

## Some uses of CCA timber treatments to be phased out. Media Release - 15 March 2005

### Media Release 0501

The national agricultural chemical regulator, the Australian Pesticides & Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) is moving to phase out uses of copper chrome arsenate (CCA) timber treatments that it cannot be confident are safe. The phase out is one of the conclusions contained in the final report of the APVMA's review of arsenic timber treatments released today.

APVMA Principal Scientist, Dr David Loschke, said that certain uses of CCA would be phased out over a 12 month period to the end of March 2006.

'Over the same time the timber industry will be able to implement new procedures and upgrade their plants and processes to meet higher environmental standards and the recognised Australian Standards for timber treatment facilities,' Dr Loschke said.

'The review of arsenic timber treatments began in 2003. A critical issue in the review was whether or not arsenic was able to leach out of treated timber and if so, what were the likely implications for people and the environment.'

'The review concluded that the APVMA could not be satisfied that there wasn't a health risk for people, particularly children who had frequent and close exposure to treated timber products such as decks, garden furniture and playground structures.'

'Other key outcomes of the review include the requirement that CCA treated timbers be clearly labelled to improve consumer awareness and the introduction of greater controls on the availability and use of CCA by timber treatment plants,' Dr Loschke said.

'The APVMA has no regulatory authority over existing CCA treated structures. We are making our report available to other relevant authorities for them to

consider. However, at this stage, no other countries that have examined this issue, and that includes those that have phased out the use of CCA, are recommending the dismantling of existing structures.'

The actions that the APVMA is taking to manage the risk of exposure to arsenic from CCA timber treatments follow a rigorous scientific assessment and are consistent with those taken recently by other leading regulatory agencies in Europe, the USA and Canada.

You can find the [final chemical review report](#) and answers to [frequently asked questions](#) on the APVMA website.