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TREAT YOUR FENCE POSTS

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TREAT YOUR FENCE POSTS

Treat native or locally grown posts of aspen, ash, cottonwood, and "sap" bur oak with wood preservatives to make them last 2 to 5 times as long. The preservatives most commonly used are copper sulfate (blue stone), creosote, and penta (pentachlorophenol).

COST OF PRESERVATIVE TREATMENT

Posts can be treated for from 5 cents to 20 cents per post, depending on the method and chemical used, as well as the method the preservative is purchased. Labor or the cost of the treating vat is not figured in this amount.

METHODS OF TREATMENT

There are many ways to treat fence posts. Two methods lend themselves very well to farm treatment. They are (1) the cold soak method using peeled, seasoned posts and either creosote or penta and (2) the steeping method using freshly cut green posts and copper sulfate. This last method has been used extensively in Canada to treat aspen fence posts. In one test at Manyberries, Alberta, a test fence in use for 42 years still had 70 percent usable posts.

COLD SOAK PROCESS, USING PENTA

Needed for this method of post treating are:

(1) Well-seasoned, dry, clean, peeled posts.
(2) 55-gallon or larger drum. A container having a depth of 42 inches or more is best.

(3) Penta. The concentrated form is the most economical way to buy it.
(4) Fuel oil or thin, strained, used crankcase oil.
(5) Water (the use of water is optional)

Treating Procedure

(1) Fill the drum with fence posts, butt end down.
(2) Add water to a depth of about 8 inches. This water saves up to 50 percent of the cost of the chemicals needed to treat a post.
(3) Mix the penta concentrate according to the directions with the fuel oil or used crankcase oil.
(4) Add enough of this mixture to the post-filled drum to bring the liquid level at least 6 inches above the depth at which you will place the posts in the ground. Twelve inches are better.
(5) Let the solution soak into the posts until it penetrates at least 1/8 inch. More penetration is desirable but not absolutely necessary.
(6) They can be used immediately or stacked and stored until needed.
(7) In setting up to treat the next drum full of posts, do not forget to add both water and preservative to bring the liquid up to the right level.

COLD SOAK PROCESS, USING CREOSOTE

For this method of treating fence posts, substitute creosote for the penta. Use the same procedure, exce mix the oil at the

rate of 6 quarts to 4 quarts of the creosote. A 50-50 mixture can be used, except that it is slightly more expensive.

STEEPING PROCESS

This process works best from March through May, when the sap is "up". Materials needed for this method of treatment are:

(1) Freshly cut green posts. Bark can be left on.
(2) Copper sulfate, powdered form preferred because it dissolves easily.
(3) Wooden barrel, tub or storage tank. If a metal container is used, first coat it heavily on the inside with tar. Copper sulfate is corrosive to unprotected metal.

It is best not to cut more posts at one time than are needed to treat 2 batches.

Treating Procedure

(1) Measure enough water to fill the treating container to a depth of 12 inches.
(2) Add 2-3/4 pounds of copper sulfate for each gallon of water. Dissolve the copper sulfate.
(3) Add the posts, butt end down.
(4) Allow the posts to soak up the chemical until a bluish color appears on the top cut face of the post. When this color shows up, the post is treated. This may take from 12 to 48 hours, depending on the weather and length of posts.
(5) Remove treated posts and put in a new batch.
(6) Use treated posts immediately or store until needed.

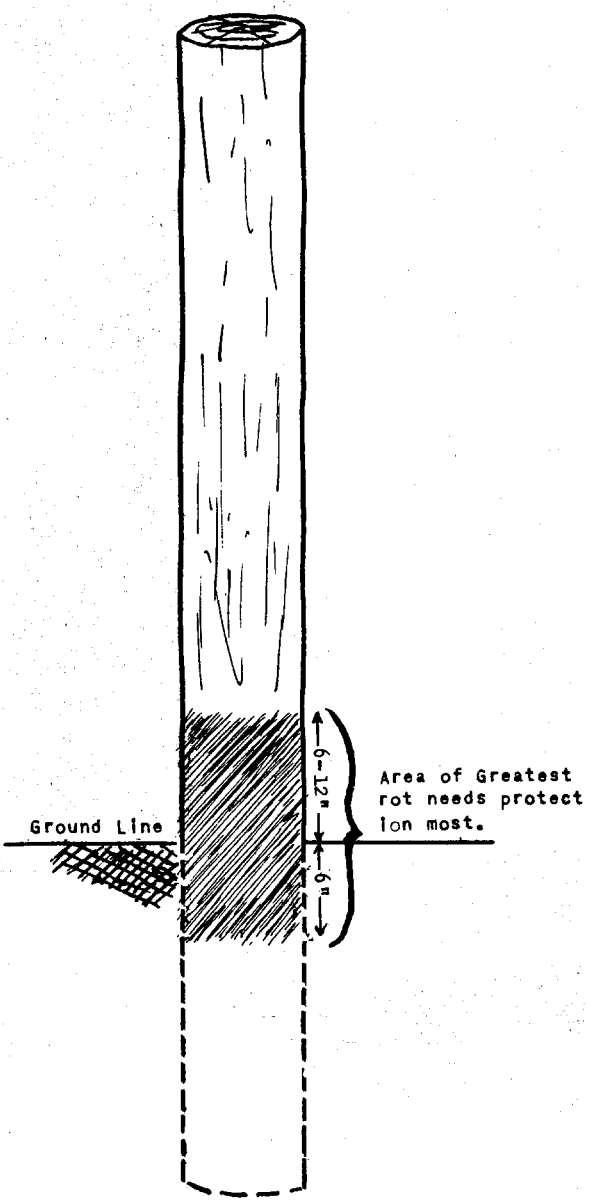
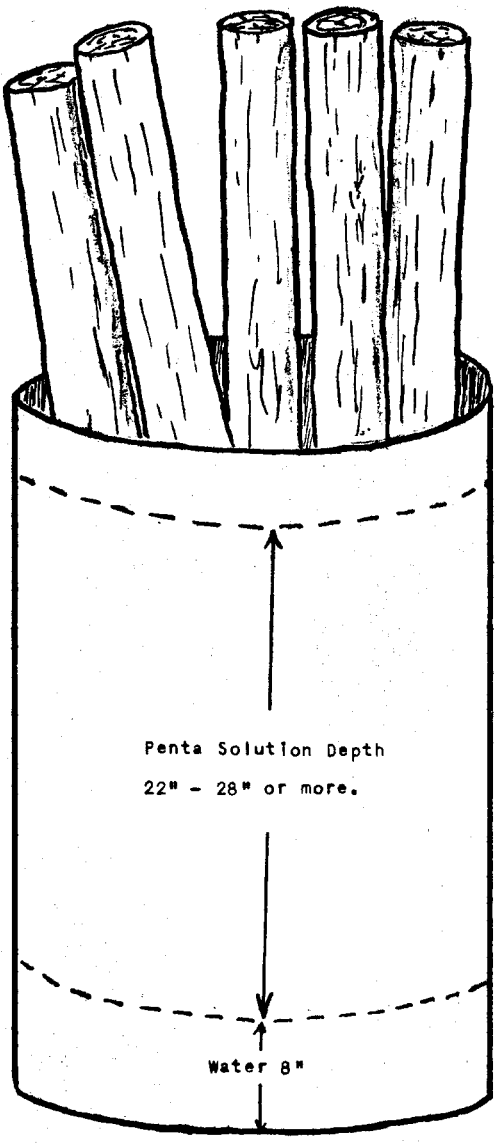


Diagram of post showing
location of greatest
need for preservative.

akota



Treat posts to a depth at least 6" (preferably 12") higher than the post is set in the ground.

Extension Service, E.J. Haslerud, Director, North Dakota Agricultural College and U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperating. Fargo, North Dakota Distributed in furtherance of Acts of Congress May 8 and June 30, 1914.