

# UNDERSTANDING HAZARD CLASSES

According to the National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS), any timber that is claimed as preservative treated timber through the correct preservative treatment process must be branded with the specific SANS standard. The Hazard Class is also included in this brand and it is important to understand the different Hazard Classes. The hazard classes are a classification of the conditions of timber usage that is based on the probability that the wood will be attacked by wood-destroying organisms.

The hazard classes are as follows (found in SANS 1288 Table 1):

Hazard Class	Exposure Class	Timber Application	Hazard	Preservative Type	Example of End Uses
H6	Marine	Constantly/periodically in contact with sea water and subject to marine borer attack	Severe Decay Marine Borer	CCA Creosote	<b>Poles:</b> Piling; Retaining walls; Slipways; Jetties <b>Sawn timber:</b> Piling; Retaining Walls; Slipways; Jetties
H5	Fresh Water	Constantly/periodically in contact with fresh water or heavily wet soils	Severe Decay Termites Borers	CCA Creosote	<b>Poles:</b> bridges, piling, agricultural poles under drip irrigation <b>Sawn Timber:</b> slipways; flood gates; drains; retaining walls
H4	Ground Contact	In direct contact with the ground	Severe Decay Termites Borers	CCA Creosote	<b>Poles:</b> distribution; telephone; building and fencing; carports <b>Sawn Timber:</b> landscaping structures; carports; flower boxes; decking; bridges
H3	Exterior above ground	Not in contact with the ground but exposed to leaching and weathering	Moderate Decay Termites Borers	CCA Creosote	<b>Poles:</b> cross-arms; spacers; fencing rails; building <b>Sawn Timber:</b> gates; steps; stairs; outdoor decking
H2	Internal	Not in contact with ground and is not exposed to leaching and weathering (used under roof)	Borers Termites	CCA Creosote	<b>Poles:</b> building structures; roof trusses <b>Sawn timber:</b> laminated beams; ceiling boards; window frames