

Wood Packing Materials

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Agriculture Quarantine Inspection

Port Huron, MI 48060

porthuronai@cbp.dhs.gov

Phone: (810) 989-8839

Fax: (810) 985-5542

What is the treatment/marketing requirement for wood packing materials (WPM) prior to arrival?

- For WPM originating outside of Canada, there are two treatment options: heat treatment or fumigation with methyl bromide.
- WPM must be marked in a visible location on each article, preferably on at least two opposite sides of the article, with a legible and permanent mark, approved by the IPPC, to certify that wood packaging material has been subjected to an approved treatment. See 7 CFR § 319.40-3 for the acceptable stamp format; unapproved variations will be refused.
- When WPM is unmarked or the mark is illegible/incomplete/non-permanent, it is considered untreated and non-compliant. When a live, quarantine-significant pest is found in WPM, it is considered non-compliant regardless of markings.

Can a treatment certificate be used in lieu of markings?

- Paper certifications of treatment are not required or accepted.

What kinds of WPM are covered by this regulation?

- Most WPM (excluding U.S. or Canadian origin) are covered by this regulation, including pallets, crates, boxes, and pieces of wood used to support or brace cargo. Wood packaging material is defined as wood or wood products (excluding paper products) used for supporting, protecting, or carrying cargo, including, but not limited to, dunnage, crating, pallets, packing blocks, drums, cases, or skids. Every piece of WPM, including single pieces of bracing and blocks, must be marked.
- The definition of WPM excludes manufactured wood materials, loose wood packing materials such as wood shavings, and wood pieces less than 6mm thick in any dimension.

What are the options for containers found to contain non-compliant WPM?

- At Port Huron, the only option available for shipments containing non-compliant WPM is re-exportation. Manipulation, separation, or fumigation of the WPM after the fact is not an option.

Why does the shipment need to go back to the country of origin and not just Canada?

- When arriving at Port Huron, re-export is the only option. The policy between USDA and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is that when shipments have transited Canada in-bond, the prescribed action is return to country of origin.

Can containers with non-compliant WPM be fumigated and allowed to proceed?

- No. The regulation does not allow for fumigation as remediation.

Can containers with non-compliant WPM be manipulated to remove the problematic wood and allowed to proceed?

- At Port Huron, regulations allow only for export of the non-compliant WPM. Re-exportation must occur at the port where the non-compliance is identified. Manipulation is only an option when freight arrives directly at a US maritime port.

Why does a shipment with compliant WPM require the same action as a shipment with non-compliant WPM or non-compliant dunnage when they are shipped in the same container?

- All regulated WPM must be treated and marked regardless of the type of load (ie. mixed load). Since manipulation is not an option at Port Huron, all shipments/entries in a container found to have non-compliant WPM must be re-exported.

Is it possible that the marks were present, but not visible during CBP's inspection?

- The WPM must be marked in a visible location on each article, preferably on at least two opposite sides of the article, with a legible and permanent mark per 7 CFR § 319.40-3.

Can I request photos of the pallets and/or pests?

- There is no requirement that CBP take photos of every shipment that has pests or other issues. Any photos taken are for CBP internal use and are not taken to verify the identity of a shipment or commodity. Requests for photos can be made at <https://foiaonline.gov/foiaonline/action/public/request>.