

BORAX AS A WOOD PRESERVATIVE

Why use Borates ?

Borates are a group of compounds that are safe for humans and higher animals, especially when compared with the commonly used petrochemical based woodworm treatments which contain hazardous ingredients and solvents. Borax is an effective treatment and preservative against insect and fungal infestation in wood and is approved to BS 5268 with regard to fungal and insect attack. Borates are non-carcinogenic and do not give off vapours. Once dissolved in water, application is simple and effective.

What are Borates ?

Borates are a group of mineral salts containing the element Boron. The best known of this group is Borax. Borates are used in detergents, paints, glass making, in ceramics and as fire retardants. In low concentrations they are an essential component of higher life forms and in stronger concentrations are lethal to insect life and fungi.

Eradication and Prevention

When applied to woodwork, Green Shop Timber Borax (Sodium Octaborate Tetrahydrate) will give protection against woodworm in larval and adult stages by being lethal to them on contact. The larvae will die as they hatch and start eating into the treated wood. Any adults emerging from inside the timber will ingest the Borax and die as they eat their way out.

On application the borax will travel along the moist parts of the timber, which generally are the most vulnerable areas to attack. As woodworm and fungal organisms need an environment of at least 12% moisture to multiply, any ongoing source of damp should be eliminated if possible. If there is a current infestation which is threatening to cause structural failure it should be treated by inserting Borax rods into the affected areas. This is a job to be done by specialist contractors only and we urge you to seek further advice if this is the case.

Application

Using the Borax dissolved in water, it can be applied by painting, spraying or dipping. Apply at the rate of 50 grams of Borax per square metre. If the timber is very dry, an initial moistening with water will help absorption. Two or more coats at a low dilution are preferable to one coat with a high concentration of Borax. If on drying crystals of Borax form on the surface of the treated timber, these can be wiped off with a dry cloth prior to painting.

DILUTION INSTRUCTIONS

For sawn timber – 15% solution	(1 kg in 5.7 litres of water)
For planed wood – 10% solution	(1 kg in 9 litres of water)
For dipping – 5% solution	(1 kg in 18 litres of water)

Dissolve in warm water at 15 degrees Celsius or higher for one hour in a non-metallic container. 1 kilogram of borax powder in solution should be sufficient to treat 20 square metres of timber.

Green Shop Timber Borax Price List

1000 grams (1kg) : £ 9.95
(Prices inclusive of vat at 17.5%)

We are happy to quote prices on larger quantities – give us a call with your requirements.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Borax has a very low toxicity level, in the standard LD-50 scale it is rated in the same order as common salt (Sodium Chloride).

LD-50 Disodium Octoborate Tetrahydrate : = 2550mg / kg

LD-50 Lindane : = 88mg / kg

(The higher the number, the lower the toxicity).

However safe a substance is, one should take reasonable precautions and be aware of action to take in case of a mishap. A suitable guide is set out below.

INHALATION : Remove affected individual from the source, rest and keep warm. In severe cases seek medical attention.

SKIN CONTACT : Wash affected skin with plenty of water, remove contaminated clothing and wash before re-use. If the irritation persists or the skin is broken, seek medical attention as soon as possible.

EYE CONTACT : Irrigate with water for 10 minutes and seek medical attention.

INGESTION : Wash out of the mouth with water, DO NOT induce vomiting. Give water to drink, if the person continues to feel unwell, seek medical attention.

SPILLAGE : Sweep up or vacuum and dispose of in a suitable container. For solutions soak up with sawdust before cleaning up and disposing of carefully.