

Postsaver® increases life of posts for ranchers

Boot preserves environment as well as wood

Home, home on the range, where seldom is heard a discouraging word—until it's time to replace fence posts. Then the sheer size of the job is enough to discourage even the most optimistic rancher or farmer.

But a new product from Postsaver USA is riding to the rescue. The Postsaver® system consists of a specially formulated polyethylene boot or sleeve lined with an inner layer of a meltable bituminous that seals the lumber. The system protects the portion of the post that lies in the decay zone, the area that is close to the ground, where moisture, soil nutrients and organisms are found.

"That double-barrier system is important to ranchers and farmers for several reasons," said John Makuvek, general manager of Postsaver USA (www.postsaverusa.com). "Longevity of the post is the primary issue. The Postsaver product can double if not triple the service life of a post. Ranchers and farmers won't have to replace them as often."

"A second issue," he said, "is environmental." "This is a non-toxic product that forms a barrier to prevent the elements of decay from entering the post. That gives everyone more options. Manufacturers can now explore the use of above-ground chemicals in below-ground applications. And fence installers can evaluate the use of both treated and untreated lumber, which gives ranchers and farmers more flexibility when choosing fencing material."

A third is practical. Posts with the Postsaver boot are easy to install. Plastic and vinyl can cost much more than wood and are not very impact resistant, especially in cold weather. Installers can't pile drive plastic as they can wood.

Issue of rot - Don Bratcher agrees with all of those reasons. "The biggest problem with treated products is that after eight or ten years, depending on soil conditions and the installation, fence posts may rot," said Bratcher, national sales manager for Oregon-based Conrad Forest Products (www.conradfp.com). "We've looked at a variety of solutions, from sleeves to additional coatings, and Postsaver is the first product we've seen that is really viable. It is very forgiving with misapplication. It also seals the wood so oxygen can't get into it, which takes away the ability of fungus to eat the post. This product is as close to a permanent fix as we've seen."

Right product, right time - Bratcher said Postsaver is the right product at the right time. "The treating industry, especially in residential applications, has voluntarily moving away from CCA and arsenic-containing products to what we think are cleaner, more environmentally acceptable alternatives. Conrad was the first treating company in the United States to do that. Several years ago, the San Francisco Bay area became one of the first parts of the country where the local agencies mandated change. We knew that was the way things would go eventually. Now we are now the largest treater using alternative preservatives on the West Coast."

Other pressure-treaters are excited about the Postsaver technology. "I thought, Why not use a cedar pole?" said Hal Bumby, president of Maine Wood Treaters Inc. in Mechanics Falls, Maine. "Cedar will last 15 years in ground contact. I think the

Postsaver product will about double the life of untreated cedar. This product is certainly going to take off."

Bumby views Postsaver as an opportunity to capture new markets and bring high-quality, long-life products to the agricultural and residential fencing industry.

Value-added product - "While the barrier protects both treated and untreated lumber for below-ground post applications, it is not meant to replace pressure-treated lumber," Makuvek said. "It is designed to complement their product lines."

The Postsaver system is designed to be applied in a mill environment for businesses that want to differentiate their products. The company gives independent applicators the technology and knowledge to service their regional and niche markets. This allows them to increase profits by selling value-added products. Conrad Forest Products, for example, should have its equipment up and running this May.

For Bratcher, Postsaver was an easy sell. "We are a forest products company, and our business is always evolving. When we looked at what Postsaver would add to the cost of a post, I had to say, 'Look, this is a value-added product. The consumer realizes that he may never have to replace that post in his lifetime.'"

Makuvek agreed. "Ranchers spend a fortune replacing posts," he said. "Now, for just a small additional price, ranchers can buy a product that will last longer and have less impact on the environment—and that should make a huge difference in their bottom line."



The Simple Solution to In-Ground Post Decay

POSTSAVER® is a unique, revolutionary concept for preserving in-ground wood. **POSTSAVER®** is a non-toxic, environmentally-friendly barrier for both treated and untreated lumber for below-ground post applications.

POSTSAVER®'s advanced technology provides lumber posts with superior protection. The vulnerable area of the post is shrink-wrapped with a heavy-duty polyethylene boot coated on the inside with bitumen. The heat-shrinking process liquifies the bitumen and drives it into the wood. This provides a secondary moisture-resistant layer. The polyethylene outer layer provides the tough physical barrier.

POSTSAVER®'s durability is designed to withstand post-driven applications. Laboratory tests prove that **POSTSAVER®** protects posts from decay by resisting wood destroying organisms found in the soil.

The SAVER Elements of POSTSAVER®

- Bituminous Sealant
- Tough Polyethylene Boot

There are many things to do on farms and ranches, replacing fence posts shouldn't be one of them!

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AFA
American Fence Association