



REGULATORY ALERT BULLETIN

Wood Packaging Materials

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Commencing on September 16, 2005, all wood packaging material ("WPM") entering the United States from a foreign country must meet certain regulatory standards of the International Plant Protection Convention. The new regulatory standards will have a drastic effect on those MIA members which use WPM when importing natural stone products into the United States. In order to ensure that MIA members do not have a disruption in their supply chains from foreign countries, it is imperative that they become familiar with and adhere to the new regulatory standards.

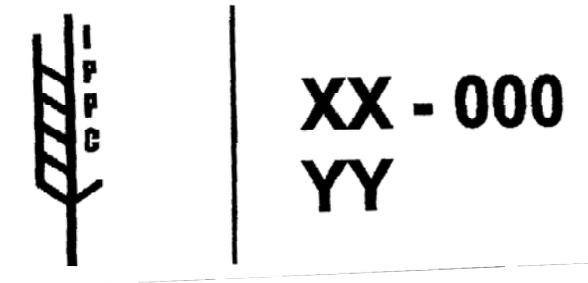
- 1. What agency will enforce the new regulatory standards?**
The United States Customs and Border Protection will enforce the new regulatory standards.
- 2. What is the intent of the new regulatory standards?**
The new regulatory standards pertaining to WPM are implemented to ensure that the United States avoids potentially severe damage to its agricultural interests caused by pests and other biological hazards.
- 3. What types of materials are encompassed by WPM?**
Items such as pallets, crates, boxes and dunnage used to support or brace cargo are subject to the new regulatory standards.
- 4. Are any WPM products exempt from the new regulatory standards?**
WPM made entirely of manufactured wood material (e.g. particle board, plywood, oriented strand board and wine and whisky barrels) are exempt along with WPM made entirely of thin wood pieces of less than 6 mm thickness. WPM made entirely of Canadian origin wood is also exempt.
- 5. Are there any other physical attributes that the WPM must adhere to?**
The new regulatory standards mandate that the WPM be completely free of bark.
- 6. What are the substantive elements of the new regulatory standards?**
The new regulatory standards require that the WPM be treated in certain manners and also conspicuously branded.

7. What are the treatment requirements?

All WPM entering the United States from a foreign country must receive either: (1) heat treatment to a minimum wood core temperature of 56°C for a minimum of 30 minutes; or (2) fumigation with methyl bromide.

8. What are the branding requirements?

Each WPM must be conspicuously branded with a mark that is approved by the International Plant Protection Convention. The branding logo is found below.¹



9. In what location does the branding logo have to appear on the WPM?

The branding logo must appear on all sides of the WPM and should be conspicuously visible so inspectors can observe the required logo. In addition, the branding logo must be visible every couple of feet of width; however, each country of origin may have further specific regulations on where the branding must be located.

10. What, if any, reference to compliance with the regulatory standards needs to be denoted in shipping documents?

The shipping documents must state that the shipment was packed per WPM regulations. This should be included in all invoices, packing lists, or in a separate document provided to the MIA member from the treatment facility.

11. What, if any, contact needs to be made with the point of origin foreign country?

Each MIA member which ships materials from a foreign country into the United States must apply to the Plant Protection Office in the foreign country of origin. The Plant Protection Office will give the organization instructions on proper marking of pallets, crates, dunnage and wood used for bundles into various containers. The Plant Protection Office will also indicate which establishments within the foreign country are already set up for this treatment and branding process.

12. Is an organization authorized to brand and treat the WPM itself?

Yes, as long as the entity applies to the foreign country of origin's Plant Protection Office to obtain the proper branding tools. Individual branding is not allowed in all foreign countries, therefore contact needs to be made with the foreign country of origin's Plant Protection Office.

13. What penalties are associated with the failure to adhere to the new regulatory standards?

Typically, all shipments that are not in compliance with the new regulatory standards will be returned to the foreign country of origin. There may be limited exceptions if an inspector determines that the WPM may be separated from the merchandise and the pests will not escape. In these circumstances, the WPM will be separated from the merchandise, burned and returned to the foreign country of origin at the importer's expense. Please note that this is a costly process.

¹ XX – represents the country code; 000 – represents a unique number assigned by the Plant Protection Office; YY – represents either HT for heat treatment or MB for methyl bromide.