International Wood Products Journal ›
Volume 2, 2011 - Issue 2

Original Article

Scheffer index as preferred method to define decay risk zones for above ground wood in building codes

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Pages 67-70 | Received 15 Apr 2011, Accepted 07 Jul 2011, Published online: 12 Nov 2013

Cite this article https://doi.org/10.1179/2042645311Y.0000000012

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Abstract

Building codes and wood preservation standards are gradually taking more account of variations in climate within and across national boundaries. In Canada, the NRC-IRC Moisture Index (MI) has been used to delineate the boundary of zones where above ground wood exposed to precipitation or conducive to moisture accumulation needs to be preservative treated to Canadian Standards Association wood preservation standards. However, the older Scheffer Index is more widely recognised in wood science circles. Above ground field test data were reviewed for experiments where matched material had been exposed at more than one test site for a sufficient period for decay to occur. The relative condition of this material at two sites was compared to the Scheffer Index values for the sites and whether the MI values were below or above 1·0. The Scheffer Index was found to be a more reliable predictor of decay condition for above ground outdoor wood applications.

Keywords:

Wood Decay Climate Building codes

FPInnovations would like to thank its industry members, Natural Resources Canada, and the Provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador, for their guidance and financial support for this research. FPInnovations would also like to acknowledge its contract clients, Wood Preservation Canada, Timber Specialties Co. and Arch Wood Protection for permission to reproduce some of the data presented here. The authors would like to thank Steve Cornick for invaluable assistance in understanding the MI.

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