

Coronavirus (COVID-19) (/coronavirus)

Latest updates and guidance

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Guidance

Wood packaging material for import and export

If you use, produce or supply wood packaging material (WPM) to move goods to or from the EU or the rest of the world, you must make sure it meets international standards.

From:

[Forestry Commission \(/government/organisations/forestry-commission\)](/government/organisations/forestry-commission)

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Applies to England, Scotland and Wales

[Guidance for Northern Ireland \(https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/plant-and-tree-health\)](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/plant-and-tree-health)

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Wood packaging material (WPM) is known to introduce harmful tree and forestry pests and diseases.

If you import or export any goods using WPM or supply WPM to businesses, you need to follow the rules to meet ISPM15 international standards from 1 January 2021. This is so you can move WPM between Great Britain (GB) – England, Scotland and Wales – and other countries, including EU member states and Switzerland.

WPM includes:

- packing cases
- boxes
- crates
- drums and similar containers
- pallets, box pallets, pallet collars and other load boards
- dunnage (loose wood used to protect goods and their packaging)

The rules do not apply to processed, non solid WPM like plywood, raw wood that's 6mm thick or less, barrels for wines and spirits or gift boxes made from processed wood, sawdust, shavings or cardboard (as packing material).

The [WPM rules for Northern Ireland \(NI\) from 1 January 2021](#) are different.

Associated controlled dunnage

Associated controlled dunnage means wood that supports a consignment of wood of a genus or species specified and which:

- is constructed from wood of the same type and quality as the wood in the consignment; and
- meets the requirements specified for landing in [GB](#)

Associated dunnage (bearers, stickers and spacers) of the same type and quality of the consignment need not be ISPM15 compliant where it is banded together with the sawn timber product.

International standards for [WPM](#) imports

Solid [WPM](#) must meet the [ISPM15 international standards](#) (<https://www.ippc.int/en/publications/regulation-wood-packaging-material-international-trade-0/>) if you import it into [GB](#) from any country, either to move goods or for supply to businesses.

Any [WPM](#) may be checked at the border or inland premises to make sure it meets the necessary requirements. If your imports don't comply with these rules then the [WPM](#) could be rejected or destroyed and you will need to make alternative arrangements for the transport of goods.

Importers using [WPM](#)

You must make sure you, or your packing service or freight forwarder, uses [solid wood packaging that meets the requirements](#). (<https://www.gov.uk/wood-packaging-import-export>) This way you can avoid having your goods held at the border.

Contact your supplier or the [Timber Packaging and Pallet Confederation \(TIMCON\)](#) (<https://www.timcon.org/default.asp>) if you need more advice on moving [WPM](#).

Exporters using [WPM](#)

Find out if [countries you're exporting to require ISPM15 compliant \[WPM\]\(#\)](#). (<https://www.ippc.int/en/countries/all/contactpoints/>)

WPM rules for Northern Ireland

If you [move WPM \(for supply or to move goods\) from NI](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/plant-and-tree-health) (<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/plant-and-tree-health>) to the EU, there will be no changes to WPM requirements.

If you move WPM (for supply or to move goods) from NI to Great Britain there will be no changes to WPM requirements. These movements will also continue as before.

If you move WPM from GB to NI (for supply or to move goods), your WPM must be treated and appropriately marked in compliance with international standards (ISPM15). Checks will be carried out on a risk-targeted basis only, taking into account that GB to NI movements are very low risk.

How to produce ISPM15-compliant WPM

To produce ISPM15-compliant packaging you must be a member of the UK Wood Packaging Material Marking Programme (UKWPMMP) and have 6-monthly assessments of your facility. [Apply for membership of UKWPMMP](http://www.ukwpmmp.org/ExportersGuide/Default.asp) (<http://www.ukwpmmp.org/ExportersGuide/Default.asp>) and get email updates on the movement of WPM.

You must also [register with the Forestry Commission as a professional operator to apply ISPM15 marking](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-as-a-professional-operator-to-issue-plant-passports). (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-as-a-professional-operator-to-issue-plant-passports>)

There's no requirement for ISPM15-compliant WPM to have a phytosanitary or treatment certificate because the certification is provided with the ISPM15 mark. This applies to WPM originating outside GB. You cannot use certification instead of an ISPM15 mark applied to imports of WPM.

How WPM must be treated for ISPM15 compliance

Wood packaging material must be made of debarked wood. Any number of clearly distinct small pieces of bark may remain if the individual pieces are one of the following:

- less than 3cm wide (of any length)
- greater than 3cm wide but with a total surface area of less than 50 square cm

Debarked WPM, including dunnage (loose wood used to wedge or support cargo) must be either heat treated or fumigated.

Heat treatment

Wood packaging material is either heat treated to 56°C for at least 30 continuous minutes throughout the entire profile of the wood, including its core. It can also be dielectric heated (for example, microwaved).

Dielectric heating is for wood that is less than 20cm wide (including bark) when measured across the smallest dimension of the piece or stack. It must be heated to a minimum temperature of 60°C for one continuous minute throughout the entire profile of the wood, including its surface.

The bark can be removed before or after treatment.

Fumigation

Fumigation is either with methyl bromide or sulphuryl fluoride. The bark is removed before fumigation as it can alter the effectiveness of the treatment.

Marks that must be displayed

Wood packaging material that has a legible ISPM15 mark meets the standard and does not need phytosanitary or treatment certificates. Certification cannot be used instead of the ISPM15 mark.

All WPM must show a mark with the 2-letter ISO country code assigned by the National Plant Protection Organisation (NPPO) of the country concerned. The mark identifies the producer and how the WPM has been treated.

Contact

If you have any queries, email plant.health@forestrycommission.gov.uk or call 0300 067 5155.

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Last updated 5 January 2021 + [show all updates](#)

1. 5 January 2021
post brexit rules
2. 31 December 2020
Amended for end of Transition Period
3. 16 December 2020
Transition period update explaining new rules for Northern Ireland.
4. 13 November 2018
Inspection levels changes under Plant health for WPM with commodities from China and Belarus.
5. 5 November 2018
Update to include letter to importers and agents.
6. 26 September 2018
First published.

Related content

- [Wood packaging goods for import and export \(/wood-packaging-import-export\)](/wood-packaging-import-export)
- [Register as a professional operator to trade in wood, issue plant passports and apply ISPM15 marking \(/guidance/register-as-a-professional-operator-to-issue-plant-passports\)](/guidance/register-as-a-professional-operator-to-issue-plant-passports)
- [Plant health controls \(/guidance/plant-health-controls\)](/guidance/plant-health-controls)
- [Importing and exporting wood and timber products \(/government/collections/importing-and-exporting-wood-and-timber-products\)](/government/collections/importing-and-exporting-wood-and-timber-products)
- [Import timber, wood products or bark \(/guidance/import-wood-wood-products-or-bark\)](/guidance/import-wood-wood-products-or-bark)

Collection

- [Importing and exporting wood and timber products \(/government/collections/importing-and-exporting-wood-and-timber-products\)](/government/collections/importing-and-exporting-wood-and-timber-products)
- [Moving goods into, out of, or through Northern Ireland \(/government/collections/moving-goods-into-out-of-or-through-northern-ireland\)](/government/collections/moving-goods-into-out-of-or-through-northern-ireland)

Brexit

[Check what you need to do \(/brexit\)](#)

COVID-19 vaccinations

[Book your coronavirus vaccination and booster dose on the NHS website \(https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/\)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/)

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