

AMERICAN WOOD PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

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STANDARDS FOR TREATED WOOD? AWPA PROVIDES CLARITY IN A CONFUSING MARKETPLACE

Have you been confused by recent information about treated wood standards? Several statements regarding the efficacy of wood preservatives containing sub-micron sized copper particles (often referred to as "micronized" copper) have been released by various wood preservative manufacturers. Most of these press releases refer to AWPA Standards, and as a result, AWPA has received many inquiries about these preservatives. Based on assertions made in the press releases, it seems that a large number of people now assume that the "micronized" wood preservative systems have been evaluated and approved by AWPA. Unfortunately, these assumptions are not true.

AWPA's Technical Committees develop several types of Standards. AWPA Evaluation Standards are developed to test wood preservatives for the purpose of submitting the resulting data to our Technical Committees. However, because AWPA Evaluation Standards do yield valuable information, they are frequently used for purposes other than AWPA's standardization process. When used outside of AWPA, this information is not subject to the same degree of expert review provided by AWPA's open, consensus-based process which is accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). AWPA's Analytical Standards are developed to determine the presence and amount of preservatives in wood, but they do not provide any indication as to whether or not a preservative will effectively protect a wood product.

To date, no data supporting the effectiveness of "micronized" copper systems have been submitted to AWPA for evaluation or standardization. The only treated wood products reviewed and standardized by AWPA are those listed in AWPA Standard U1. When statements are made that a treated wood product has been tested in accordance with AWPA Standards it does not mean that the product meets or conforms to any AWPA Standard unless that product is listed in AWPA Standard U1. An excerpt from Standard U1 can be downloaded from www.awpa.com/standards/ucs.asp. A listing of currently standardized residential treated wood products can be found at www.awpa.com/references/homeowner.asp. AWPA welcomes the submission of proposals and supporting data for any wood protection system for review by its Technical Committees for the purpose of listing it in AWPA Standards.

About AWPA: Founded in 1904, the American Wood Protection Association is a non-profit organization which promulgates voluntary treated wood standards. AWPA Standards are developed by its technical committees in an open, ANSI-accredited, consensus-based process that involves individuals from all facets of wood protection, including producers, end users, and those with a general interest in treated wood products. AWPA Standards are directly referenced in the major model building codes and are recognized worldwide. AWPA charges no mandatory fees for the consideration or listing of products in its Standards, and has no financial interest in the use of any wood preservative or treated wood product. The use of AWPA standards helps to ensure that treated wood products perform satisfactorily for their end-use. AWPA believes that a consensus-based process is necessary to develop technically competent, credible standards. Membership in AWPA is open to all interested individuals, and committee meetings are open to all persons, whether or not they are members of the Association.

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For more information on this topic, visit AWPA online at www.awpa.com, call 205-733-4077 or send an email message to email@awpa.com