



# THATCHERS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA DEKKERSVERENIGING VAN SUID-AFRIKA

Newsletter 6/2014  
8 September 2014

## NEWSLETTER

Dear member

Following the discussion points during the last Executive meeting and responding to the TASA's subsequent newsletter, we would like to report the following:

### 1. TREATED SISAL TWINE

Concern was expressed regarding the poor quality and poorly treated sisal twine. The following was mentioned in Newsletter 5/2014:

‘Manufacturers thereof may be addressed to label distinct specifications regarding the amount of resistance and stress treated sisal twine can handle, including shelve life, age limit, etc. Clarity may be obtained regarding their implementation of quality control, treatment, transmission, etc.’

SATAS (South African Technical Auditing Services) has tested sisal twine at Ten-E Packaging Services, SA (Pty) Ltd. and made it available to the TASA. The average strength of sisal twine is 47 kg. but the following requirements must be obtained from the manufacturers.

Breaking strength	Retention of preservative
Material	Preservative type

We would like to hear from our other members if they received any feedback from manufacturers regarding the products used by them. All fire retardant systems must be tested in accordance with the SANS 10177/12 specification, or be retested.

We must remind everyone that any party may be liable according to the Consumer Protection Act, from the manufacturers to the consumer.

No party is excluded, so everything must be specified.

The SANS 10177-12 Ed. 1 (2014) (Fire Testing of Materials, Components and Elements used in Buildings - Part 12: Test Methods for Fire Tests of Roof coverings) is for sale at the SABS at a cost of R210-90.

### 2. GROUND POLES

Concern was expressed regarding ground poles that rot completely and break down at ground level due to water penetration. A proposal that only H5 poles should be used for ground poles, where the area around the poles do not quickly dry off, could not be accepted as it is not specified in the National Building Regulations.

The general availability of H5 poles is also questioned.

Mr. Bruce of Breedt of SAWPA responded as follows:

“With respect the proposal that only H5 poles be used in soil that have a high moisture content and don’t dry out sufficiently or quick enough, and the decision by your Executive not to support it as it is not stated in the Building Regulations.

Please note that the Building Regulation A13.1(b) refers to SANS 10005 which clearly defines the various hazard classes and end applications. Furthermore SANS 10005 also refers to SANS 457-2 and SANS 457-3, as does SANS 10400-L. I am therefore of the opinion that the specification of H5 poles for wet soil areas are clearly and well documented.

With regards to the availability of H5 poles, I have to concur with that it’s not freely available, and this is merely because of the numbers, i.e. demand. I do however believe that if ordered and specified with the treater/supplier directly, the possibility is available since treaters can retreat a lower H class already in stock, e.g. H3 or H4 to upgrade it to a higher hazard class, i.e. H5.

I am however concerned if H4 poles are failing in normal soil that are only periodically wetted. It may be that the poles are not planted correctly in that any moisture taken up by the pole, especially in the ground line area, is not allowed or able to drain out at the bottom of the pole. Although I want to believe that all your members are well informed on the “how to plant a pole” to ensure this does not happen.

I think a further issue that may help is for the contactors to ensure that all poles to planted in the ground has reached the equilibrium moisture content of the area where it is to be used, and to verify that there is no post treatment checks in the ground line area of the pole and below that may have developed post treatment. This problem tends to become more prevalent during the drier windy season i.e. August and September. Such checks will result in untreated heartwood areas being exposed and at risk to fungal decay and termite attack. According to SAMS 457-3, post treatment defects such as splitting is not acceptable and should a contractor choose to continue using the post treated checked/split pole, he will be well advised to consider the additional application of remedial preservative systems e.g. Eco Rod’s or Vika Rod’s made by Timberlife, which can easily be maintained by the house owner and basically requires the replenishing of the eco rod from time to time, i.e. if the previous one has totally dissolved.”

The SAWPA brochure “Purchasing Treated Timber and How to Plant a Pole” is attached to this Newsletter.

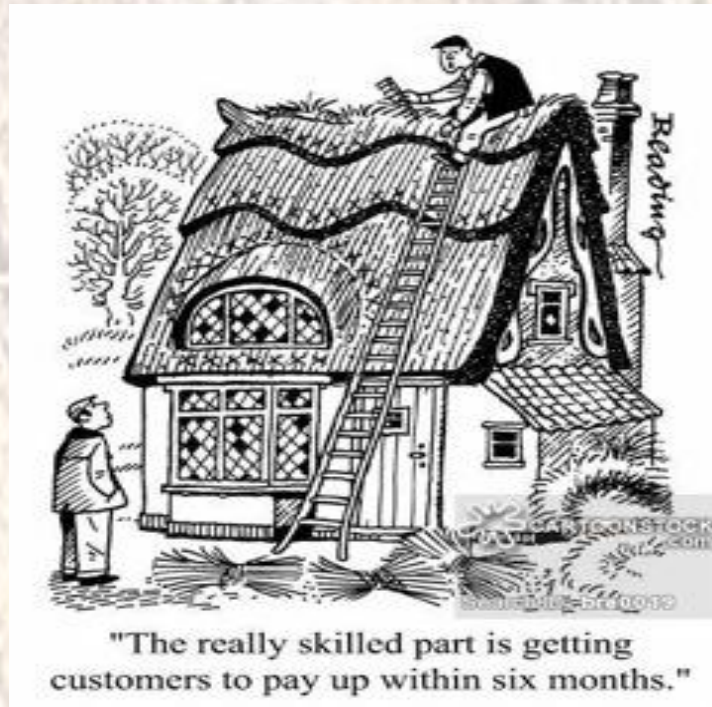
### **3. PAYMENT WITHHELD BY CLIENTS**

An increasing amount of complaints are being received from disgruntled clients over the past year. Documentation and photographic evidence substantiate these complaints, but every story has two sides.

The worldwide trend is that clients withhold final payments and sometimes search for mistakes to justify their actions. It is amusingly depicted in the sketch below.

It should again be emphasized that the Thatchers Association does not get involved in contractors' finances. The Complaint Procedure stipulates as follows:

“Should the Complainant select to make use of any of the above remedies, the costs thereof will be for the account of the Complainant and the Thatchers Association of South Africa will not act as mediator or arbitrator, or be involved in any way. The Complainant will be requested to submit the outcome to the Thatchers Association of South Africa.”



#### 4. **THE NECESSITY OF APPROVED BUILDING PLANS**

Members are again reminded of the urgent necessity of approved building plans prior to the commencement of a project. If the owner is responsible, it must be specifically stated in your contract.

It is alarming the risks our members expose themselves to, when building structures without approved plans and building thatch roofs on top of structures which were not approved and inspected.

Here is a recent example of extensions built without approved plans:

#### **“Labour dept to investigate house collapse**

2014-08-18 16:06

Johannesburg – The labour department has sent a team of inspectors to investigate the building collapse in Alberton, south-east of Johannesburg, where nine people was killed on Monday, it said.”

Kind regards

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**NATIONAL CHAIRMAN**

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