

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Environmentally safe?

Westwood's thermo-treatment process uses only water and electricity to create the desired results, minimally impacting the environment. When you consider this along with the fact that chemicals are never introduced, it is realized that you have a real wood material that is 100% environmentally safe and people friendly.

Thermo-treated wood is relatively new to the United States, however it dominates the European market...

About fifteen years ago, Finland created the first technology for thermo-treating wood. The process was designed solely to treat softwoods with the intentions of producing an environmentally safe alternative for chemically treated wood. Since then the technology has been significantly improved upon by others but non capable of treated hardwoods, until NOW! Westwood's technology is revolutionized the thermo-treatment process making it compatible with both soft and hardwoods.

Can thermo-treated wood be used when constant ground contact is unavoidable?

Research has shown that when thermo-treated wood is kept in constant contact with the ground it does not decay. However, due to the chemical processes that occur in wood kept in constant contact with the ground, there is some lose of strength. The research being done on thermo-treated wood is ongoing, as not everything is yet known. For the time being it is not recommended to maintain constant ground contact when using thermo-treated wood.

What is the difference between thermo-treating Soft and Hardwoods?

Precise control is needed when treating hardwoods because of the exothermal reactions occurring in the wood. The high temperatures required to change the molecular structure of hardwood is much greater than softwood. Westwood's advanced technology can subject hardwoods to these high temperatures without causing combustion.

Is the color of thermo-treated wood consistent throughout the wood?

Yes, the color is consistent to the very center of the board.

Can thermo-treated wood be glued?

Thermo-treated wood is suitable for jobs involving glue or paint. If water-based glue or paints are used, a longer drying time is required. This is due to the diminished absorption of water and must be taken into consideration.

Is the smell of thermo-treated wood harmful?

In laboratory tests, the results show that the smell of thermo-treated wood, similar to the smell of charcoal, is not at all harmful but may be unpleasant to some people. For unfinished products, this aroma will fade away after 1 to 2 months from the time of treatment. There is seldom any smell when the products are pre-finished.

Does the product have to be finished for outdoor applications?

Thermo-treated wood is still a natural, organic material and will fade in color from UV exposure. The brown tint will fade to a silver/gray over a 1 to 2 year period if untreated with a UV protectant. Although the wood is resistant to checking, it is more likely for checking to occur if a UV protectant is not applied. Checking of the wood has no effect on the long term durability or its resistance to rot and decay. In order to maintain and improve thermo-treated woods performance against checking, and accentuate the natural grain structure, Westwood recommends the use of a semi-transparent UV protectant. PENOFIN® clear is a commercially available UV protectant that works well with thermo-treated products.

How often is maintenance required for thermo-treated wood products?

Thermo-Treated wood products have increased dimensional stability which allow it to maintain its size. This ensures the products will not shrink or swell following the application of a protectant. When the product maintains its size it prevents the finish from cracking, which means less coats, less often. However to ensure you are receiving the best results from your protectant please follow the directions on the products' label.

Does the product have any guarantee?

According to European Standards, the life cycle of thermo-treated wood is determined by the degree of temperature reached during the process and can be recognized by the various colors. A dark chocolate color is class #1 in durability, meaning it has a life cycle of 25+ years. A lighter honey color has a Class #2 durability rating and has a life cycle of 15 – 25 years. Based on these standards, Westwood offers its customers a transferable limited warranty on all thermo-treated wood.

*The life cycles are based on exterior applications.

What is the difference between the “heat-treated wood” and “thermo-treated wood” terms?

In the U.S. the term, “heat treated wood” refers to kiln dried wood that reaches temperature of 133°F. The only purpose being to dry wood. Thermo-treated wood is a process that increases the temperature of wood beyond 400°F which create a change in the molecular structure, resulting in a new generation of wood material.