



Eco-Healthy Child Care



Eco-Healthy Child Care is a national program created by the Oregon Environmental Council to ensure that child care settings are as healthy, safe and green as possible by reducing children's exposure to toxins.

Treated Playground Equipment

The wood in many playground sets, picnic tables and decks can contain potentially hazardous levels of arsenic due to the use of Chromated Copper Arsenate (CCA) as a wood preservative. The health effects related to arsenic include irritation of the stomach and intestines, birth or developmental effects, cancer, infertility and miscarriages in women.

CCA-treated Wood

Chromated Copper Arsenate (CCA) is a wood preservative and insecticide that is made up of 22% arsenic, a known carcinogen. Much of the wood in playground equipment, picnic tables, benches, and decks contains high levels of this toxic substance. In 2004, CCA was phased-out for residential uses; however, older, treated wood is still a health concern, particularly for children.

What to Do with CCA-treated Wood

Test it. Test kits are available for a fee at [Environmental Working Group](#), [Home Building Network](#) and the [Safe Playgrounds Project](#).

Seal it. Apply a water-based sealant twice a year.

Wash up. Make sure children wash their hands and do not allow them to put their hands in their mouths after handling CCA-treated wood.

Take cover. Cover picnic tables with a tablecloth; avoid contact of food and drink with CCA-treated wood.

Do not burn it, sand it or cut it. Burning CCA-treated wood will release arsenic into the air. Sanding or cutting CCA-treated wood will create toxic dust. Dispose of CCA-treated wood at a hazardous waste site.

Replace it. Replace CCA-treated wood with [safer alternatives](#).

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call: 503-222-1963 x119

Email: hesterd@oeonline.org

Visit: www.oeonline.org/ehcc

Playground Equipment Resources on the Internet

- Avoid Arsenic Exposure from CCA-treated Wood
www.checnet.org/healthhouse/education/top10-detail.asp?Top10_Cat_ID=25
- Poisoned Playgrounds
www.ewg.org/reports/poisonedplaygrounds
- Arsenic Home Test Kit
www.ewg.org/reports/poisonwoodrivals/orderform
- Arsenic Test Kit
www.healthybuilding.net/arsenic/index.html
- Chromated Copper Arsenate (CCA)
www.epa.gov/oppad001/reregistration/cca
- Arsenic Wood: Hazards and Alternatives
www.healthybuilding.net/arsenic/hbn_wood_factsheet.html
- The Safe Playgrounds Project
www.safe2play.org

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