

Western Pallet

Magazine for WPA Members
March 2020

Magazine

Pallet Industry Shoulders the Load as COVID-19 Crisis Spreads

Industry Updates and Reports from WPA Members
Best Practices for Preventing Pallet Hitchhikers



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North American Softwood Prices

Softwood prices listed as of March
18, 2020, courtesy of NRCAN.

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North American Softwood Prices

Weekly softwood lumber prices to March 18, 2020 are shown below, sourced at <http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/forests/industry/13309>.



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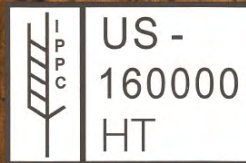
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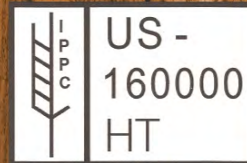
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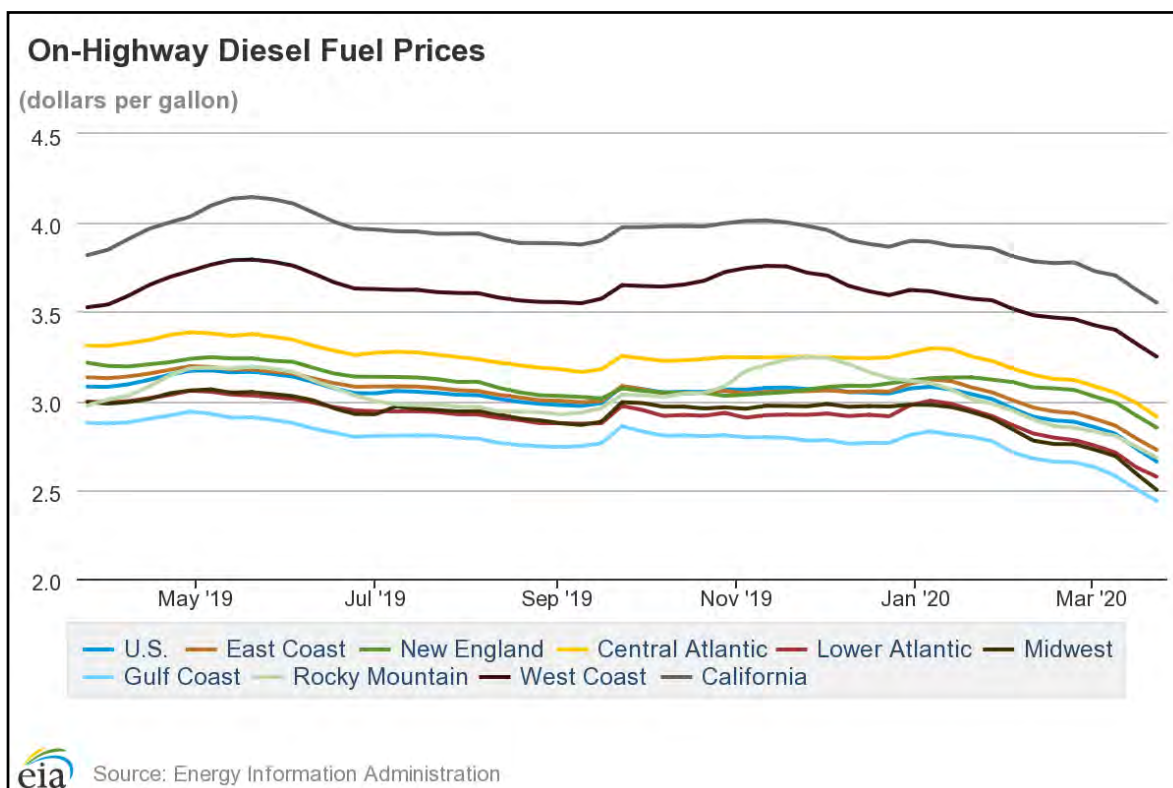
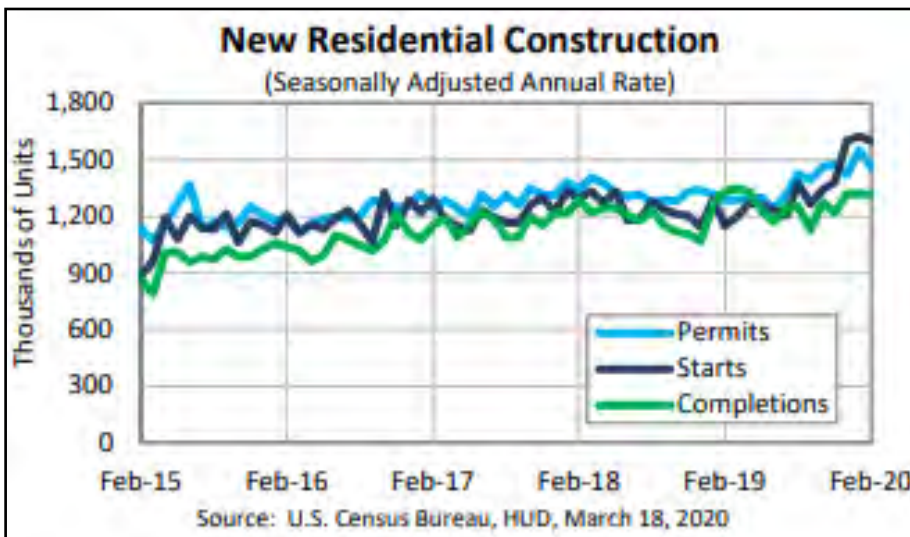


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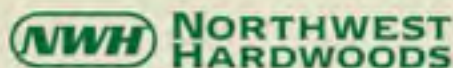
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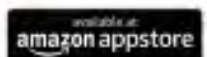
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U.S. COVID-19 Response: Pallet Industry Designated as Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce

U.S. Pallet Industry Designated as Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce during COVID-19

The U.S. federal government provides guidance to state and local governments to recognize the role of pallets

Alexandria, Va. (March 23, 2020) – Amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) late last week designated manufacturers and distributors of packaging materials, including the pallet industry, as essential workforce critical infrastructure.

As the largest organization of wood packaging professionals in the world, the National Wooden Pallet & Container Association (NWPCA) recognizes the importance of this federal guidance as state and local governments seek to keep needed goods moving while working to prevent the spread of COVID-19. As state and local officials work to designate essential business operations in their districts, NWPCA urges government agencies to follow the DHS guidance.

"The continued development, use and reuse of pallets provides a critical piece of our supply chain," said Brent McClendon, President and CEO, NWPCA.

"The system for getting important goods where they need to be is rapidly evolving and being pushed harder than ever. Making sure pallets remain a part of that system now will help deliver food, medicines, sanitizers and other essentials that are required to successfully manage a quarantine."

Prior to the coronavirus outbreak, nearly 2 billion pallets were in use across the U. S. during any given day. The total number of pallets in circulation each day is likely higher now. More than 93% of all goods are shipped using pallets. The increase in demand for food, essential medicines, sanitizers and other critical items that are shipped on pallets is a clear demonstration of how essential the pallet industry is at this time.

NWPCA will continue to champion the industry throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond as our country keeps essential goods moving to consumers at a pace that meets demand.



Global Response: Pallet Manufacturing is an “Essential Service” and “Critical Infrastructure”

Statement by the Global Wood Packaging Forum (GWPF) in response to the COVID-19 outbreak:

As our global leaders across the world put in place emergency measures to protect the world's population from the spread of COVID-19, we respectfully urge that policies being developed and implemented safeguard the ability of essential businesses to continue operations. We need to avoid an inadvertent mistake that has a global negative impact.

Wooden pallets and containers are essential services and critical infrastructure. We are the 'blood cells' of the body of the world; moving food, medical supplies, pharmaceuticals, chemistry, beverages, and essential paper products. There are 2 billion pallets in circulation in the United States alone and over 4 billion in Europe. Businesses that manufacture, repair wooden pallets, offer pallet pooling services and provide wood containers and wood packaging that are essential to maintaining critical operations and the flow of commerce. Community members providing critical care, and services should be assured they will receive their shipments in a timely manner and in good condition. This will be crucial beyond the current crisis when we turn to recover from this pandemic.



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We are appealing to all Governments to support pallet and packaging manufacturers, pallet pools, reconditioned pallet businesses, and the logistics industry; and also ensure that global sawmilling and material support operations are able to continue providing timber and essential equipment and supplies to our operations. Many pallet manufacturing businesses affected are family owned and support their local economy. The industry does this through purchases of lumber, nails, machinery, and related goods. Most importantly, wooden pallets and containers are a critical piece of global supply chain logistics, as no other 'essential' goods make it through the supply chain without pallets.

This is an unprecedented situation and we will be working with the industry and with the Government to ensure these businesses can carry on operating to ensure continuity of supply of these essential products.



MARCH 2020

Pallet Companies Shoulder the Load as COVID-19 Crisis Spreads

With Washington, Oregon and California following federal guidelines regarding the critical status of pallet provision, West coast pallet companies are reporting volumes ranging from business as normal to very high, based on conversations with WPA-members on March 24 and March 25, 2020. The situation remains very fluid, however, so consider that the information provided below may be dated by the time you are reading the March issue of Western Pallet Magazine.

Oxnard Pallet

Oxnard Pallet, like other companies contacted, reported that their company is still operating at full swing. According to WPA president Beatrice Vasquez of Oxnard Pallet, the company has taken several steps to increase worker safety, starting with employee safety awareness meetings and training. Safety steps taken include maintaining 6-foot distances, frequent washing of hands, staying away from work if employees begin to exhibit any cold or flu symptoms, and keeping all areas clean.

One additional step taken by Oxnard was to provide employees with a special letter confirming that they work for a critical industry. "We are very grateful to be able to continue our business operation," Vasquez stated.

United Pallet Services

"As crazy as the situation is right now, it's

remarkable how "normal" things are for us," Callen Cochran of United Pallet Services reported. "We are operating on a regular schedule, and in fact, business has actually picked up mainly because a lot of our customers are either in or are closely tied to the food industry," Cochran said.

As with other pallet companies contacted for this article, the Modesto, California-based company has several steps to keep our workers safe, including increased cleaning frequency of restrooms, breakrooms and common touchpoints such as door handles. Employees are asked to stay home and call their doctor if they have flu symptoms. The company has held departmental breakout meetings to discuss COVID-19 and provide safety information. "I would say the main challenge right now is separating fact from fiction and trying to dispel fear," Cochran said.

Advance Group

Sukhi Brar of Surrey, BC-based Advance Group is a WPA director and current CWPCA president. He was contacted at home, where he is finishing a 14-day self-quarantine period after having traveled out of the country. Like other companies, Advance has taken all of the standard training and safety precautions such as enhanced cleaning, social distancing, and having symptomatic employees stay at home. It is also enforcing self-quarantine



for any employees who have left the country - a policy followed by Brar himself as he works from home.

One additional move has been to split up the workforce to take coffee breaks and lunch in smaller groups to facilitate social distancing. Where possible, employees are working from home, and the office is locked and closed to any visitors. The company has also purchased a handheld temperature gun to help it easily clarify if a worker might be running a fever.

Brar emphasized the importance of ongoing communication with employees as well as customers and providers. Advance has translated key information into other languages such as Punjabi and Spanish to help employees better understand the required safety procedures. "The main thing is communication," Brar concluded. "We are all in this together."

Oregon Pallet

Meanwhile, Oregon Pallet reports that it is extremely busy meeting the needs of a key food industry client. The company is working 10 hour days and six days a week to try to get ahead of demand, reported Carly Taylor of the Salem, Oregon-based company. The company runs multiple

onsite operations and has had to increase staffing levels at all locations in response to increased activity. Some locations, such as in Arizona, are proving to be more difficult in filling jobs.

As with other companies, Oregon Pallet is following recommended best practices to reduce the risk of virus transmission. Steps include having employees work from home if possible. "If we do lose someone, we don't want to lose everyone," Taylor said. The office is locked and drivers must call to have paperwork brought out.

For its part, Oregon Pallet has closed its lunchroom and is having employees eat in their personal vehicles or other distance-appropriate location. It has also adjusted its time and attendance system to minimize the touching of surfaces, relying on supervisors to track hours.

Please note that NWPCA has created a listing of resources to help your company manage the COVID-19 crisis. It is available at this link.

NWPCA also held a COVID-19 webinar. It is available at this link and starts at the 12:50 minute mark.



NWPCA COVID-19 Resources

Here are some of the COVID-19 prevention ideas shared by WPA-members:

- Employee training on safety procedures, in multiple languages, as required
- Establishment of social distancing policy
- Restricting access to the office
- Restricting access to the lunchroom or requiring smaller lunch groupings to promote distancing
- Adjusting work stations as needed to meet distancing requirements
- Visitor and travel restrictions, logging any onsite visits by outsiders
- Providing letter for employees on company letterhead explaining their role in the critical workforce
- Working from home where practical
- Digital temperature gun to help determine if an employee has a fever
- Requiring any employees exhibiting symptoms to stay home
- Mandatory self-quarantine period if employees have traveled internationally
- Adjusting procedures to minimize communal surface touchpoints
- Ongoing communication with employees and trading partners

In response to COVID-19, Governors around the country require nonessential business to close. Pallets are essential not only to the solid wood producers in each state, but they are also critical for moving the essential goods our Nation needs today. Today alone, more than 2 billion pallets will move the products Americans need to the places they are needed most.

At the federal level, the Department of Homeland Security has recognized manufacturers and distributors of packaging materials, pallets, crates, containers, and other supplies as "Essential Critical Infrastructure." States must follow the DHS guidelines and include the pallet industry when designating essential businesses. The following links are courtesy of NWPCA.

- [**Global Wood Packaging Forum Statement: Pallet Manufacturing is Essential and Critical for Supply Chain Continuity and COVID-19 Recovery**](#)
- [**NWPCA News Release on Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce**](#)
- [**Click to download CISA Guidance on Critical Infrastructure Workers**](#)
- [**Click to read March 19 Memorandum**](#)
- [**Click to read NWPCA's Letter**](#)

[**The National Association of Manufacturers launched a resource page with current information by state: State Activity on COVID-19**](#)

Vecoplan Midwest Expands Team for Wood & Biomass

NEW ALBANY, IN – Vecoplan Midwest, LLC, a subsidiary of Vecoplan LLC, has augmented its sales team to increase its focus on wood and biomass markets. In addition, it welcomes a new engineer for projects and product development.

"As a leader in shredding and pelletizing equipment, it is logical for us to add salespeople in areas where we can grow," says Vecoplan Midwest COO, Bill Miller. "The new sales team members bring a combined 70 years' experience to our customers to help them, in turn, grow or increase efficiencies."

Willie Baldwin is based in Portland, Oregon and comes from the primary wood industry. Previously serving in roles including customer service, inside and outside sales, and sales management, he has over two decades of experience. Baldwin has called on the industry across the entire country and has intimate knowledge of cutting technologies. He will be focusing on western states for Vecoplan.

"I recently joined Vecoplan Midwest as the Western Territory Sales Manager, and I look forward to successfully expanding the Vecoplan footprint to the West Coast," he said. Baldwin attended the 2020 WPA Annual Meeting where he met many WPA members.

"I have 20+ years of experience in sales across a multitude of industries, which will help me help my customers with their operation," Baldwin added. After starting in an entry-level position as a customer service representative, he was promoted to Sales Manager where he managed the entire United States C.S.R. team of Burton Saw, and then Territory Sales Manager, growing in his territory by 25% after only two years. He was subsequently promoted to Western Regional Sales Manager position, managing seven territory sales managers, cutting tool specialists and customer service representatives.

Will Brennan serves as an independent rep for Vecoplan in Western Canada. Based in the Vancouver area, Brennan specializes in biomass applications in size reduction. He has over 25 years' experience in various industries including primary and secondary wood processing and material handling. His technical background in mechanical engineering technology allows him to understand and contribute to complex projects in regards to wood and biomass waste.

Mike Proost has over 25 years in industrial sales throughout the Midwest and Western US regions. Proost brings to Vecoplan expertise in material reduction and handling applications in various sectors. His expertise in size-reducing technology applies to multiple types of

Willie Baldwin is the Western Territory Sales Manager for Vecoplan Midwest



sectors. His expertise in size-reducing technology applies to multiple types of material, allows him to identify cost savings opportunities for facilities, be it through production and conveyor efficiencies or extending the life of machines. Proost is based in St. Louis and covers the central Midwest region of the country, south to Oklahoma and New Mexico.

At its home office in Indiana, Vecoplan Midwest has hired Cliff von Hoene as sales engineer who will be part of the team that oversees projects and engineering functions for the company. Over a span of 35 years, von Hoene has worked both domestically and abroad,

including Asia and Europe. He specializes in industrial design in fabrication and manufacturing for both large and small customer sectors. Von Hoene is a graduate of Auburn University.

Vecoplan Midwest, LLC is a subsidiary of North Carolina-based Vecoplan, LLC, both of which are part of Vecoplan AG located in Germany. The companies manufacture industrial and mobile shredders for size reduction of virtually any material, selling into plastics, wood, recycling, and waste markets. The Vecoplan Midwest office focuses on the wood and biomass business and sells pelletizing equipment in addition to shredders.



Pallet Wood Waste Now Allowed for Wood Pellet Fuel in the United States



On March 11, 2020, the Environmental Protection Agency's Administrator, Andrew Wheeler, signed into regulation language that opens the path for wood pallet residuals to be sold as wood pellet fuel. This announcement will be welcome news for the many wood pallet recyclers who are challenged to find markets for the fiber they generate from wood waste. Because fiber has a very low-value density, it is usually not economically viable to haul fiber a significant distance. Wood fiber was the topic of a panel session at the 2020 WPA Annual Meeting.

NWPCA's Vice President of Advocacy and External Affairs Patrick Atagi said, "NWPCA members were able to be proactive and change existing federal regulation that had previously prevented recycled wood pallets from being used in pellet fuel." Atagi continued, "I'm very proud of NWPCA members, the pallet industry, and EPA to make this change – it shows working-together-works! A special shout-out to BDL Supply, CHEP/ Brambles, Hay Creek Pallet Co., Industrial Pallets, Northland Pallet, Vecoplan

Midwest and WestWind Logistics for their time, energy and tremendous support."

On March 16, 2015, EPA issued a final rule revising the Standards of Performance for New Residential Wood Heaters. 80 Fed. Reg. 13,671 (Mar. 16, 2015). In that rule, EPA promulgated regulations governing requirements for pellet fuel. EPA also listed a variety of prohibited fuel sources. One such category of sources was "Railroad ties, pressure-treated wood or pallets." The language inadvertently, but effectively, prevented wood pallets from being certified as wood pellet fuel.

The pallet industry prides itself on its environmental footprint; including a 95% recover and recycle rate that leads the landfill avoidance rate of all competing packaging materials. With the passage of this revised regulation, the wooden pallet industry can maintain and grow its recycling rate even further. This is a fantastic win for the environment, the industry, and NWPCA members, NWPCA stated in a release.



Brambles Takes the Top Spot as the Most Sustainable Company Globally



Brambles, which operates in more than 60 countries primarily through the CHEP brand, has received the highest score in the Dow Jones Barron's sustainability ranking, rated as the most sustainable company globally. Barron's is an American magazine published by Dow Jones & Company, a division of News Corp and a sister publication to The Wall Street Journal which covers US financial information, market developments, and relevant statistics.

"We are very proud to receive this recognition," said Graham Chipchase, CEO at Brambles. "Sustainability is at the core of our business because our circular model saves natural resources and helps eliminate waste and carbon emissions. These issues are more important to our customers than ever before."

To reach this top 20 ranking, the Barron's analysis evaluates the 1,000 largest publicly traded companies by market

capitalization in terms of how they perform with regards to their shareholders, their employees, their customers, the community and the planet. This, in turn, translates into more than 230 Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) performance indicators.

99.7% of wood used by Brambles is from certified sources; 60% of all electricity used is from renewable sources, and it also seeks to actively contribute to a better workplace for its employees and better communities worldwide. The company has also been working with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and other major brands on Circulytics, a new digital tool that accurately measures circularity and supports a company's transition towards the circular economy, regardless of industry, complexity, and size.



Wood-Mizer Introduces Power Feed Trim Saw for Pallet Recycling



Wood-Mizer recently introduced the PC200 Single End Power Feed Trim Saw engineered to efficiently trim the ends of deck boards and stringers for manufacturing recycled pallets. With the addition of the PC200, Wood-Mizer now offers equipment to dismantle a pallet and trim boards into smaller material for assembly of a recycled pallet. The PC200 joins the Wood-Mizer pallet and pallet recycling equipment line that includes horizontal resaws and pallet dismantling bandsaws.

Built in the USA for pallet recycling and remanufacturing operations, the PC200 trims the ends of boards from 21" to 66" long, up to 2" thick and 10" wide at rates of up to 12,000 boards per 8-hour shift. In addition to four quick-adjustable board stops, the PC200 features an overhead blade design for reduced board kickback,

electronic variable feed speed for optimum production, and a gravity-assist incline feed system for efficient material flow.

"Wood-Mizer is dedicated to providing the best in class equipment for a variety of timber and wood processing needs throughout the world," said Brad Kirkaldy, Wood-Mizer Pallet Recycling Product Manager. "The addition of the PC200 single end power feed trim saw is another high-quality piece of Wood-Mizer equipment for the pallet industry that is backed by our established network of service and support."

The PC200 Single End Power Feed trim saw is now available to order in North America. For more information, visit www.woodmizer.com or contact your local Wood-Mizer representative.

Call for Applications: 2020 Excellence in Reusable Packaging Award

Tampa, FL. The Reusable Packaging Association (RPA) has announced the opening of the application period for the 9th annual Excellence in Reusable Packaging Award. This award recognizes primary (end) user companies and organizations that have developed and implemented measurable and innovative reusable transport packaging solutions (including pallets) in their supply chain. The application form is available on the RPA website at reusables.org here. Submissions are due by June 15.

Awards will be made in two categories: one for-profit and one non-profit (or governmental organizations).

The awards will be given to primary users of reusable packaging transport systems. Primary users do not have to be a member of the RPA to enter. Submissions will be reviewed and winners selected by an independent panel of judges, based on the quantifiable environmental and economic benefits of the reusable transport packaging system. Winners will be notified in August 2020 and should be available to attend PACK EXPO 2020 in Chicago, November 8-11, to receive the award and to present their winning case study.

[Read more.](#)

Rotochopper Updates FP-66 Horizontal Grinder

Rotochopper, through a commitment to continuous innovation, has updated its FP-66 horizontal grinder to increase the capacity of materials that can be processed by the remarkably reliable mid-sized grinder. The larger 30" feed opening and increased powerfeed lift height allows larger materials into the grinding chamber – increasing productivity and efficiency. This heavy-

duty grinder is now available with a more aggressive powerfeed and either a 630 or 755 horsepower diesel engine to grind a variety of raw materials, while still providing a great value and Rotochopper's unmatched factory-direct customer support. Contact a sales representative today to find out how to make your operation more profitable.

Recommendations for Preventing Pest Contamination of Pallets and Containers

Did you know that ISPM 15 compliant wood pallets, as well as exempt pallets made from other materials, may still be at risk of contamination by invasive species known as "hitchhikers?" These basic steps can help.

by Leigh Greenwood, The Nature Conservancy, with assistance from Brad Gething, NWPCA and Scott Geffros, CWPCA

The movement of any commodity or conveyance bears some risk of transporting invasive species through either infestation or contamination. In order to best mitigate these risks, there are regulations that are designed to combat potential infestation (such as ISPM15, designed to practically eliminate the risk of moving wood-borne pests that can be present in solid wood packaging) as well as regulations and best management practices that could be applied to nearly any situation where pest contamination may occur.

Once properly applied, the ISPM15 treatment should minimize the infestation risk profile of any given piece of solid wood packaging, as the unique pest infestations that can occur within solid wood should have been eliminated. At this point, treated solid wood is functionally the same as engineered wood from the pest perspective, while non-permeable surfaces such as plastic or metal would have different – and likely neither better nor worse – risks associated with them. Regardless of material, all conveyances can be pathways for a

different class of pest – known informally as "hitchhikers" – which can include; adult organisms sheltering anywhere in or on a conveyance, pests that contaminate the conveyance through laying their eggs on solid surfaces, and water or soil-borne organisms.

Recommendations to prevent common types of pest contamination of any conveyance – including solid wood pallets, plastic pallets, crates, dunnage, metal containers, and more – would be to store these items:

Indoor whenever feasible – when it is possible to store conveyances indoors in a dry and clean area, this is a very simple and effective way to minimize potential contamination by many invasive pests.

As far away from live trees as is practical – this will lessen the chance of contamination from insects that lay eggs on solid surfaces, like spotted lanternfly and European gypsy moth.

At right, the brown marmorated stink bug.

Not under bright lights, especially at night - many insects, especially moths, are attracted to bright industrial lights and may then seek shelter or lay eggs on any objects near the lit areas.

Off the ground, ideally atop a dry riser and/or on a solid surface (such as a concrete floor) - this will lessen the chance of soil, mud, or waterborne species splashing, soaking, or tunneling into the conveyance, thereby contaminating it- this may apply to pests like nematodes, imported fire ants, terrestrial snails, and other soil and water-based invasive species.

Not in grassy or weedy open yard areas - this lessens the chance that invasive species such as insects and snails found in the plants will lay their eggs or seek shelter within the conveyance's structure or surfaces.

Know your local pest situation and consider how to best protect your business- different places have different pest threats that will apply to their area. Some problems, like the spotted lanternfly, are only in a very specific area at this time. Others, like the brown marmorated stink bug, are found in almost all 50 states and in four Canadian provinces. In the USA, it might be wise to speak with your State Plant Health Director (SPHD) to learn what local invasive species concerns apply to the



storage of pallets. Find your SPHD here: https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/planthealth/ppq-program-overview/ct_sphd. In Canada, the Forestry branch of your Provincial Natural Resources department is your preferred point of contact.

Once you understand your local pest situation, take steps during peak risk seasons if identified- some pests have specific risks associated with the seasons, such as when the pest is prone to flying long distances, or when they lay eggs. Learning these specific peak risk seasons can help you protect your business most effectively. This information should be available from your State Plant Health Director or Provincial Natural Resource officer.

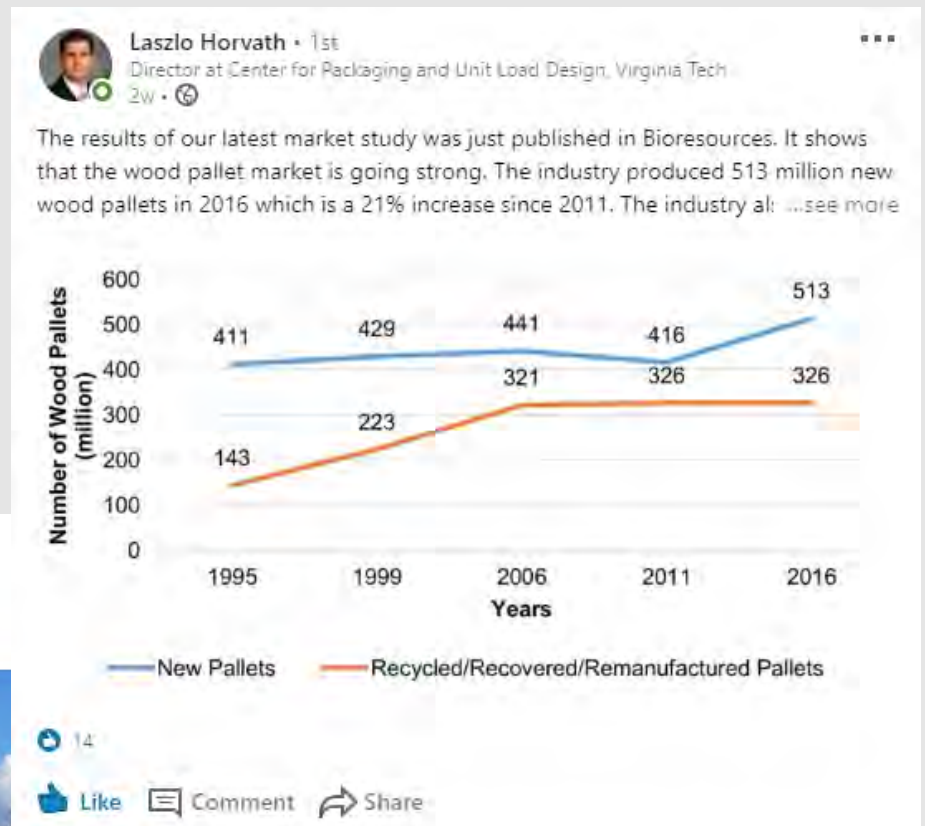
All trade activities contain some risk for the accidental movement of invasive species. By combining the treatment requirements of ISPM15 with the best management practices outlined above, the pallet industry can further minimize the risk of their product bearing both infesting and contaminating pest types.



Social Media Roundup

What's new in social? Click on images to check.

To share your company's social post, email to newsdesk@western-pallet.org



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The Wooden Pallet Industry is strong, ready, getting the job done! There is light at the end of the tunnel. Stay safe! ✓ - Stay Strong! 💪



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National Wooden Pallet and Container Association (NWPCA)

7 hrs · 🌐

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Kathleen Dietrich and 4 others

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MARCH 2020

The Membership Drive Is On!

This year's membership drive is now underway, and as always, the competition will be intense.

In addition to valuable cash prizes, the winner now also receives the membership plaque, presented at the Annual Meeting. With the highly successful 2019 Annual Meeting now in the books, it is time to work toward 2020.

When you recruit new members, the entire WPA membership is the winner!

New members can join and pay on the website. Here is the link: www.westernpallet.org

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Upcoming Events

4/29/2020 - 4/30/2020 Wood Pallet Design & Performance Short Course
Omni Hotel, Richmond, VA

As of March 23rd, the Wood Pallet Design and Performance short course that was going to be held April 29th-30th, 2020 has been postponed until the fall of 2020. Please check the Continuing Education page of our website for updates when it's been rescheduled. <https://www.unitload.vt.edu/education/continuing-education/>

5/10/2020 - 5/14/2020 LIGNA, Hannover, Germany
<https://www.ligna.de/>

6/12/2020 - 6/13/2020 CWPCA Annual Meeting, Halifax, Nova Scotia
www.canadianpallets.com As of March 30, this meeting has been postponed.

10/9/2020 - 10/10/2020 EXPO Richmond, Richmond, Virginia
<https://www.exporichmond.com/>

In case you missed them...

(Click on back issues to read or download)

