

Newsletter 193

4 December 2014

Season's
Greetings

Dear Members,

SAWPA would like to wish all our members and loved ones a very happy and restful holiday season.



Please note that the SAWPA offices will be officially closed from the 19th of December to the 5th of January 2015.

CCA TREATED TIMBER USED IN PLAYGROUNDS FEEDBACK FOLLOWING THE REGISTRARS WORKSHOP HELD ON 20 NOVEMBER

On the 20th of November the much anticipated workshop, called for by the Registrar of Act 36 of 1947, to deal with the risks of CCA treated timber used in playground equipment finally took place. Although we anticipated the attendance of the complainants against the use of CCA to be present and to substantiate their opposition, they were not in attendance. SAWPA voiced our disappointment with the fact that we, as an industry, are required to defend unsubstantiated and support allegations whilst the ones responsible for the allegations are not present.

Be that as it may, Industry presented its position at the workshop which included a verbally presented position paper from SAWPA highlighting all previous submissions made to the Registrar, including the 2009/10 class 1 red band review submissions, the detailed response document to the WD Goodwin letters (prepared by ENSafrica) and the INFOTOX report submitted earlier this year, as well as highlighting the background history on CCA, the CCA treatment industry in South Africa, the safety track record etc. This was followed by a summary report presented by Bob Gruber from LONZA USA on the reasons and background for the decisions taken in the USA prior to 2002, and what has transpired since then. A presentation was then done by Dr Willie Van Niekerk from INFOTOX which aimed to clarify his conclusion made in the INFOTOX report, i.e. "that there was no reason for restrictions to be implemented", and also aiming to clarify the "precautionary principal" which has played such an influencing role in decisions taken by other countries to date. The presentations were then followed by a discussion session containing questions and answers.

Perhaps a concerning outcome of the workshop is that even though we felt we were able to present the Registrar with factual evidence to support a "non-restrictive path" the Registrar made it clear that the final decision will be made after carefully considering all the submitted scientific facts, as well as the routes taken by other countries, but he also stated that the decision will be made in consultation and collaboration with industry. It is also important to note that during the workshop the risks associated with the burning of treated timber waste and offcuts seemed to attract unexplained

attention, and even though we expanded on our efforts so far in addressing the problem, the Registrar as well as other government departments present, were clear that this matter will be receiving more attention and that industry needed to come up with a plan to better address the public awareness and mitigating the risks associated with burning treated timber.

ILLEGAL TREATMENT PLANTS

It is with great concern that we recently took note of four illegal CCA dip treatment plants operating in the Limpopo region. We engaged with CCA suppliers as well as our CCA treater-members urging them to be vigilant in the control of all CCA concentrate supplied to and received by plants so that this perilous practice can be stopped.

This new development in illegal treatment activities must be seen as a serious threat to the industry especially in light of the pressures which we are already facing on CCA at present, bearing in mind that CCA is a class 1 red band pesticide and if used irresponsibly and incorrectly could lead to severe health, safety and environmental issues. Members must please ensure that all CCA chemical supplies and receipts are strictly controlled and accounted for. Members who have any information on any similar illegal activities in other regions are also requested to submit the details to SAWPA so that we can pass it on to the relevant regulators.

SAWPA has notified the NRCS of the existence of the plants and supplied them with detailed information on the exact location of the CCA dip plants, as well as information on a number of illegal "creosote" plants. So far we have not received any response from them on whether or not they have acted, or intend to act on the illegal treaters but we will follow up with the NRCS on the matter.

NRCS LEVIES FOR 2015

The latest NRCS levies for preservative treated timber was approved and published in Government Notice 791 of 17 October 2014. The new levies are based on the 6% CPI increase that was proposed following the collective NRCS levy consultation meetings held on the 9th, 10th and 11th of December 2013, and as you may recall, of which we only got notice of on the day of the first meeting.

There is however a positive take on the new levies in that the increased levy of R1.11 from the previous R1.04/m³ is not applicable to plants that have a type 5 product certification. The newly published levy for type 5 certified plants is set at R1.00/m³, and what this effectively means is that all SABS and SATAS certified plants will pay the reduced levy if implemented by the NRCS. Ironically the implementation is dependent on the NRCS's ability to process and approve all the applications submitted since 2010, which we believe is still far from completion.

2014 ANNUAL STATISTICS – PREPARATION OF TREATED TIMBER VOLUMES

SAWPA will soon be sending an e-mail request to all treatment plants in South Africa regarding the collection/submittal of the 2014 treated timber production volumes. This is however a friendly reminder to all SAWPA members to start preparing and collating the volumes from 1 January 2014 up to the end of 31 December 2014 so that it can be ready for submittal early in the new year. SAWPA would like to have the 2014 statistics finalised and available before the end of the first quarter of 2015, and if at all possible by the end of February.

TALKING ROT

- Hits to the SAWPA website during October and November 2014 were 68915 & 55797 respectively.
- “New pest of Eucalyptus detected in South Africa”. See article written by Bret Hurley from FABI, below.
- SAWPA recently started a 6 month promotional campaign in the Home Handyman Magazine and attach the advert and editorial placed in the November 2014 edition for your information.
- Mr Carl Evans, from Time2Act, (tel 082 920 9256 / email: carlevans@vodamail.co.za) is a sourcing agent in South Africa looking for biomass waste for the European market. Please contact him if you have any wood waste, bark, chips, offcuts, chunks, slabs & shavings which you would like to sell on an ongoing basis. Should you wish to have a copy of his original email, please contact Sue at SAWPA.
- Mark Crowe contacted us recently. He has autoclaves for sale (2.8m x 7.8m and 1.45m x 7m). Should anyone be interested please contact him on 082 653 8019.

BRUCE BREEDT

SAWPA accepts no responsibility for any statement or claim made in this newsletter.

New pest of Eucalyptus detected in South Africa



In May this year symptoms of a previously unreported insect pest was detected on *Eucalyptus* in Midrand, Gauteng. While the symptoms appeared similar to those of some *Ophelimus* species, no gall formers emerged in captivity until recently. The species name must still be confirmed, but the symptoms and adults that have now emerged indicate that it might indeed be *Ophelimus maskelli*, which is a known pest of *Eucalyptus* in the Middle East, Europe, North Africa, Mauritius and New Zealand (native to Australia).

The collections of infected leaves originally only resulted in the emergence of *Closterocerus chamaeleon*, a known larval parasitoid wasp of *O. maskelli*. Furthermore, a Tetrastichinae wasp (still to be identified) has also emerged from the galls, which is also thought to be a parasitoid of the gall former.

Work by the TPCP is ongoing to confirm the identity of this new pest, understand the threat it poses to *Eucalyptus* forestry, and investigate possible responses including biological control. It is important to obtain information on the spread and host association of this new pest outside Midrand. Thus, please refer to the attachment and notify Dr Brett Hurley (brett.hurley@up.ac.za) should you notice the symptoms shown in the attachment.

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