



## Responds To Market Confusion Over Treatment Chemicals

October 2, 2008



*From Michael Johnson, CEO Cox Industries*

I am writing to you today with a two-fold purpose. First, to all our long time residential business partners and friends I want to say thank you for your dedication and patience over the last two years. Along with this recognition of our long time friends, I also want to welcome the 38 dealers that have joined us over that same time and are the newest members of the Cox family. Our commitment to growing the profitability of our businesses in a sustainable partnership with you remains unchanged. It has been the Cox way since 1954. We hold this commitment first and foremost in all the decisions we make at Cox. Above all else, we expect every member of our Cox family of employees to uphold the trust you have placed in Cox.

The second purpose of this letter today is to provide you with some information, and hopefully clarity, from the people you trust. You may have seen an article in Deck Builder magazine this month on the wide variety of non-arsenic treatment options now available in the marketplace. For those of you who have not seen it here is a link; <http://www.deckmagazine.com/abstract/154.html>, where you can download or read the PDF. Even on this page you will see conflicting information in the advertisements displayed. We have been discussing, with you, many of the issues addressed in this article over the last two years, as we made a cautious and calculated decision to move to our new treatment system. We made sure the new system was safe. We applied new technology combined with a proven system to design a treatment that was effective and better, not just new. Finally, we sought commitments and supported an approval process with AWWA to ensure the highest standards for our industry are upheld. No other company in our industry is able to offer you a dispersed and dissolved blend like Cox has done. Others will surely follow, but by the time they catch up with us we will have found other ways to strengthen your business. We strive to reinforce the Cox way.

As a quick recap to the confusing information in the marketplace, I have provided a list of questions and answers. We have been asked by our customers to provide a straightforward way for us to talk about the unique solution provided by Cox. We have worked diligently to communicate our efforts and thoughts to you via letters, the web, Cox colleges, and face to face visits. As always, we are available at any time to support your business needs. Please call any of us with all questions you might have. We will make every effort to resolve your issue to your complete satisfaction. It is the Cox way.

*Q&A begins on page 2*



### *Questions & Answers*

#### **Why did we move away from CCA?**

As in any industry, our products are regulated by a number of different agencies. In the case of pressure treated wood, not only does Cox reference agencies that support our products performance, but also those that regulate its uses and safety. In 2003, the primary suppliers to our industry voluntarily approached the EPA with a proposal to limit the use of preservatives containing chrome and arsenic. The primary impact to our industry was the limitation of CCA in residential applications. In anticipation of such forthcoming regulation, the chemical manufacturers responded proactively by offering their respective substitutes that were already in use in other markets. It is important to note that CCA continues to perform as safely today as it has in the past in many industrial applications. Please visit the following link for more information.

<http://www.woodpreservativescience.org/faq.shtml>

#### **Why are there so many different preservatives now?**

In a departure from the past, all three major chemical suppliers are now positioned to offer alternative preservative systems based on proprietary formulas. This gives suppliers and their licensees the ability to differentiate themselves in the marketplace. When the move from CCA occurred, every wood treating company had to make a decision on the preservative system they felt was best for their customers. Wood preservers today are faced with even greater choices but now there are a variety of new chemical suppliers in the market, each with their own respective system.

#### **I'm confused over the use of treated lumber in contact with aluminum. Is that OK?**

Some companies have suggested that you can use their respective systems in direct contact with Aluminum and electro galvanized (EG) products. Cox has deferred this question to our chemical supplier, Arch Chemicals, in cooperation with the aluminum association and the International Code Council. Based on our analysis of their research, we have concluded that no current preservative system containing metals meets approval from these groups. We have never recommended direct contact with aluminum when using Cox treated wood. Cox Industries has begun our own in-house R&D work in an effort to provide more data to support aluminum and fastener recommendations. If you would like more information on fasteners please visit our web site <http://www.coxwood.com/faq> for links to various hardware manufacturers and answers to other questions.

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*continued*

### **I've seen articles about treated wood failures. Is that Cox treated wood?**

Since 1954, we made our preservative choice based on safety, efficacy, and AWPA approvals. Today we uphold the same standard of scrutiny. We stake our reputation on every piece of wood we treat! Historically, most wood failures have been a result of poor treatment processes and poor quality control. While some treaters accept the minimum and allow one charge in ten to fail we have always, and will continue, to ascribe to a 100% pass rate. Our results are independently verified by a third party. We are confident in our chemical supplier and the preservative systems we use, past and present. *As a family, building Cox for future generations, we are proud to say we have not had failures, and the science behind our new treatment combined with our quality control will assure none in the future.*

### **What makes the new Cox treatment different?**

The new Cox treatment is dispersed copper azole type C. It is literally a blend of traditional and new technology. It combines dissolved copper amine with a new dispersed copper formulation. It is an offspring of the current CA-C formulation that was just approved by AWPA and we expect approval of this system as well. We arrived at this treatment in response to a variety of factors. We wanted a system we were 100% confident provided full cell-wall penetration and had a better biocide than was currently available. While we are excited to see many in our industry moving away from quaternary based systems (MCQ/ACQ) towards an azole biocide, they are still a generation behind us. We now use a co-biocide system that uses two different azoles to form a synergistic protection factor. We then blend traditional dissolved copper amine back in with the dispersed solution to provide complete saturation of copper in all parts of the wood cells. As an added benefit, it answered a repeated customer request to have a distinct color difference in their treated lumber without expensive pigments. It is applied and monitored by a computer controlled system. We test every batch of chemical for proper composition and assay every charge of wood to ensure proper retention level. This system, like our service to our customers, is unique to our industry.

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*Cox has long been an innovator in the industry and we will continue to introduce new treatments and products that enable our customers to differentiate their business in the marketplace. In fact, in keeping with the continued trend of changing technology, we expect the industry will see further research on new protection systems. These new systems will range from new metal-based chemicals, to organic systems and even mechanically altered wood products. In turn, we will maintain our efforts to search the globe to analyze new technologies and keep you informed of the latest developments.*

*Sincerely,  
Cox Industries Inc.*