

BWPDA issues statement on Benefits and Safe Use of Wood Preservatives

Wood is a natural resource. It is renewable, but demand on world forest resources is increasing. World population increases have led to demand for more land for farming, and wood for firewood. Wood is also needed for pulp to make paper, and is used for fencing, poles, structural and joinery timbers in building, furniture and other decorative uses.

The use of wood preservatives plays an important role in reducing demand for timber stocks, by extending the service life of wooden components, and enabling timbers of low natural durability to be used in high hazard situations such as ground contact. Wood preservatives achieve this by preventing or limiting attack by wood boring insects such as woodworm, death watch beetle or termites, and by protecting against wood destroying fungi such as dry rot and wet rot. However, chemicals effective against these target organisms can adversely affect other forms of life and the environment in general if they are not carefully and correctly assessed, used and handled. There are regulatory controls governing their use to safeguard workers, customers, the general public, domestic and wild animals and the environment. UK regulations are comprehensive and arguably the most stringent in the world. The key ones are:

The Control of Pesticides Regulations

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations

BWPDA Members are committed to ensuring that wood preservation is carried out safely, in accordance with appropriate regulations, industry best practice, government and association guidance to safeguard workers, customers, the general public, domestic and wild animals, and the environment.

This commitment is shown by:

- Assessment of actual and potential impact of activities and products on health & safety of employees, customers, the public and the environment
- Information being made available to employees, customers, the public and statutory bodies about activities which could affect health, safety and the environment.
- Development and implementation of procedures to achieve a high level of health, safety and environmental protection, in conjunction with public and statutory bodies.
- Training of employees to enable them to achieve the high operational standards required to fulfil this commitment.