

Industry Guide

The sale of CCA-Treated Timber Products after March 2006

The following guide has been prepared to assist in the on-going production and trade of CCA-treated timber after 12th March 2006.

Background

The Australian Pesticides & Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) regulates the use of wood preservatives up to the point of sale of the treated timber. The APVMA recently reviewed CCA as a timber treatment, reinforcing its status as a safe, durable, and inexpensive way to preserve wood for most outdoor purposes.

The APVMA however, adopted a precautionary position with certain products with which the public, notably children, may come into frequent and intimate contact. The APVMA proposed some restrictions on these products and consequently from 12th March 2006, CCA preservative chemical may not be used for treating timber intended for use as garden furniture, picnic tables, exterior seating, children's play equipment, patio and domestic decking boards, and handrails.

All other timber may continue to be treated with CCA, but these products will be required to be marked with the words "Treated with Copper Chrome Arsenate" and other brand requirements, as detailed in the Marking Guide section below.

The APVMA is introducing the changes to CCA use through label variations. The label instructions are legally binding on the chemical suppliers and the chemical users (treaters) in Australia. Although not directly under APVMA authority, wholesalers (including importers) and retailers have a role to play in ensuring that the change-over goes smoothly.



The new label changes also require compliance with a number of treatment plant operational aspects, as set down in AS/NZS 2843. CCA-treated timber producers can obtain details of these specific requirements from the CCA chemical suppliers.

Marking Guide

The timber industry has developed a guide to marking all CCA-treated timber produced after 12th March 2006. The new label instructions specify that CCA-treated timber should be marked with both the normal branding, in accordance with the AS1604 series of Standards (plant number, chemical number and hazard class), as well as the statement "TREATED WITH COPPER CHROMIUM ARSENATE". To summarise:

Marking Requirements:

For all hazard classes of timber treated in accordance with the AS 1604 series of standards, each separate piece of treated timber is required to be "legibly and sufficiently permanently marked" with the following information:-

- Treatment plant number
- Preservative code number
- Hazard class number.

*In addition, for all timber that is treated with CCA, the timber shall be legibly marked with the words "**Treated with copper chrome arsenate**".*

These requirements are intended to advise the user and should be clearly visible up to the first point of use.

Exemptions from Marking

In accordance with AS1604 series the following treated products are not required to be individually marked but shall be pack-marked:-

- Battens, fence palings and droppers,
- Timber 1500 mm² and less in cross section,
- Timber less than 15 mm nominal sawn thickness dimension.

Note: In NSW and Queensland, there may be additional requirements under the NSW Timber Marketing Act or Queensland Timber Utilisation and Marketing Act.

Imported CCA-treated Timber

The APVMA does not have any jurisdiction over non-Australian producers and therefore has no authority to impose requirements on imported treated timber products.

Controlling the use of CCA-treated imported timber is the timber industry's own responsibility and it has agreed with the APVMA to self-regulate such timber products. To this effect, the industry intends to impose a self-regulated prohibition on CCA-treated timbers intended for use in garden furniture, picnic tables, exterior seating, children's play equipment, patio and domestic decking boards, and handrails. For CCA-treated timber products allowed after 12th March 2006, the requirement for marking CCA-treated timber, shown above, has also been agreed by the industry with the APVMA.

Summary

After 12th March 2006, CCA may not be used to treat timber products produced either in Australia or overseas and intended for use as garden furniture, picnic tables, exterior seating, children's play equipment, patio and domestic decking boards, and handrails



After 12th March 2006, CCA may be used to treat timber products produced either in Australia or overseas, that are intended for all other uses, as long as they are marked with the words "Treated with Copper Chrome Arsenate".



Garden furniture, picnic tables, exterior seating, children's play equipment, patio and domestic decking, and handrails treated with CCA prior to 12th March 2006 may be sold until their supply is exhausted.