

BORATES APPROVED AS WOOD PRESERVATIVES IN JAPAN

***Tim-bor*[®] Industrial and *Borogard*[®] ZB will be available as safe, effective and less expensive alternatives to protect homes from termites and decay**

November 18, 2008 – Rio Tinto Minerals, a world leader in borate supply and science and producer of *20 Mule Team Borax*[®] products – announced that borate-based wood preservatives will now be available in Japan, providing safe, effective and less expensive alternatives to protect homes from termites and decay. Borate-treated building products will include lumber treated with *Tim-bor*[®] Industrial and Oriented Strand Board (OSB) treated with *Borogard*[®] ZB. *Tim-bor* Industrial and *Borogard* ZB are two borate-based wood preservatives manufactured by US Borax at its California operations.

Tim-bor Industrial was approved earlier this year as a wood preservative by the Japan Wood Preserving Association (JWPA) according to Japanese Industrial Standard JIS K1571-2004. OSB treated with *Borogard* ZB is produced by the Ainsworth Group of Companies. The approval was based on rigorous efficacy and safety testing conducted by the Japanese Housing and Wood Technology Center (HOWTEC). *Timbor* Industrial's performance has also been validated by researchers at Kyoto University and the Japanese Forest and Forest Products Research Institute, among other respected organizations.

Wood is used to construct more than 40 percent of the one million new homes built in Japan every year. This widespread use is due to wood's excellent performance and energy-efficiency, combined with its reasonable cost. Termite and decay damage represents the only disadvantage to building with wood, and happens in all 47 prefectures. Almost one-third are considered to be high termite hazard zones, including Wakayama, Tokushima, Kagawa, Ehime, Kochi, Fukoka, Saga, Nagasaki, Kumamoto, Oita, Miyazaki, Kagoshima and Okinawa.

Use of *Tim-bor* Industrial and *Borogard* ZB supports the Japanese Administration's policy to enhance the durability of wooden homes. Borate treatment has proven successful at protecting wood buildings for more than 50 years in regions with similar termite and decay problems, including the United States, Australia, New Zealand and Western Europe. The treatment protects against decay and termites, but is safe for people, pets and the environment.

Treating building materials with *Tim-bor* Industrial and *Borogard* ZB is less expensive and works better than other wood treatments because the treatment is distributed throughout the wood completely, and does not corrode metal construction components. This allows the use of wood throughout the structure, including treated lumber for dodai and flooring systems.

Tim-bor Industrial and *Borogard* ZB are made with borates, naturally-occurring mineral salts that are essential nutrients for all plants and part of a healthy diet for people. Borates are also key ingredients in a wide variety of products including fiberglass, glass, ceramics, fertilizers, flame retardants and detergents.

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About Rio Tinto Minerals

Rio Tinto Minerals produces nearly half the global demand for borates from its mine in California, one of the richest deposits on the planet. The organization began mining borates in 1872. The mule teams originally used to haul borates are long gone, but the symbol endures in the *20 Mule Team Borax*[®] brand. Today, Rio Tinto Minerals produces borates and talc encompasses 2,800 people working on five continents to serve more than 2,500 customers worldwide. www.riotintominerals.com

About Ainsworth

Ainsworth is a leading international manufacturer and supplier of engineered wood products for residential, commercial and industrial applications. The company has operations in British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario, Canada, as well as Minnesota, United States. Ainsworth is committed to maintaining the integrity of the environment through responsible and sustainable forest management and stewardship.

Ainsworth Engineered[®] OSB and plywood products are APA-certified and known for their consistent quality and reliability. www.ainsworthengineered.com

Contacts:

Susan Keefe (Americas)
+1 303 713 5055
susan.keefe@riotinto.com

Tamio Arakawa (Asia)
+ 81 (0) 42 581 9023
arkwtom3@m2.hinocatv.ne.jp

Laura Jones (Europe)
+33 5 61 50 20 37
laura.jones@riotinto.com