



## South African Wood Preservers Association

Dear Members,

### ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS - INSPECTIONS AND NOTICES

There have been a number of concerns raised recently regarding the inspections from both local and national officials of Environmental Affairs, as well as the subsequent notices received by some plants, and the remedial action that is required. Although SAWPA has only seen a couple of such notices, there have been some reports of seemingly unrealistic and unreasonable remedial requirements by the department. After consultation with the SAWPA Executive Committee and Chemical Forum, it has been agreed that SAWPA should investigate the concerns by gathering information from its members, following which the information will be collated to get an idea of the scale and level of findings made and expected remediation required to comply with environmental legislation. Once we have a clearer understanding of the various issues that are most critical and of greatest threat and potential impact, we can then obtain an expert opinion from an environmental specialist consultant company who has a good understanding of the wood preservation industry and with whom we have had previous engagement and interaction. We hope to retain the services of Dr Van Niekerk and his colleagues at INFOTOX.

Members are therefore requested to send us any notices of noncompliance received, as well as any remedial actions required from the Department of Environmental Affairs, be it National, provincial or local. Your assistance in this regard will be highly appreciated. Please note that any information received from members will be handled with the highest confidentiality and will not be made known to anyone else but a specialist consultant.

### CCA PLANTS AND AIR EMISSION LICENCES

During a recent meeting held with officials from the Department of Environmental Affairs, the issue of air emission licences to CCA timber treatment plants was finally laid to rest. The Air Quality Specialist attending the meeting made it very clear that the wording as given in the listed activities, specifically subcategory 7.4 that dealt with inorganic chemicals, could in no way be misinterpreted as applicable to CCA timber treatment plants. This is based purely on the fact that there is no application of heat during the process of CCA timber treatment, and any person who advises differently must be referred to the National Department through SAWPA. As such we will release an official letter advising our members to do so should they encounter any future misinterpretation by an official or consultant.

### RECENT SUCCESSES ON ILLEGAL TREATMENT

Following various requests to the NRCS to act on and report back on action taken against illegal treatment plants reported to them over the last couple of years, we have finally received some positive feedback on action and follow up visits by the NRCS Inspector in specifically the Tzaneen and Modjadji areas of Limpopo. Several of the illegal plants were visited and instructed to cease activities, and reports were also received that some of the plants previously visited were now closed. This however does not include other areas in Limpopo which are also believed to be hotspots for illegal activities, neither does it include areas of KZN and the Eastern Cape that have been reported by SAWPA. The positive outlook however is that similar plans of action for visits and follow up action in the other areas will be encouraged within the NRCS, based on the recent accomplishment in the Tzaneen area.

We can also report that the issue of illegal treaters together with the problem of large scale timber theft that in the past feeds illegal treatment was raised at the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee last week. We are grateful to the Chairman and acting Executive Director of the Forest Sector Charter Council for raising the awareness of the problem at this level, and hopefully it will encourage that more attention is given to the problem by the relevant authorities.

## SAWPA TO SUPPLY SANS STANDARD TO MEMBERS

As reported at the regional meetings held in March, SAWPA was looking into the viability of supplying SANS standards, as an added benefit to all Class 1 members. After consideration we have come to a decision to introduce the benefit going forward. Members must however note that the supply will only be on standards that are newly published, including revisions and amendments, as relevant to your specific product line-up, i.e. standards that form part of your certified product line. This will include the recently published standard test methods SANS 5993 and SANS 5967 as relevant.

Standards that were published before and are current i.e. 2017 and earlier editions, will not be part of this process as all plants should be in possession of copies of all the relevant standards. Current standards will however be supplied if and when revised or amended. The scheme works on the principle that SAWPA purchases a multiuser licence for a number of copies as per member needs. An electronic copy will then be sent to a selected company representative who will control and disseminate the standard at that specific plant/site. The electronic copies will be issued with clear lettering indicating "For use by SAWPA members only". As such any dissemination of a copy outside of your company/plant will be regarded as a contravention of copyright by the holder of the standard.

The cost saving to members will be significant as it will be at no additional cost to members, or for at least as long as SAWPA's finances can continue with such a scheme. Should costs over time escalate, we can then consider continuing with the scheme, but on the basis that we only recoup the cost of the multiuser licence. This will still be a reduced fee significantly less than if you were to procure the standard yourself. A multiuser licence cost is based on a sliding scale which means the more copies SAWPA buys per user licence the lower the cost per copy becomes. For example, the current group of standards and range per members equates to a saving of ±30% and much more depending on the number of copies purchased per user licence.

## IRG49 CONFERENCE A GREAT SUCCESS



SAWPA is proud to report that IRG49 was a huge success in every way, from the conference programme to every social event, and there were numerous. The Conference was attended by 158 delegates and the total number including companions was 190 people, from 35 different countries. We received countless praises from both local and international delegates, and it seems IRG49 will remain a memorable occasion for many of our guests. I would like to thank all the local support, both delegates and sponsors, who contributed to the success, as well as the individuals who formed part of our Local Organising Committee during the conference, and last but most definitely not least, a big thanks to Sue for all her hard work in the planning and organisation of IRG49. In the words of the IRG-WP president, Dr Joris Van Acker from Ghent University in Belgium, the mere fact that South Africa was able to host and pull-off such a successful conference has been an inspiration for many other countries who have raised their hands to host future IRG annual conferences. Applications have been received to host the IRG until 2023. IRG50 will be held in Quebec, Canada from 12 to 16 May 2019, and we hope that

IRG49 in South Africa has been an inspiration for local South African delegates to attend this and other IRG conferences to follow. Members who are interested to know more about the papers presented can contact us for a list of papers, and should you then require any specific paper to please let us know.



(Pic: IRG 49 delegates)

## NEWSLETTER OFFCUTS

- The hits to the SAWPA website for Feb – April totalled 237812.
- We recently acquired a new batch of safety labels and members are encouraged to make use of the labels available from SAWPA to all members at no charge.
- The attached technical alert notice was recently released at the TPCP annual symposium. Growers of eucalyptus species are advised to take note of the threat and to report the disease if you note its presence in your plantations.
- SAWPA will be taking part in WoodEx For Africa running from 11 to 13 July at the Gallagher Convention Centre in Midrand. This year will incorporate the 'Deck and Flooring Expo' alongside WoodEx for Africa.
- We received information on a  $\pm 2.27\text{m}^3$  plant is for sale in Bloemfontein. The plant was previously used to treat thatch grass using vacuum pressure and borate. Interested persons should contact Bertus Niewenhuis on 082 5588 484 or [bertusn@me.com](mailto:bertusn@me.com)

Regards

**BRUCE BREEDT**

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