



# BIG RIVER PLYWOOD PRODUCTS

INFORMATION SHEET 7

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MATERIAL SAFETY DATA  
ISSUED NOVEMBER 1, 2003

## PLYWOOD/LAMINATED FLOORING - WOOD VENEER PRODUCT

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) was compiled by Big River Timbers in accordance with Worksafe Australia guidelines. Information contained herein must not be altered, deleted or added to. Big River Timbers will issue a new MSDS when there is a change in product specifications and/or Worksafe Australia guidelines/regulations. Big River Timbers will not accept responsibility for any changes made to its MSDS in content by any other person.

## IDENTIFICATION

Product Name	Big River Timbers Structural Plywood (AS/NZS2269) Big River Timbers Exterior Plywood (AS2271) Big River Timbers Overlaid Formwork Plywood Big River Timbers Armourfloor
UN Number	None allocated
Registered Trade Name	Big River Timbers Pty Ltd
Dangerous Goods Class	None allocated
Hazchem Code	None allocated
Poisons Schedule	None allocated
Use	Residential, commercial, and industrial construction, flooring, furniture and fitments and/or general purpose building material.

## PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION/PROPERTIES

Appearance	The products are manufactured as pressed boards ranging in standard thickness from 3mm to 45mm. They are made from wood veneers of a range of species which are bonded together with resin.
Odour	No distinctive odour. Newly manufactured plywood and freshly machined surfaces tend to have the odour of the wood species from which the plywood is manufactured.
Boiling Point	Not applicable
Vapour Pressure	Not applicable
Vapour Density	Not applicable
Melting Point	Not applicable
Solubility in Water	Highly insoluble
Flashpoint	Not applicable
Specific Gravity	0.50-1.00
Flammability in air	Fine airborne dust, generated when the product is machined, can ignite spontaneously.
Auto Ignition Temperature	>220°C

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## INGREDIENTS

Substance	CAS No.	Properties by weight
Wood veneer	None	>92%
Phenol formaldehyde resin (or)	40798-65-0	<8%
Melamine urea formaldehyde resin	25036-13-9	<8%

## NOTE

The above ingredients are bonded together under heat and pressure. The process cures the resin. However, small amounts of formaldehyde may be released from the finished product. In newly manufactured plywood, which is the worst case scenario, formaldehyde emission has been measured in the range 0.03-0.05ppm using large scale chamber test material.

## HEALTH HAZARD INFORMATION

### ***Health Effects:***

This product, in its natural form, is not classified as hazardous according to the criteria of Worksafe Australia.

In well ventilated storage areas and workplaces utilising these products the concentration of formaldehyde in the air will not exceed the World Health Organisation standard of 0.1ppm for the general environment and it will be well below the Worksafe Australia Occupational Exposure Standard of 1.0ppm on a time weighted average (TWA).

Sealing plywood with paint, varnish or other surface finishes further reduces any emissions.

The known health effects of the constituents of the boards are as follows:

### ***Cured Resin:***

The cured resin is inert and not likely to contribute to health effects.

#### ◆ Formaldehyde:

Formaldehyde gas is irritating to the nose and throat, eyes and skin. It is recommended that storage areas be well ventilated to avoid any irritating effects of a build-up of formaldehyde.

Worksafe Australia has classified formaldehyde as a Category 3 carcinogen (possibly carcinogenic to humans) on the basis of evidence that inhalation of gas caused nasal cancer in experiments with rats. In the experiments, groups of rats were exposed to formaldehyde for six hours a day, five days a week for up to two years at concentrations of 0, 2.0, 5.6 and 14.3ppm. Fifty percent of those exposed at 14.3ppm, one percent exposed to 5.6ppm, but none exposed to 2.0 or 0ppm developed nasal cancers.

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There have been more than thirty epidemiological studies involving over 150,000 people occupationally exposed to formaldehyde. These, and studies of behaviour to toxicity, indicate that exposure to formaldehyde below the Worksafe Australia occupational Exposure Standard of 1ppm TWA (time weighted average) will not result in an increased risk of cavity cancers in humans.

As plywood products have emission levels of 0.03 to 0.05 ppm, well below the WHO recommended level of 0.1 ppm, under reasonably foreseeable circumstances it is unlikely that the presence of traces of formaldehyde in the product poses a health risk.

### ***Wood Dust:***

When the boards are machined (sawn, sanded, drilled, routed, planed, etc.) wood dust is produced. Wood dust and splinters may cause irritation of the nose and throat, eyes and skin. Some woods may also be sensitisers, and some people may develop allergic dermatitis or asthma. Inhalation of wood dust, both hardwood and softwood, may increase the risk of nasal and paranasal sinus cancers.

Exposures to the wood dust produced from machining the boards may result in the following: health effects.

### ***Acute:***

- Swallowed: Unlikely to occur, but swallowing the wood dust may result in abdominal discomfort.
- Eye: The wood dust may be irritating to the eyes, causing discomfort and redness.
- Skin: The wood dust may irritate the skin, resulting in itching and occasionally a red rash. Allergic contact dermatitis may occur.
- Inhaled: The wood dust may irritate the throat and lungs especially in people with upper respiratory tract or chest complaints. Asthma may occur.

### ***Chronic:***

Repeated exposures over many years to uncontrolled wood dust from these boards may increase the risk of allergies, dermatitis, asthma or chronic nose or throat irritation in some people. The risk of nasal or paranasal sinus cancers may also be increased. If the work practices noted in this MSDS are followed, no chronic health effects are anticipated.

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**First Aid:**

Swallowed: Drink a glass of water.  
Eye: Flush with flowing water for at least 15 minutes, and if symptoms persist seek immediate medical attention.  
Skin: Wash with mild soap and running water.  
Inhaled: Leave the dusty area.  
Advice to Doctor: Treat symptomatically.

**PRECAUTIONS FOR USE****Exposure Standards:**

The Worksafe Australia Exposure Standards for softwood (e.g. pine) dust, published in October 1991, are:

- 5mg/m<sup>3</sup> time-weighted average (TWA)
- 10mg/m<sup>3</sup> short term exposure limit (STEL)

and for hardwood:

- 1 mg/m<sup>3</sup> time weighted average (TWA)
- 2 mg/m<sup>3</sup> short term exposure limit (STEL)

Wood dust is also listed as a sensitiser and the Exposure Standard is under review. In the interests of maintaining a safe working environment, it is recommended that workplace exposures to wood dust should not exceed 1.0 mg/m<sup>3</sup> TWA.

**Engineering Controls:**

All work with these boards should be carried out in such a way as to minimise the generation of wood dust.

Under factory conditions, machining should be done with equipment fitted with exhaust devices capable of removing wood dust at the source. Hand power tools should be fitted with dust bags.

Work areas should be well ventilated. They should be cleaned at least daily, and wood dust should be removed by vacuum cleaning or by wet sweeping.

**Skin Protection:**

Wear loose, comfortable clothing. Long-sleeved shirts, trousers and comfortable work gloves (AS2161) should be worn if skin irritation occurs.

Wash with mild soap and water after handling boards. Do not scratch or rub the skin if it becomes irritated.

Wash work clothes regularly and, if possible, separate from other clothes.

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***Respiratory Protection:***

If wood dust exposure is not controlled when machining (sawing, routing, planing, drilling, sanding, etc.) a class P1 or P2 replaceable filter or disposable facepiece respirator should be worn. Respirators should comply with AS/NZS1716, and be selected, used and maintained in accordance with AS/NZS1715.

***Eye Protection:***

Safety glasses or non-fogging goggles (AS/NZS1337) should be worn when machining.

***Flammability:***

These boards are flammable but difficult to ignite.

Avoid a build-up of wood dust and keep all storage and work areas well ventilated.

Avoid sources of radiant heat and flame, and avoid sparks and sources of ignition in all electrical equipment, including dust extraction equipment.

People must not smoke in storage or work areas.

SAFE HANDLING INFORMATION

***Storage and Transport:***

The boards should be stored in well ventilated areas away from source of heat, flames or sparks.

No special transport requirements are considered necessary.

***Spills and Disposals:***

Off-cuts and general waste material should be placed in containers and disposed of at approved landfill sites, or burnt in an approved furnace or incinerator, in accordance with disposal authority guidelines.

Wood dust should be cleaned up by vacuuming or wet sweeping.

***Fire/Explosion Hazard:***

Early fire hazard properties as determined in accordance with AS1530 Part 3.

Ignitability Index	14
Spread of Flame Index	8
Heat Evolved Index	8-10
Smoke Developed Index	2-3

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Burning or smouldering boards or wood dust can generate carbon dioxide and other pyrolysis products typical of burning organic material. Dry wood dust in high concentrations can be explosive. Use water or dry chemical powder fire extinguishers:

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