

WP-1 is launched into wood preservation market

Not only farmers make plans. FFS is a past master of the process. Glass smelting furnaces are changing from coal tar fuel (CTF) to pipeline gas which has become available recently. FFS has been processing CTF, a by-product of coke or char manufacturing, for many years and selling it as a low-sulphur industrial-heating fuel in the metallurgical industry.

The company is committed to its CTF suppliers and had to develop a new market for the material. So a plan was made. The wood preservative market was identified as a suitable alternative application and an extensive R&D programme was launched.

A pilot plant was designed and built in-house to determine the wood treatment parameters, both physical (application temperatures, pressures and time factors) and technical (colour, penetration and weeping). A wood preservative product WP-1 was developed for impregnated timber poles. The new product has superior colour, penetration and weeping properties.

Successful commercial tests were carried out at Poles Galore in Pinetown. FFS has subsequently received membership of the South African Wood Preservers Association (SAWPA) and has been requested to join the new standards committee. The product has been



Pierre Rossouw, marketing procurement manager, with samples of poles impregnated with WP-1.

registered with the Department of Agriculture and conforms to code SABS 1290. The production facilities have also been approved by the SABS. The dedication and commitment of the FFS team is clearly illus-

trated by the record time taken to develop and complete this project. The wood preserve industry's support is applauded and FFS looks forward to a mutually rewarding venture. •