

# Buying timber fence posts or round stakes?

The Wood Protection Association (WPA) recently started an investigation into reports of under-performing fence posts and agricultural rounds. This investigation is highlighting just how important it is for every business in the supply chain to fulfil its duty of care obligation to customers. Key points to emerge are:

1. The copper/organic biocide preservatives now used in the UK have a successful track record in other major markets dating back to the early 1990's. Performance information gathered world-wide and in testing proves these preservatives work when used correctly. When the treatment standards in BS 8417 and in WPA guidelines are followed a 15 or 30 year desired service life can be specified and achieved.
2. Analysis of fence post failures show that penetration and loading of the preservative did not conform to that required for a component used in direct ground contact (Use Class 4 applications in BS EN 335). Lack of penetration and loading is almost always related to high moisture content in timber prior to treatment. A lack of preservative loading may also result if the wrong BS EN 335 Use Class is assumed or specified for the treatment process.
3. Like many other building materials, a failure to follow treated wood installation good practice can also impact performance significantly. Most common is a failure to re-treat cuts and notches made to components on site.

## Duty of Care

Every business has a duty of care to its customers. This takes many forms but above all is the duty to ensure that products offered for sale are fit for their intended use. All treated wood can be relied on to perform when it is correctly specified, processed and installed.

The WPA is committed to working with its members and other industry bodies as part of a collective industry duty of care to get this message over. We have published a **Fact-File** about the specification and use of treated wood in ground contact – freely available on request - and are launching a number of initiatives designed to promote quality treated wood and the companies that supply it. If you would like to know how to make sure your posts and stakes are correctly treated then contact us now.

## Wood Protection Association

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There has never been a better time to become a member of the WPA. Send for an Application Form and help shape and lead the wood protection industry.



Make sure it's 4 is a campaign to promote the correct treatment of timber components destined for ground contact applications. Contact the WPA for more details

