



→ [NEWSPAPER SEARCH](#)

→ [FIND A BUSINESS](#)

LIVING



» [More From The Staten Island Advance](#)

Top Living

New kind of pressure-treated wood for this year's decks

Planking with arsenic preservatives being phased out; the new wood requires different hardware

Sunday, May 02, 2004

By JULIA MARTIN

STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

Homeowners who want to add a new deck to their pool this spring are now using lumber that has been pressure-treated without arsenic.

The new wood, which was introduced at home-improvement and lumber stores at the beginning of this year, is treated by various manufacturers without the use of arsenic preservatives.

The transition represents a voluntary decision by industry toward more consumer use of lumber products treated with alternative new wood preservatives.

The primary approved alternative treatments is ACQ (alkaline copper quaternary). NW100 is a trademarked name containing the copper-based preservative.

The transition is the result of a voluntary decision by industry towards more consumer use of lumber products treated with alternative new wood preservatives.

The new product will supply virtually all uses of the residential and recreational wood formerly treated with (CCA), including decks, backyard playground equipment such as swings and see-saws, picnic tables, landscaping timbers, residential fencing, patios and walkways or boardways.

PRESSURE-TREATED

What does pressure-treated mean?



INSIDE

Living

- » [Food & Drink](#)
- » [Health & Fitness](#)
- » [Home & Garden](#)
- » [Love & Marriage](#)
- » [Teens](#)
- » [Travel](#)
- » [Weddings](#)

[SEND THIS PAGE](#)

[PRINT THIS PAGE](#)

SPEAK UP!

- » [Blah, Blah, Blah](#)
- » [Island Nostalgia](#)
- » [Job Hunting](#)
- » [Our Schools](#)
- » [Parenting](#)
- » [Pets](#)
- » [Religion](#)
- » [Reunions](#)
- » [Shopping](#)
- » [Veterans](#)
- » [Weddings & Engagements](#)

» [More Forums](#)

» [Log On to ChatXtra!](#)

Advertising Sections

- » [Fun Guide](#)

» [Win 4 Tickets to see a Medieval Times Show!](#)



St. Vincent's Hospital
Staten Island
SAINT VINCENT CATHOLIC MEDICAL CENTERS

- » [All about Us](#)
- » [Find a Physician](#)
- » [Calendar of Events](#)

LOCAL JOBS. FOR LOCAL PEOPLE.

The Best Local Jobs



» [Advertise With Us](#)

VISIT OUR SPONSORS

The process is used on wood, which is a great building material, but is appetizing to insects and other organisms. When wood is in contact with moist ground for a period of time, these organisms attack the wood. Untreated wood, like pine, will disintegrate in a year or two.

To preserve the wood, the industry uses chemicals that are toxic to organisms, but instead of simply soaking the wood, a pressure chamber forces the chemical into the very core of the wood.

The chemicals in treated wood are generally not good for humans, but the most dangerous is arsenic, a known carcinogen.

Children are a more sensitive subpopulation and may face increased risk of developing lung or bladder cancer over their lifetime from playing on wooden swings, sliding boards made from CCA pressure-treated wood.

The increased risk to children, according to a report from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, is posed by exposure to arsenic residue on children's hands followed by hand-to-mouth contact.

The report says the transfer of the arsenic from the hand to the mouth can occur during and after playing on pressure-treated wood playground equipment.

PARENTAL ADVICE

The CPSA emphasizes, however, that not all exposed individuals will get cancer at some time during their lifetime. Many risk factors contribute to people's risk for developing cancer over their lifetime, such as environment, genetics, diet, and behaviors, such as smoking.

The CPSC does not intend to alarm, but merely advise parents and caregivers to wash children's hands with soap and water thoroughly right after the youngsters play on CCA pressure-treated wood playground equipment, and children should not eat while on pressure-treated wood playground equipment.

Chromated Copper Arsenate (CCA) has been injected into wood since the 1940s, and was intended to protect wood from dry rot, fungi, molds, termites, and other pests that can threaten the integrity of wood projects.

Wood treated with CCA has previously been used as the primary outdoor building material.

The phase-out does not include uses other than recreational and residential, for example, fence posts on agricultural farms, fences that are highway barriers, and piling for docks and marinas.

The new alternative wood preservatives require wood hardware, such as outdoor screws with triple ceramic coating, which can be installed with either square or Philips Driver Bit screwdrivers.

The coarse threads have strong holding power. They are perfect for fastening decking, railings and many other outdoor uses. They are said to provide a lifetime of care-free use and reduce the added expense of stainless steel.

CHANGE NOT OBVIOUS

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, however, existing CCA-treated wood used around or near homes and playgrounds poses no threat to the public.

The EPA also emphasizes that CCA-treated wood which still remains available in stores also does not present an unreasonable risk, added Mary Jane O'Connell, proprietor with her husband Brian, of New Dorp Lumber Co., and homeowners do not have to remove or replace their more recent structures.

Mrs. O'Connell observed that most of the customers and users aren't aware of the change in the pressure-treated lumber. She said the new lumber looks almost the same or maybe slightly darker green.

Robert Farrell, co-owner of Farrell Lumber Co. in Port Richmond with his brother, Donald, says the new type of pressed wood, which keeps the yellow pine strong and resistant to rot and insects, costs about 8 to 10 percent more than the CCA-treated pressed wood.

Farrell said, however, homeowners do have other choices, for example, cedar

wood, which produces a softer, prettier deck. Cedar would cost approximately twice as much as a comparable piece of the pressure-treated ACQ wood, he said.

A spokesman with the Environmental Protection Agency said, "This transition represents a responsible action by industry to ensure that future exposures to arsenic are minimized in residential settings."

"The companies deserve credit for coming forward in a voluntary way to undergo a conversion and retooling of their plants as quickly as possible," he said.

The spokesman added that the transition to new alternatives will provide consumers with greater choice for their building needs."

For more information, phone the CPSC hotline at 1-800-638-2772.

Julia Martin is a staff writer for the Advance. She may be reached by email at martin@siadvance.com.

[» Send This Page](#) | [» Print This Page](#)

Copyright 2004 The Staten Island Advance. Used with permission.

MORE TOP LIVING

- [A healer like no other](#)
- [Getting nosy](#)
- [Hantavirus enters the body through the respiratory system](#)

[More Stories](#) | [14-Day Archive](#) | [30-Day Archive](#) | [Complete Living Index](#)

[The Best Local Classifieds: Jobs](#) | [Autos](#) | [Real Estate](#) | [Place An Ad](#)



Have The Advance delivered to your home or business. Save 40% off the newsstand price with EZPay. [Subscribe Now!](#)

[About Us](#) | [Help/Feedback](#) | [Advertise With Us](#)

Use of this site constitutes acceptance of our [User Agreement](#). Please read our [Privacy Policy](#).

© 2004 [SILive.com](#). All Rights Reserved.



[Home](#) | [News+Biz](#) | [Local](#) | [Sports](#) | [Forums+Chat](#) | [Cams+Radio](#) | [Living](#) | [Entertainment](#) | **CLASSIFIEDS**

Get The Best Local...
[Jobs](#) | [Autos](#) | [Real Estate](#)
[All Classifieds](#) | [Place An Ad](#)