

Renovating with timber? Choose the right product for the job.

Treating timber with chemical preservatives extends its versatility and service life, but you should take care not to inhale treated timber sawdust or smoke, and to avoid contact with ash, or soil containing treated timber mulch or sawdust. One preservative, copper chrome arsenate (CCA), may harm people or the environment if not handled or disposed of properly because it contains arsenic, a human carcinogen.

CCA is not to be used for high-contact surfaces such as garden furniture, picnic tables, seating, play equipment, handrails, patios and domestic decking. Timber treated with CCA should be labelled, 'Treated with copper chrome arsenate', but if the labels or brands are missing or faded, play it safe and handle the timber as if it is CCA. You can't tell what timber has been treated with by its colour.

Ash from CCA treated timber is toxic and may contain up to 10 per cent of its weight as heavy metal residue – including arsenic. The presence of large amounts of CCA ash can be a big problem when properties are damaged by bushfires.

- Never bury ash.
- Double bag it and take it to a licensed landfill site.
- Wear personal protective equipment when bagging it.



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Safe handling

- Avoid inhaling sawdust.
- Wear gloves.
- Use a P1 dust mask.
- Wear protective goggles.
- Work outside or use dust extraction devices.
- Don't allow sawdust to accumulate.
- Wash hands and face thoroughly after handling.

Safe contact

- Don't put food in direct contact with treated timber surfaces.
- Wash children's hands after contact with treated timber, especially before eating.
- Don't drink water that has had contact with treated timber, particularly CCA treated timber.
- You can seal treated timber with oil-based polyurethane products or paints.

Safe disposal

- Small amounts of treated timber can go in your bin.
- Treated timber from larger jobs must be disposed of at licensed landfill sites.
- Don't burn treated timber.
- Don't use treated timber products (including sawdust or wood shavings) for mulch, compost or animal housing or bedding.
- Don't leave treated timber to be used for firewood.
- Most treated timber can't be recycled.

Select the right treated timber for the job – and if possible, choose an arsenic-free alternative

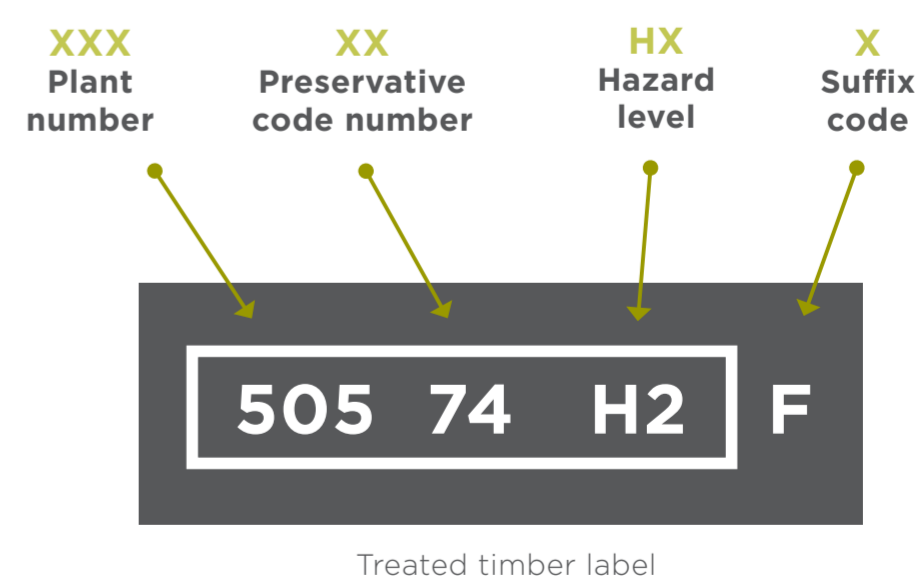
Hazard level	Exposure	Biological hazard	Typical uses	Preservative currently used for hazard level
H1		Lyctid borer	Borer susceptible hardwood used for dry interior framing, flooring, furniture and joinery	Boron
H2	Inside, above ground		Framing, flooring, joinery, etc. used in interior dry situations	Boron (south of the Tropic of Capricorn only), synthetic pyrethroids, imadacloprid
H2F		Borers and termites	Framing used in interior dry situations (south of the Tropic of Capricorn only)	'Blue Pine' (synthetic pyrethroids, imadacloprid)
H2S	Inside, above ground		LVL/Plywood (glue-line treatment) in dry situations (south of the Tropic of Capricorn only)	Synthetic pyrethroids, imadacloprid
H3	Outside, above ground		Weatherboard, fascia, pergola posts (above ground), window joinery, framing and decking	ACQ, CA, CCA (not residential decking), LOSP
H3A	Outside, above ground (protected by paint)	Moderate decay, borers and termites	Fascia, bargeboards, exterior cladding, decking, window and door joinery and veranda posts	LOSP
H4	Outside, in-ground	Severe decay, borers and termites	Landscaping timbers, fence posts and pergola posts (in-ground)	ACQ, CA, CCA, creosote (farm fencing only)
H5	Outside, in-ground, contact with or in fresh water	Very severe decay, borers and termites	Retaining walls, piling, house stumps and building poles	ACQ, CA, CCA, creosote (power poles)
H6	Marine waters	Marine wood borers and decay	Boat hulls, marine piles and jetty cross bracing	CCA, creosote (in waters above Batemans Bay only in combination with CCA)

ACQ: alkaline copper quaternary
CA: copper azole

CCA: copper chrome arsenate
PEC: pigment emulsified creosote

LOSP: light organic solvent preservative
LVL: laminated veneer lumber

Identifying the chemicals used to treat timber



Treated timber label

Preservative code numbers

CCA: 01, 02, 03, 14, 15, 16, 31, 32, 33, 34, 38, 40, 43, 51, 55

Synthetic pyrethroids: bifenthrin 73, 75; permethrin 70, 74

Copper quaternary: 89
Copper azole: 58

LOSP: tebuconazole + propiconazole + permethrin 64; Imidacloprid 59, 60

Boron: 9, 10, 11

ACQ: 90

Creosote: 20; PEC 45