



Transition to New Generation of Wood Preservatives Questions and Answers

Over the past decade, the three major manufacturers have developed and refined a number of highly effective, new wood preservatives. After discussions with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and in light of the growing interest in alternative products, each of the manufacturers has volunteered to make a transition to this new generation of wood preservatives for the consumer and residential market. To expedite this transition, preservative manufacturers, suppliers and pressure treaters will retool their facilities over the next two years.

The following is provided to help answer the most frequently asked questions related to this transition to the new generation of preserved wood products:

Why is the industry making this transition?

Preservative manufacturers have been in discussions with the EPA as part of the periodic review and re-registration process for Chromated Copper Arsenate (CCA), the most widely used preservative on the market today.

Over the past year, the policy debate about new standards for arsenic in drinking water has prompted substantial media attention. Although treated wood represents a tiny fraction compared to all the natural sources of arsenic in the environment, the preservative manufacturers have developed new lines of non-arsenic-based preservatives.

To be responsive to current and anticipated customer interest, the manufacturers told EPA they will make the transition to these new generation preservatives for all non-industrial wood products over the next two years.

Is CCA-treated wood safe?

Absolutely. Study after study has shown it is safe. One analysis by the Florida Department of Health shows that a child would have to eat a spoonful of dirt – taken from right next to a CCA treated play set – every day, for 30 years, before there would be a potential health effect.

If CCA-treated wood is safe, why change?

The fundamental safety of CCA-treated wood has not changed, but perceptions in the marketplace have. The preserved wood industry stands by the safety of all wood products treated with CCA, which have been used for nearly 70 years. Manufacturers have made a decision to be responsive to customer interest in new preservatives that provide the same

benefits of CCA-treated wood. The time is right now because we've developed this new generation of preservatives and can begin the transition.

What are these new generation preservatives?

The manufacturers have developed a number of excellent new preservatives that have been developed and in use for more than a decade. The new generation wood preservatives are marketed under the names ACQ Preserve®, NatureWood® and Wolmanized® Natural Select™ wood. The new preservatives use copper-based preservatives, but without arsenic.

Are the new preservatives safe?

The new preservatives have been studied extensively and approved for use by EPA. Like CCA, they protect and extend the life of wood products for decades.

Are these products available today?

There are very limited supplies of wood products treated with the new preservatives on the market today. But that will change over the next two years as the industry changes its facilities to apply the new generation preservatives.

Will the new generation preserved wood products cost more?

We are not sure at this point what the price difference will be. From what we have seen in the marketplace recently, the price difference is approximately 10% to 20% higher.

Is it OK to build a deck or play set made with CCA-treated wood?

Yes. EPA looked at the safety of CCA-treated wood as recently as a couple of years ago and reaffirmed its safety when used as recommended. In addition, the Consumer Product Safety Commission has said that CCA treated wood is an acceptable material for playground structures.

Can I do anything to prevent arsenic exposure from CCA-treated wood?

First of all, studies show that people may be exposed to over 30-times more arsenic from food and water and other natural sources than they get from contact with CCA-preserved wood. But if anyone is still concerned about exposure, there are simple steps that can be taken to minimize it – such as covering wooden tables before eating and regular hand washing. Safe handling instructions are detailed in our EPA-approved Consumer Safety Information Sheet. For a copy, visit <http://www.ccasafetyinfo.com/>.

Do you recommend the use of sealants?

We don't believe there is a risk to begin with and sealants are not necessary.

Why use preservatives at all?

Preservatives make – and keep – wood products sturdy, stable and safe. They prevent decay, insect damage and extend the life of the products from just a few years to decades.