



## **THE AMERICAN WOOD PRESERVERS' ASSOCIATION**

The AWPA is the principal standards writing body for the wood preserving industry in the US. These standards help insure that treated wood products perform satisfactorily for their intended use. They are recognized and used by most, if not all users of treated wood such as the electrical, marine, building, and road construction industries as well as federal, state and local governments.

It is an international, nonprofit technical society founded in 1904 that also provides a forum for exchange of information for all segments of the industry. It provides a link for technical interchange between industry, research and users of treated wood.

The work of making better use of wood. This in a nutshell is the principal objective of the AWPA.

AWPA programs are supported by membership dues, contributions, publication sales and advertisements.

## / AWPA STANDARDS FORMAT

- ◆ Preservative Standards
- ◆ Commodity Standards
- ◆ Analytical Standards
- ◆ Evaluation Standards
- ◆ Miscellaneous Standards

A description of each standards group is given.

Only the Commodity Standards section of the Book of Standards will be affected by the change to a Use Category System.

The remainder of the Book of Standards will not change format.

## AWPA COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

- |                           |                                      |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ◆ Lumber and Timber       | ◆ Creosote                           |
| ◆ Poles                   | ◆ Organic Preservatives              |
| ◆ Piles                   | ◆ Inorganic Preservatives            |
| ◆ Posts                   | ◆ Analytical Methods                 |
| ◆ Crossties               | ◆ Preservative Evaluation<br>Methods |
| ◆ Plywood -Composites     | ◆ Fire Retardant Systems             |
| ◆ QC and Inspection       |                                      |
| ◆ Fire Retardant Products |                                      |

- Before getting into the Use Category System, it will be useful to provide an understanding of how the AWPA is structured.
- The business at AWPA is conducted within a number of Subcommittees, built around the commodity products and preservative systems.
- The left column lists the various Treatments Subcommittees that deal with application of preservatives to commodity products, and the right column lists the Preservative Subcommittees that deal with the preservative systems.
- All Subcommittees meet each September, with active task forces meeting as needed throughout the year.
- There are also a number of Special Committees:
  - Information and Technical Development
  - Glossary
  - Wood Preservation Research
  - Treated Wood Use, Recycle and Disposal
  - Building Codes

# AWPA USE CATEGORY SYSTEM

## WHY REVISE THE FORMAT?

- ◆ Input from Standards users
- ◆ ISO developing wood standards based on UCS
- ◆ World Trade Organization agreement

The content is accurate, but increasingly the AWPA gets inquiries from user groups for interpretation of certain sections of the Standards. The AWPA also recognizes the future possibility of reduced use if changes are not made to stay in step with the rest of the world.

Additionally, the US has signed the World Trade Agreement, where all signatory countries have agreed to put International Standards ahead of their own. As long as we're moving to conform with International Standards, we're going to take this as an opportunity to improve the standards.

The ISO is moving to develop a new standard for treated wood based on an exposure category system, and if we don't revise the AWPA Standards concurrently we may need to conform to another system.

The implications are important to AWPA and its position as a prominent standards setting organization for treated wood products.

# AWPA USE CATEGORY SYSTEM

## WHAT IS IT?

- ◆ New format for existing Commodity Standards.
- ◆ Use categories based on Biodeterioration Hazard to which treated product will be exposed.
- ◆ Simpler for specifiers and users.

Important to emphasize that this is a format change for Commodities portion of the Standards only. No other portions of the Book of Standards are involved, and no changes are being made to any basic requirements as a part of this activity.

The UCS format is based on one used successfully in other countries, where specifiers have found the format more understandable.

Fundamental to the UCS format are several Use Categories that are based on the Biodeterioration Hazard to which the treated wood will be exposed. The user will begin with the knowledge of where they want this wood to perform rather than with a specific commodity, and follow on to the product type, species of wood, allowable preservatives, and technical details.

There are 7 Use Categories, and I will briefly describe each one.

# USE CATEGORIES

## UC 1

Interior construction where wood-based products are not on contact with the ground and are protected from exterior weather and interior sources of water such as leaking plumbing, condensate, pools, spas, etc..

I have taken some editorial license with the written description of each Use Category to keep them concise and still give you the right idea.

## USE CATEGORIES

### UC 2

Coated, exterior construction that is not in contact with ground or foundations, but may be exposed to full effects of weather such as intermittent rain, dew, sunlight and wind. Applications are vertical exterior walls or other types of construction which allows water to quickly drain from the surface of wood members.

UD 2 is for wood that is not highly exposed because it's been coated.



## USE CATEGORIES

### UC 3

Wood not used on contact with the ground. Used for a variety of applications (decks, walkways, piers, sills, etc.) and may be exposed to prolonged wetting and full effects of weather. Does not require exterior coating, but may be finish coated.

UC 3 includes those above ground uses.

# USE CATEGORIES

## UC 4

Wood used in contact with the ground, fresh water, or in other situations favorable to deterioration. This category encompasses a variety of products, including utility poles located in regions of low decay potential.

This category includes the basic ground contact uses.

# USE CATEGORIES

## UC 5

Wood used in contact with the ground either in severe environments such as climates with high potential for deterioration, or in critical uses such as utility poles, building poles, permanent wood foundations, pilings, or in salt water splash areas.

This category includes critical service items for ground contact use. It is subdivided into two parts; one for poles and PWF, the other for piling.

The ISO has one less category than the AWPA is currently proposing, and work is underway to reduce our structure by one category. This is the one that will probably be melded into UC 4 or 6.

# USE CATEGORIES

## UC 6

Construction that exposes wood to brackish water with potential for marine borer attack. This includes any construction that is at any time directly exposed to salt water.

UC 6 is the category that will include salt water exposure.

# USE CATEGORIES

## UC 7

Wood materials intended for fire protection. This category is further divided into interior and exterior applications.

And finally, UC 7 is the category for Fire Retardant applications. It is divided into two sections for interior and exterior use.

The ISO does not currently have a Fire Retardant treatments category, and we are currently working with them to resolve this inconsistency.

## IMPLEMENTATION

- ◆ Draft versions published in 1997 and 1998 Proceedings for information only.
- ◆ Active Task Forces are working out the details.
- ◆ Anticipate final version to pass vote at September 1998 Technical Committee meetings
- ◆ In use with publication of 1999 Book of Standards
- ◆ Parallel publication with current C-Standards for one year

The current working draft has already been refined several times, and is in the final stages. A draft version is being published for information in the 1997 and 1998 AWPA Proceedings and Member Bulletins, if you are interested in viewing the current draft.

The various UCS task forces active within each Subcommittee are currently reviewing the portion of the UCS draft that pertains to their business, recommending changes to the main UCS task force, and working toward a version that is worthy of being passed in September of 1998.

If things stay on track, the Use Category System will become official with publication of the Book of Standards in August of 1999.

To help with the transition, the AWPA intends to publish the existing C Standards parallel to the UCS system in 1999, and probably drop them the next year if all goes well.

## UCS PROMOTION TASK GROUP

- ◆ Working to inform users and specifiers of UCS details.
- ◆ Publication of trade articles.
- ◆ Speeches and attendance at user meetings.
- ◆ Specification change guides for major user groups.
- ◆ Direct mail.

The AWPFA recognizes that a change of this type must be communicated to those who use our Standards well in advance of the changes taking effect. A Promotion Task Group to identify those groups or individuals who have contact with the Standards and inform them of the upcoming change to a UCS.

Plans are currently under development, and include speaking engagements at meetings and conventions, contacting US and international trade associations and scientific societies, identifying pertinent publications, and getting articles and news releases widely published.

AWPFA will also be working with certain specific groups of Standard users such as Utility Companies to help them with the transition by producing a guide to changing their specifications, which will include sample specifications.

**We need your assistance. Please let us know if you have ideas or suggestions about how we can work with you to make this a smooth transition.**

## WANT MORE INFORMATION?

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If you have questions, comments or want membership information the AWPA can be contacted as shown here.

The AWPA office may refer you to an officer of the Subcommittee who is familiar with the area of your question.