

This requirement would reduce the opportunities for exposure of the logs to plant pests.

Additionally, we would require that the wood chips be consigned to a facility in the United States operating under a compliance agreement with APHIS, in accordance with § 319.40–8 of the regulations. The compliance agreement would further ensure the safe importation of the treated wood chips by specifying safeguards and requirements to ensure that the processing method would effectively destroy any plant pests, and by stating that inspectors must be allowed access to the facility to monitor compliance with the requirements of the compliance agreement and the regulations.

We would require that, during shipment to the United States, no other regulated articles (other than solid wood packing materials) would be permitted in the holds or sealed containers carrying the wood chips, and that wood chips on a vessel’s deck would have to be in a sealed container. These requirements would control possible movement of plant pests from other regulated articles.

We would also require that certain safeguards be applied upon arrival of the wood chips in the United States. First, the wood chips would have to be unloaded upon arrival by a conveyor that is covered, to prevent the chips from being blown by the wind and to prevent accidental spillage. The facility receiving the wood chips would have to have a procedure in place to retrieve any chips that fall during unloading. If the chips must be transported after arrival, we would require that they must

be covered or safeguarded in a manner that prevents the chips from spilling or falling off the means of conveyance, or from being blown off the means of conveyance by wind. Once at the facility, the wood chips would have to be stored on a paved surface and be kept segregated from other regulated articles from the time of discharge from the means of conveyance until the chips are processed. The storage area could not be adjacent to wooded areas. Finally, the wood chips would have to be processed, and any fines or unusable wood chips would have to be disposed of by burning within 45 days of arrival at the facility. (“Fines” are small particles or fragments of wood, slightly larger than sawdust, that result from chipping, sawing, or processing wood.) These safeguards would help remove any opportunities for movement of plant pests from the wood chips, should there be any plant pests present on the chips.

**Executive Order 12866 and Regulatory Flexibility Act**

This proposed rule has been reviewed under Executive Order 12866. The rule has been determined to be not significant for the purposes of Executive Order 12866 and, therefore, has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget.

This proposed rule would amend the regulations that govern the importation of logs, lumber, and other unmanufactured wood articles into the United States to require that logs and lumber of tropical species of *Eucalyptus* from South America be fumigated with methyl bromide or heat treated prior to importation and that wood chips of

tropical species of *Eucalyptus* from South America be fumigated with methyl bromide, heat treated, or heat treated with moisture reduction prior to importation. In addition, this proposed rule would amend the regulations to allow *Eucalyptus* wood chips from South America to be treated with a surface pesticide as an alternative to the current treatments. These proposed changes are necessary in order to prevent the introduction of plant pests into the United States through the importation of eucalyptus logs, lumber, and wood chips from South America.

Currently, no wood products of tropical or temperate species of *Eucalyptus* from South America are being imported into the United States. In response to several written and verbal requests from wood products industries in the United States wishing to begin importing these articles, the U.S. Forest Service prepared a risk assessment that indicated that more restrictive entry requirements would be necessary to prevent the introduction of pests into the United States. Since there are currently no imports of these articles, the more restrictive measures will not have any immediate economic impacts, but the proposed changes might impact future imports of wood products of tropical species of *Eucalyptus* from South America.

The cost of the treatment methods we are proposing to require for *Eucalyptus* spp. logs, lumber, and wood chips (see table 1) would be comparable to the costs of those treatments as they are currently applied to other unmanufactured wood products imported into the United States.

TABLE 1.—TREATMENT COSTS FOR EUCALYPTUS WOOD PRODUCTS

	Heat	Methyl bromide	Heat with moisture reduction	Surface pesticide
Wood chips (1 ton) .....	\$50 to \$100 .....	\$0.50 to \$3 .....	\$20 to \$30 .....	\$1.50 to \$3.
Logs and lumber (1,000 bd. ft) .....	\$100 to \$200 .....	\$1 to \$3 .....	\$41 to \$77 .....	\$1 to \$10.

**Source:** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Dec. 1996, “Heat Treatments to Control Pests on Imported Timber.”  
**Note:** 1,000 board feet of *Eucalyptus* weighs approximately 4,000 pounds.  
**Note:** Heat treatment with moisture reduction is offered as a treatment only for lumber because it is not as effective for logs and damages the wood.

The additional costs of these proposed treatments would be less than 1 percent of the value of the imported *Eucalyptus* wood products and thus would not have a significant impact on future imports of wood products of *Eucalyptus* from South America.

The proposed surface pesticide treatment for *Eucalyptus* wood chips from South America would provide an alternative to the currently approved treatments, which include fumigation

with methyl bromide, heat treatment, and heat treatment with moisture reduction. The cost of the proposed surface pesticide treatment is comparable to that of the existing treatment of methyl bromide fumigation (see table 1), and is already being used to treat *Pinus radiata* wood chips from Chile, so we do not expect it would have a significant economic impact on the wood products industries. This proposed rule would benefit the U.S.

wood products industries by making available an alternative treatment that is more cost effective for treating large volumes of wood chips. The availability of this alternative treatment would benefit the U.S. wood products industry by facilitating access to these wood chips, which are readily available and produce high-quality pulp.

At this time, we do not expect that this proposed rule would have any economic effects on any entities, large