

News on Wood Standardisation

News on CEN and ISO standardisation
for wood and wood-based products

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Durability and wood protection

Revised EN 351 – standard for preservative-treated wood

The most important standards for the wood preserving industry, EN 351, parts 1 and 2, have been revised and new versions have just been published. Part 1 is concerned with defining the penetration requirements and gives guidance on the retention requirements for preservatives in preservative-treated solid wood and Part 2 gives guidance on the general procedures to be followed in the sampling for analysis of preservative-treated solid wood.

The major difference between the revised part 1 and the present version is that the number of penetration classes has been reduced from nine to six. The revised Part 2 contains somewhat more detailed guidelines for the selection of the batch, from which sampling shall take place, as well as on the sampling procedure itself.

The changes will require some modifications of the Nordic application documents, NWPC Document No 1, Nordic Wood Preservation classes, and NWPC Document No 3, Nordic requirements for quality control and marking of pressure-treated timber. It is thus expected that the Nordic Wood Preservation Council will initiate work to revise these documents during 2008.

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EN 351 gives guidance on how to specify preservative-treated wood.

New Technical Specification – Thermal treated wood



Thermal treated wood gets a brownish colour.

So far little attention has been paid to creating specifications for alternatives to preservative-treated wood such as acetylated, furfurylated and heat-treated (thermal treated) wood. However, a sub-group within CEN/TC 175 has recently finished its work to prepare a Technical Specification (CEN/TS 15679: 2007 Thermal Modified Timber – Definitions and characteristics) with definitions related to heat-treated wood and guidance on how to specify characteristic properties of heat-treated wood.

It has to be pointed out that the TS does not provide any classification of heat-treated wood. Some guidance on the use of heat-treated wood is given.

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Use classes for wood and wood based materials – ISO standard finalized

Finally, a sub-committee within ISO (ISO TC 165/SC 1) has completed its work on the standard for use classes for wood and wood-based products (ISO FDIS 21887). This work started already in 1997, when CEN forwarded EN 335 to ISO for a “fast-track procedure” to accept that standard as an international standard. Nobody expected that the work would take more than 10 years to complete, but different views on how to specify use classes in Europe, North America, Japan, Australasia and South Africa complicated the work. Anyway, the standard defines five use classes that represent different service situations to which wood and wood-based products can be exposed all over the world. Subclasses are also defined for some of these use classes. These subclasses might or

might not be employed in national or regional standards depending on local needs. Guidance is given on applying the processes and documentary codes that govern specification of preservatives, treated wood and naturally durable wood within the key trading regions of the world. The standard also provides a reference source to access the relevant codes and standards but does not provide definitive specifications. The standard is applicable only to preservatives and processes for pre-treatment of wood and wood products and is not intended for products and processes for remediation and eradication of existing damage to timber.

The standard is expected to be issued shortly after some editorial modifications.

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Measuring emissions from treated wood

Knowledge of the emissions from preservative-treated wood to the environment is of importance with respect to the use of treated wood for different commodities. CEN/TC 38 has prepared two methods for estimation of emissions from preservative-treated wood. One method (CEN/TR 15119-1) refers to wood held in the storage yard after treatment and wood commodities exposed in use class 3, i.e. above ground. The other method (CEN/TR 15119-2) refers to wood exposed in use class 4 or 5, i.e. in ground contact or in contact with fresh or sea water. Final versions for publication are in preparation.

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Analysis of creosoted wood

At present there are five European standards (EN 1014, parts 1-4, EN 12490) for the analysis of creosote and creosoted timber. These standards deal with sampling procedures as well as analytical techniques and are presently subject to review and revision. No major changes are expected.

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EN 252 - Field test method for wood in ground contact

EN 252, the standard field test method with stakes in ground contact, is well known and well recognized in the Nordic countries. For those involved in testing and evaluating preservative-treated wood, Simlångsdalen, Sørkedalen, Viiki and Tåstrup are familiar test sites. EN 252 was prepared already in the 70's, based on a common initiative in CEN from the Nordic countries.

At the CEN/TC 38 Working Group Meetings in November 2007 it was agreed to appoint a small sub-group to review the contents of the standard with the aim of initiating a thorough revision. It is, for example, obvious that the present methodology is not so well adapted for modified wood and composites. Characterization of the test field and climate conditions also need to be considered as well as reference products. At present the well known CCA (copper, chrome, arsenic) type preservative has been used, but with CCA banned in the EU, another reference product should perhaps be chosen.

It is foreseen that representatives from the Nordic area will be actively involved in the revision work.

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Field test according to EN 252.

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