

Summary

The international and domestic market requires that wood products they buy are generally free of discolourations. The discolourations detract from the product often preventing it from being used in appearance grade; they raise questions related to health issues, the integrity of the wood, or live pests that discoloured wood might be carrying. Wood discolouration may significantly affect value and lead to large economic losses. Wood producers need to understand the nature of discolourations and especially if and how they could have been prevented or remediated. Dealing with complaints about wood discolourations in markets is time consuming and expensive. At worst a disappointed customer may: a) require the producer to be present and to pay for inspections; b) send the product back to the Canadian producer, or c) demand deep discounts on the price. It is estimated that bluestain alone can cost the industry up to \$5 million per year per mill due to a downgrade of bluestained wood, while downgrading due to chemical stain in sugar maple assures only \$450/Mbf for 2-Sap grade compared to \$1,000/Mbf for 1-Sap grade when chemical stain is prevented. A serious indirect cost is the loss of reputation and the failure to secure future supply contracts.

Discolourations are generally classed as either microbial (e.g., bluestain, mold) or non-microbial in origin (e.g., hemlock

brown stain). Some discolourations are complex and may involve microbial and non-microbial origins. Understanding what a particular discolouration is and how it is formed is the key to prevention.

This manual will enable industry and their customers to understand wood discolourations— information on which discolourations can be prevented or remediated—to help them deliver clean wood to markets.

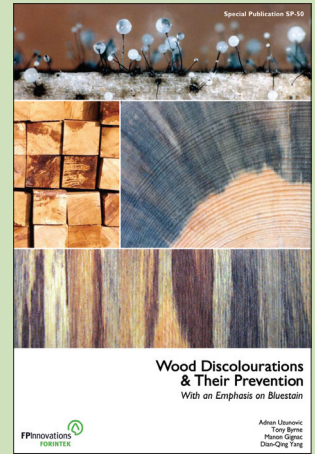
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