

Boone County Building Department

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Notice to all contractors and homeowners

A few years ago the preservative-treated wood industry voluntarily moved away from the use of Chromated Copper Arsenate (CCA-C) for residential and general use. This treatment method was replaced with new methods in which the arsenate was removed and the amount of copper was quadrupled.

This new method of treatment has led to corrosion problems with fasteners, connectors, and flashing that may come into contact with the “new “ treated lumber. The corrosion problems are due to dissimilar metals coming into contact with each other and causing a galvanic reaction. Basically the copper in the treated lumber corrodes any dissimilar metal it comes into contact with (fasteners, connectors and flashing).

The danger that exists with fasteners and connectors corroding is quite obvious and had become apparent rather quickly. Unfortunately the issue with flashing has only been realized recently. The importance of using the proper material for flashing cannot be overstated as flashing protects the ledger board from water infiltration. If the ledger board connection is compromised, a catastrophic failure could occur, as this is the critical link between the house and the deck.

While studies have shown that the corrosion of flashing can happen rather quickly, the rotting of the ledger board connection can take considerably longer. This scenario can add to the problem because a deck could be safely enjoyed for some time without a problem and then suddenly give way without any warning.

Testing has shown that additional corrosion protection is required and currently the public is being told (by industry experts) that fasteners, connectors and flashing should be triple dipped galvanized, stainless steel or copper. Flashing may also be vinyl or rubber. There are also several proprietary coatings that have been approved for use. However, if those products are to be used, documentation proving compliance will need to be provided.

If there are any questions as to what will be acceptable, please contact the Boone County Building Department at (815) 544-6176.