stringent sustainable forestry laws in place for its publicly owned forests which represent over 90% of the forest area. In recognizing only one standard, environmentally responsible choices are excluded from being recognized. It is hoped that the evolving rating systems will expand their requirements beyond the current single criteria.

COMPOSITE DECKING DEMAND EXPECTED TO GROW OVER 15 PERCENT ANNUALLY

U.S. demand for decking is projected to increase to 1.6 percent per annum through 2005 to 5.1 billion board feet.

While gains will decelerate from the 1995-2000 pace due to a slowing of new construction, opportunities for decking will be created through the repair and improvement of existing buildings and the addition of new decks to existing structures. Advances will be particularly strong for alternative decking materials (e.g., wood-plastic composites, vinyl, and polyethylene), which will increase their combined share of the market to over 10 percent by 2005, eroding the share held by wood decking. These and other trends are presented in *Wood and Competitive Decking*, a new study from the Freedonia Group, Inc., a Cleveland-based industrial market research firm. Among the various alternative decking materials, composites will grow the fastest, increasing over 15 percent per year to 488 million board feet. Sales of composite decking will be fueled by the favorable performance characteristics of the material, as well as by the product’s environmentally friendly status. Other alternative decking materials, such as vinyl and polyethylene, will also exhibit strong gains through 2005, although growth in this material segment will lag that of composites as these plastics have a more limited range of end uses. Despite the expected gains for alternative decking materials, wood will continue to dominate the decking market through 2005 with

nearly 90 percent of overall sales. *Wood and Competitive Decking* (247 pp.) is available for \$3,700 (SUS). Contact Corinne Gangloff; 440-684-9600; Fax 646-0484; pr@freedoniagroup.com; www.wiredoniagroup.com

CONSTRUCT CANADA 2002

The 14th edition of Canada's largest annual show on building design, construction, housing, renovation and property management will be held at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre **December 4-6, 2002.**

With over 950 exhibits, Construct Canada will be held concurrently with Homebuilder & Renovator Expo, and PM Expo featuring the very latest in products and technologies used for the design, construction, operation, retrofit and renovation of all types of buildings. The exhibits will cover 46 different categories of products and systems. Over 19,000 visitors will be

attending the Show including architects, builders, contractors, developers, engineers, property managers and specifiers. More than 320 speakers will participate in 200 seminars at the Show, addressing a wide range of building performance, legal, and marketing issues as well as project design, project delivery and project management strategies. Over 100 technical updates and product demonstrations will be presented in nine presentation areas on the exposition floor. The Shows are supported by more than 40 industry and professional associations.

CITW members can gain free admission to all three shows where you will be provided with considerable information on the construction industry, where you will make valuable contacts and develop market opportunities. Forward your names by email of those interested to CITW, we will order the passes for you. Advise if attendees only

interested in exhibits pass or also attending seminars/workshops.

Construct Canada/Homebuilder & Renovator Expo dates at the South Building of the Metro Toronto Convention Centre: Wed. Dec.4 and Thurs. Dec.5 -10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Fri. Dec.6 -9a.m. to 1p.m.

NOTES

- CITW Fall Committee meetings Renaissance Vancouver Hotel Harbourside 1133 West Hastings St., Vancouver, BC, Monday October 21, 2002.
- CWPA 23rd Annual Meeting, same venue, October 22nd & 23rd, 2002.
- CSA 080 Meeting, same venue, October 24th, 2002.
- Construct Canada 2002, Metro Toronto Convention Centre, South Building, December 4th to 6th, 2002.

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