

BWPDA launches new UK Specifiers Guide

Timber is a material with impeccable environmental credentials which make it desirable for many construction uses. Its use in many situations, however, requires treatment with preservatives or flame-retardants to ensure long and safe life. The British Wood Preserving and Damp-proofing Association announces the launch of the 1999 BWPDA Manual which sets out best practice and quality assurance procedures for treatment and the use of treated timber products.

New specifications

Wood preservation is changing. BSI has published new performance standards for preservatives and timber treatments. These standards were prepared by the European Standards Commission (CEN) with full involvement of the UK standards team in order to satisfy the requirements of the Construction Products Directive. The radical changes these new standards bring need clear guidance for the preservation industry, specifiers and users to enable a transition from the old to the new system. The 1999 BWPDA Manual has been designed to meet that need.

That this is the first major revision for thirteen years reflects the previously settled and well-understood system which needed little amendment. From now on the BWPDA Manual will be published annually reflecting the pace of change. It is now available in a handy A5 size bound format replacing the previous loose-leaf version.

New preservatives

New specifications for preservatives and treatment have been accompanied by the introduction of new products. The old-established types already approved by BWPDA are still widely used and are listed in the new manual. The CEN performance standard provides the opportunity for manufacturers to place new products on the market (following clearance for safe use by the Health and Safety Executive under the Control of Pesticides Regulations) on the basis of their own declaration of compliance with the standard. In order to give specifiers and users more confidence in these self-declared products, BWPDA now lists new products whose performance claims have been independently audited. The audited product list is supplied with each copy of the 1999 BWPDA Manual.

Fire protection

The Construction Products Directive is also driving a new system of testing and classification of products for fire protection for timber products. The new system is under development by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions with full involvement by BWPDA. For the time being the established system is unchanged and the 1999 BWPDA Manual shows how to specify and use flame retardant products for timber. The manual also lists impregnation products providing Class 1 and Class 'O' protection for timber in both interior and exterior situations. New for 1999 is certification for products which have been approved under the BWPDA independent assessment scheme.

Quality assurance

Confidence in the performance of both preservative and flame retardant treatments is vital; for industry to ensure its future; for specifiers and users to continue to use timber with confidence in situations where this material, with its impeccable environmental credentials, could not otherwise be used.

Quality treatment delivers the desired life for timber components in service and, with flame retardant products, protection of life and property when fire strikes. The BWPDA publishes Quality Guidance Notes (QGNs) for adoption under BS EN ISO 9000 procedures. These QGNs provide a detailed framework for quality work designed to deliver the benefits achievable when preservation and fire proofing is carried out with approved products in accordance with the best practice laid down in the new BWPDA Manual.

The 1999 BWPDA Manual is available at the following rates including delivery within the UK:

Single issue £42.50 (BWPDA members £32.50)
3-year subscription £115.50 (BWPDA members £82.50)