

Ask@



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Q

Can I spray an insecticide for PPB in my storage shed?



powder post beetle evidence

A

This insect spends 10 to 20 months inside the wood eating tunnels throughout. Finally, as it matures, it eats a hole 1/32 inch to 1/16 inch in diameter to the surface. At this point, it is eating very little, if any, wood, so poison spray on the wood will not work. Plus, they are outside the wood for a few hours before they breed and the female lays eggs, so you would have to zap them at the right moment, which would be hard as they are hatching over several weeks' time.

The cure is to heat-sterilize the lumber in storage and then clean out all sawdust and debris from the shed, including stickers, 4 x 4s, and pallets, and then refill the shed with sterilized lumber. Any pallets of 4 x 4s have to be treated with heat just before you use them; past treatments are not acceptable.

Q

I am sterilizing my lumber while green for two days, but the temperature in the wood is below 133°F. Is this ok? Why is this not working?

A

When you have wet lumber in the kiln or other chamber, its temperature will only go as high as the wet-bulb temperature. As the water in the wood evaporates, it cools the wood. The wet wood is acting like a wet wick around a temperature sensor, called @wet bulb. At 150°F, the wet bulb could read about 115°F, so the wood temperature will be 115°F.

Q

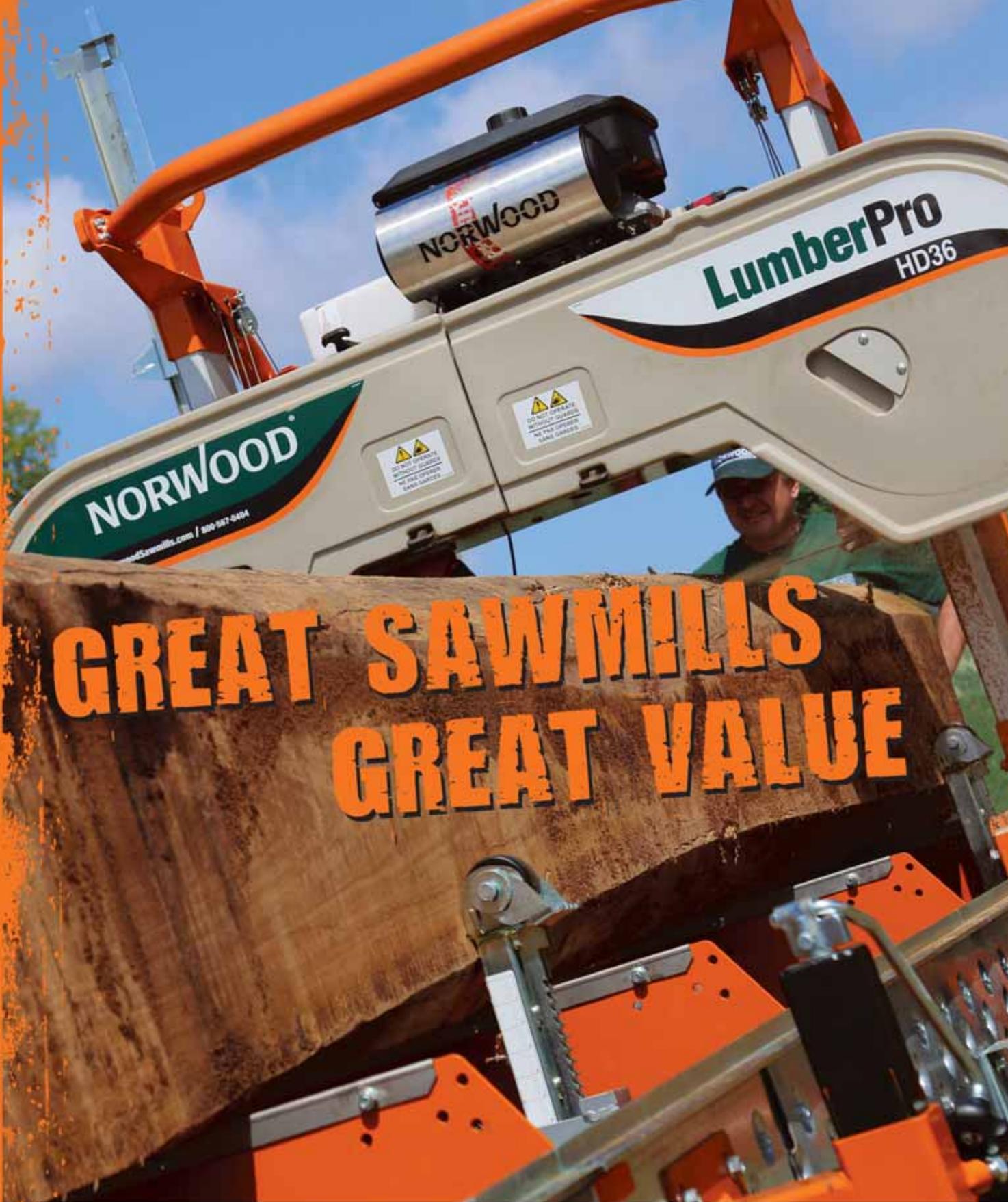
I am using red oak logs for growing shiitake mushrooms. Would it help to cover the stacks with plastic after I inoculate them?

A

We really want rain on the logs, and we want to keep them as wet as is reasonable. So, a mesh plastic sheet (like the ones for covering logs and lumber called Shade-Dry or 70% garden fabric) will let the rain through and retard drying.

Gene Wengert answered this month's questions. Please submit any questions you might have to Ask@sawmillmag.com. One of our authors will answer selected questions each month.





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