

TECHNICAL NOTES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

CASPER, WYOMING

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

Engineering No - 8

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Use of Treated Lumber in Fish Streams

There has been some concern regarding effects of wood preservatives on fish. The SCS often uses treated wood in structures for diversions and headgates in or along live streams where a fishery exists.

The chance that wood treated with creosote or "Penta" can effect fish depends on several factors. Stage of development of the fish, concentration of the chemical in the water and temperature seem to be the most important.

Many, if not most, of the SCS planned structures using treated wood are so located that water passing over or adjacent to the structure is already in an irrigation system and not part of the fishery. These sites are of no great concern. However, we should be concerned about those sites where the water which comes in contact with the treated wood flows into a stream which is considered a fishery.

In order to avoid stream contamination, the following recommendations are made:

1. "Penta" treated materials shall be weathered at least two weeks before use in a fishery stream.
2. Creosote treated materials shall be weathered at least one month before use in a fishery stream.
3. All materials shall be treated off-site to prevent accidental spillage of chemicals directly into the stream or pond.
4. At construction sites along streams, dead water areas in which debris and other contaminants have accumulated, shall not be drained directly back into the stream.

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