



## mullum creek heads-up for construction

### WATCH OUT FOR CCA TREATED PINE

In Australia, copper chrome arsenate (CCA) is the most common chemical mix used for preserving timber with limited natural resistance to fungal (rot) and insect (termite and borer) attack. And Radiata Pine is the species most commonly treated with CCA. However developing awareness of the serious and cumulative environmental and human health impacts associated with the widespread use of this chemical (its links to cancer, constrained prospects for recycling and toxicity as waste) has seen it banned in several countries including Switzerland, Vietnam and Indonesia. Japan, Sweden and Germany have also severely restricted its use. Although Australia is slow on the uptake, some small measures have been taken, as noted in AS1604 – 'Specification for Preservative Treatment'.

*'In Australia, there are restrictions on the use of CCA to treat timber intended for use as garden furniture, picnic tables, exterior seating, children's play equipment, decking boards for domestic decks and patios, and handrails.'*

The ubiquitous use of CCA treated pine has left huge volumes of wood waste in landfill, with arsenic and chrome (the really nasty elements) leaching into surrounding soil and water. For these reasons the **use of CCA treated wood products is prohibited at Mullum Creek.**

There are several less harmful chemical and thermal treatments available for preserving wood, where its natural durability is insufficient for its intended construction use. These **less toxic treatments are noted in green text below** and are also referenced in the Mullum Creek [Timber Products Guide](#).

#### How can I identify the chemicals used in treated pine?

AS1604 requires treated wood to be supplied with a label (usually stapled to the end of each length for sale) that clearly notes the treatment plant number, the preservative type (by number) and the decay hazard level to which it has been treated.

TREATMENT PLANT NUMBER	PRESERVATIVE NUMBER	HAZARD LEVEL
432	01	H4

Whilst it is often thought that CCA pine can be easily identified by a green colouring, it is not the only timber treatment to fashion this hue, and it may fade with time. **CCA treated timber** is most likely to have **Preservative Number 01** on its label.

PRESERVATIVE NUMBER	USE	CHEMICALS THAT MAY BE INCLUDED	HAZARD LEVEL
01, 02, 03, 14, 15, 16, 31, 32, 33, 34, 38, 40, 43, 51, 55	fungicide & insecticide	CCA copper chrome arsenate	H3-H6
09, 10, 11, 59, 60	glueline preservative	LOSP imidacloprid, synthetic pyrethroids, zinc borate	H2-H3
58	fungicide & insecticide	CuAz copper azole	H3-H4
62, 64, 70, 74	fungicide & insecticide	LOSP copper naphthenate, propiconazole, tebuconazole, tributyl tin naphthenate	H3-H4
73, 75	insecticide only	LOSP bifenthrin, cypermethrin, deltamethrin, permethrin	H2
89, 90	fungicide & insecticide	ACQ alkaline copper quaternary	H3-H5

Treated timber contains a concentration of chemical preservative dependent upon the degree of decay and insect attack to which the timber will be exposed, expressed as a hazard level from H1 to H6. Timber treated to H3 is commonly used for weather-exposed above-ground applications, such as for decking, wall cladding, fascias and fence palings. H4 or H5 treated timber is best for in-ground contact.