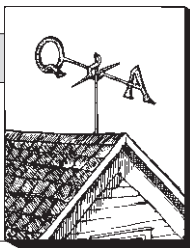


Bonding Treated Wood

by Henry Spies



Q. *What kind of adhesive should I use to bond CCA-treated decking to treated joists?*

A. Preferably none. The U.S. Forest Products Laboratory does not recommend any adhesive between the decking and the joists. The swelling and shrinking of the two members at right angles to each other will break the bond of any rigid adhesive. Many of the more flexible mastic-type products on the market will stick to treated wood, but the differential movement will cause failure in a few years. Neither type of adhesive is strong enough to prevent deck board cupping.

Waterproofing vs. Dampproofing

Q. *There seem to be a lot of products on the market that solve problems with leaky basements. Some are for "dampproofing" and others for "waterproofing." What is the difference?*

A. A quick answer is, "their lawyers." For the same reason that a product we used to call a "vapor barrier" is now called a "vapor retarder," many products are now sold for dampproofing rather than for waterproofing.

A product that fills the pores of a material to reduce capillary movement of water through the material can only be called dampproofing. An example is the thin bituminous coating painted on primarily to reduce vapor flow through the wall. These products are useless when bulk water presses

against the wall. If the product produces a sealed membrane or forms a continuous film with essentially zero permeability (very difficult), it could be classified as waterproofing. Examples include synthetic rubber membranes and bentonite-based products.

Drywall Callback

Q. *We are getting a callback on drywall screws in a bathroom that are showing through the paint and getting darker with age. What might be causing this?*

A. It is possible that the heads of the screws are corroding, but this is unlikely if you are using corrosion-resistant screws. Stainless steel screws are best.

The most probable cause of the problem is condensation on the screw heads. The screws are good conductors of heat and are sunk well into the cold studs on an exterior wall. Since they are insulated only by wood, not by the cavity insulation, the screws can become one of the coldest objects in the room, and a thin film of condensation may form on the walls over the screw heads. This moisture film will attract dirt, forming the dark spots. To check if dirt is sticking to the wall, wash the wall to see if the spots will come off.

While this may seem unusual, I once found a house where the head of every drywall nail was dark, with some other dark streaking. The pilot light on a gas log had been

misadjusted and was producing carbon black. The fine carbon particles were attracted to any area that had a condensation film, and the house looked as though there had been a fire. A similar problem often appears in churches, due to the greasy carbon produced by candles.

Redwood Stains

Q. *On elevated decks, the redwood decking often causes black streaks on the joists below. How can we prevent this?*

A. Redwood contains tannins and extractives that are water-soluble. The extractives will wash down onto the wood below, leaving brown or black streaks. The best way to minimize this streaking is to treat the redwood with a water repellent. If the water does not penetrate the redwood, only a minimum amount of extractives will dissolve to wash down on the wood below.

According to work done by Brian Buchanan of the Texas Forest Service, the best water repellents are clear or cedartone Amteco Roof and Deck Sealant (Amteco Inc., 815 Cass Ave., St. Louis, MO 63106; 800/969-4811), ABR Natural Seal X-100, (American Building Restoration Chemicals, 9720 So. 60th St., Franklin, WI 53132; 800/346-7532), Seal-Treat II (W. M. Barr Co., P.O. Box 1879, Memphis, TN 38101; 800/238-2672), and WoodGuard (Chapman Chemical Co., 6075 Poplar Ave., Suite 306, Memphis, TN 38119; 800/238-2523). For color maintenance, Amteco TWP tested best. ■

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