

WOOD PACKAGING MATERIALS PROGRAM MONITORING UPDATE

Tom Hanneman
Western Wood Products Association
Portland, Oregon

Introduction

It's been a while since I last addressed your association; I believe it was in Reno, Nevada in 2002. At that time I discussed the Non-Manufactured Wood Packaging Program (NMWP) developed through the efforts of the American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA), North American Plant Protection Organization (NAPPO), U.S. Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the American Lumber Standard Committee (ALSC).

The NMWP program was developed to satisfy the concerns of several foreign countries on the spread of the pinewood nematode via pallets and packaging material. For lumber products, heat treating is recognized as an acceptable method of stopping the spread of the pinewood nematode and other unwanted pests.

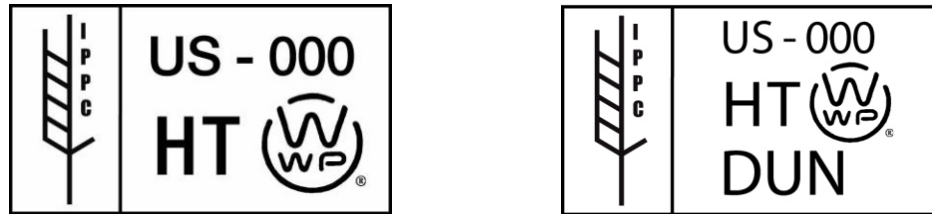
Heat Treating Standards

Heat Treated (HT) lumber is defined as lumber that has been placed in a closed chamber and artificial heat is applied until the lumber achieves a core temperature of 56⁰ C (133⁰ F) for 30 minutes. The program is monitored by the American Lumber Standard Committee (ALSC) and is available to all grading agencies affiliated with ALSC. WHPA is authorized to administer the WPM program and it is available to WHPA subscribers.

Since 2002 the program has undergone several changes which I will cover today. The changes include:

- 1) The program name has changed from Non-Manufactured Wood Packaging (NMWP) to the Wood Packaging Material (WPM).
- 2) Hardwood species were added to the WPM program. Originally hardwood lumber used in pallets and crating assemblies did not require HT certification. WPM membership grew significantly with the addition of the hardwood producers. Presently there are over 3,200 pallet/crating manufacturers enrolled in the WPM program.
- 3) Recently several countries have voiced concerns about the spacers/dunnage used in shipments of lumber not meeting the HT requirement. As a result some countries now require that all spacers/dunnage be marked to signify WPM compliance.

The stamp format shown below is used to identify packaging and crating material as well as dunnage in conjunction with the WPM program.



HT Monitoring

The ALSC Enforcement Regulations include provisions for monitoring the HT process for both primary lumber producers and pallet and crating manufactures. The regulations require monthly inspections of the companies that have been authorized to HT their products.

WWPA reviews dry kiln records to verify the heat treating time/temperature program requirements have been achieved. Dr. Kevin Cheung, WWPA Director of Technical Services, developed a time/temperature chart to assist our inspection staff when checking dry kilns that maintain a wet bulb temperature of 140° F (60° C) or greater. For dry kilns that use dry heat only and operate below 160° F the regulations require placing thermocouples in the kiln to determine the time/temperature schedule.

The HT program has worked very well in the WWPA mills as we have been able to qualify all mills requesting HT certification. The ALSC Enforcement Regulations for the Untreated Wood Program and the Wood Packaging Material Program are available on the web for download at www.alsc.org.

Typical WWPA grade stamps with HT designation.

