

Crosstie Grading Seminar Set For July In Roanoke Valley

The Railway Tie Association (RTA) will conduct its annual Crosstie Grading Seminar, sponsored by Koppers Inc., July 27-29 in the Roanoke Valley of Virginia.

Students will receive instruction and perform field exercises on untreated wood deterioration; storage and handling; species identification; defects and grading; treating technology; and more. A strong emphasis will be placed on the practical aspects of tie grading.

Students will receive a complimentary bonus educational experience. A video-based correspondence course on engineering principles will kick off the seminar this year. The half-day exercise, scheduled for Sunday afternoon, July 27, will feature an

in-depth look at why tie specifications were developed and will focus on proper grading techniques.

Students will recognize this year's instructors as leaders in the forest products industry, said Jim Gauntt, RTA executive director. "We are fortunate to have such distinguished experts provide outstanding instruction."

Terry Amburgey is a professor of Wood Science and Technology at the Mississippi Forest Products Laboratory at Mississippi State University (MSU). He has a bachelor's degree in forestry, a master's degree in forest pathology from the College of Forestry, State University of New York, and a Ph.D. in plant pathology from North Carolina University.

Mike Barnes is also a professor of Wood Science and Technology at the Mississippi Forest Products Laboratory at MSU. He has a bachelor's degree in forestry, a master's degree in forest products technology from Louisiana State University, and a Ph.D. in wood products engineering from the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

Jeffrey J. Morrell is a researcher at Oregon State University in the Department of Forest Products. He holds a bachelor's degree in forest biology from the College of Environmental Science and Forestry at the State University of New York, a master's degree in plant pathology from Penn State University, and a Ph.D. in forest pathology and mycology from the College of Environmental Science and Forestry at the State University of New York.

Jimmy Watt is the owner of The Crosstie Connection, based in Austinville, Va. The company performs crosstie inspections for Class 1 and short line railroads, as well as for treating facilities and railroad contractors. Formerly quality assurance engineer for Norfolk Southern, Watt is also a past chairman of AREA Committee 30-Ties and Wood Preservation. Watt graduated from North Carolina State University with a bachelor of science degree in forestry.

A tour of the Koppers Inc. location will include crosstie and switch tie inspection, handling and storage facilities, and sorting, end-plating, boring and dapping operations. The tour will also focus on the efficiency achievable in a plant that is dedicated to Boultonizing the majority of ties it treats.

The registration fee for the seminar is \$495, which includes instruction, take-home materials, lunch and dinner on Monday, and lunch on Tuesday. A complimentary Continental breakfast each morning is offered at the Comfort Suites Inn at Ridgewood Farm in Salem, Va., which is charging a rate of \$66 per night for each attendee. Attendees are responsible for making their own hotel reservations.

All non-member railroaders who register will receive a complimentary, one-year associate membership in RTA, which includes a subscription to *Crossties* magazine.

Please contact Debbie Corallo at RTA at (770) 460-5553 or dcorallo@rta.org for a registration form and additional information. § **K.M.**

Crosstie Grading Seminar July 27-29, 2003

Please make a copy of this form, fill out completely and include with registration fee. Class materials, wood I.D. kits, breakfasts at hotel, plus two luncheons, one dinner and plant tours are covered by the fee.

Name/Title _____

Firm _____

Mailing Address _____

Type of Business _____

Years in Current Position _____

Phone Number _____ Fax Number _____

E-Mail Address _____

Anticipated Time of Arrival _____

Please enclose check payable to the Railway Tie Association.

(Submit payment, form and data for each person.)

Fee: \$495.00

Return to: RTA, 115 Commerce Drive, Suite C, Fayetteville, GA 30214

For hotel reservations: call Comfort Suites Inn at Ridgewood Farm.
1-540-375-4800