

AWPA'S USE CATEGORY SYSTEM REPLACES THE C-STANDARD

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The American Wood Preservers' Association (AWPA) published its Use Category System (UCS) in the 1999 AWPA Book of Standards. The Use Category System will replace the Commodity or "C" standards that have been the basis for specifying treated wood products in the United States for decades.

The Use Category System provides a simple way for users to specify treated products. The C-standards served very experienced users well but was difficult for new users to follow. The Use Category System also more closely matches the evolution of other treated wood standards worldwide while still providing the same rigorous level of treatment standard, that is the trademark of the AWPA standards.

The UCS will be published in parallel with the C-standards for a minimum of two years. AWPA has made it clear that the C-standards shall govern if there is a discrepancy with the UCS. The UCS is also watermarked "preliminary" in the 1999 Book of Standards. This is due only to the fact that processing standards found in the C-standards have not yet been incorporated. The Treatments Subcommittees of AWPA's technical committees are focussed on this task and expect to bring motions to incorporate these processing standards in the fall of 2000. However, neither of these points should dissuade either users or producers of treated wood products from utilizing the UCS today in lieu of the C-standards.

AWPA's commitment to replacing the C-standards with the simple, user-friendly Use Category System is clear. The UCS has arrived and is open for business. For information on how to obtain a copy of the 1999 AWPA Book of Standards, contact the AWPA. (www.awpa.com)

AWPA's Use Category Replaces the C-Standards

What We'll Cover

- Why Me?
- Overview of the Use Category System
- Relationship to C-Standards
- Purpose and Structure
- Examples
- Wrap Up/Questions

Why Me?

- 6 years with West Coast (US) treater
 - pentachlorophenol, creosote, ACZA
- 6 years with SYP/CCA treater
- Active in AWPA over 10 years
- Chair “T-2” AWPA’s Lumber & Timber Subcommittee (UCS Appendix A)

Use Category System Overview

- Published in the 1999 AWPA Book of Standards
- Watermarked “Preliminary” due to lack of Processing Standards
- Parallel publication with C-Standards for some period (2 years?)

Relationship to the C-Standards

- UCS developed to replace the C-Standards
- Format change only, not substantive technical changes
- If there is a conflict between UCS and C-standards, C-standards govern
- Substantive changes will be carried through both UCS and C-standards (e.g., CBA-A)

UCS Structure - Exposure Conditions

UCS defines a series of exposure conditions for treated wood products, each with a different degree of biodegradation hazard and/or product service life expectations.

UCS Structure

- Section 1: Introduction
- Section 2: Service Conditions
- Section 3: Guide to End Uses
- Section 4: Standardized Preservatives
- Section 5: Species/Species Groupings
- Section 6: Explanatory Notes

UCS Structure - Section 1

There are five Use Categories.

- UC1: interior, above ground, dry
- UC2: interior, above ground, damp
- UC3: exterior, above ground
- UC4: exterior, ground/fresh water
- UC5: salt water

UCS Structure - Section 2

UC1: Interior construction not in contact with the ground or foundations, protected from weather and interior sources of water such as leaking plumbing.

EXAMPLE: interior millwork and furniture

UCS Structure - Section 2

UC2: Interior construction not in contact with the ground, protected from weather but may be exposed to interior sources of water such as leaking plumbing.

EXAMPLE: interior flooring, framing

UCS Structure - Section 2

UC3A: exterior above ground applications that are coated and allow water to quickly drain from the surface.

EXAMPLES: coated siding and trim

UCS Structure - Section 2

UC3B: exterior above ground applications exposed to the full affects of weather.

EXAMPLE: decking and sills

UCS Structure - Section 2

UC4A: exterior ground or fresh water contact applications.

EXAMPLE: deck posts

UCS Structure - Section 2

UC4B: exterior ground or fresh water contact applications with high potential for deterioration and in critically important components.

EXAMPLE: permanent wood foundations

UCS Structure - Section 2

UC4C: exterior ground or fresh water contact applications with extremely high potential for deterioration in critical structural components.

EXAMPLE: foundation piling

UCS Structure - Section 2

UC5A: salt and brackish water exposure susceptible to marine borer attack north of New Jersey (east coast of US) and San Francisco (west coast of US).

EXAMPLE: bulk-heading

UCS Structure - Section 2

UC5B: salt and brackish water exposure susceptible to marine borer attack between Georgia and New Jersey (east coast of US) and south of San Francisco (west coast of US).

EXAMPLE: bulk-heading

UCS Structure - Section 2

UC5C: salt and brackish water exposure susceptible to marine borer attack south of Georgia (east coast of US) and along the gulf coast.

EXAMPLE: bulk-heading

UCS Structure - Section 3

- Specific uses are listed giving
 - item
 - use category
 - appendix
 - special requirements
 - C-standard reference

UCS Structure - Section 3

- Specific uses are listed giving
 - item **PWF - lumber**
 - use category **UC4B**
 - appendix **A**
 - special requirements **5.2**
 - C-standard reference **C22**

UCS Structure - Section 4

- Preservatives grouped by type; example “waterbornes, acid-based”
- Preservatives are coded; example “201” is CCA-C

UCS Structure - Section 5

Species and species groupings same as listed in C1.