

**AFTER CARE
MANUAL**

FOR

SOVEREIGN

**PLAYGROUND
EQUIPMENT**

AND

SAFER SURFACING

IMPORTANT - PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING

It is your legal responsibility as the owner / operator to carry out and record regular inspection and routine maintenance including tightening of fixings, as part of your Health and Safety policy and your safe systems of work.

This After Care Manual explains how to inspect and maintain Sovereign playground equipment and safer surfacing.

This After Care Manual must be passed to the person responsible for Health and Safety and the maintenance of the playground equipment and safer surfacing and must be kept with all other Health and Safety documentation for future reference

SOVEREIGN WARRANTIES

All our equipment is manufactured and installed in accordance with BS EN 1176 with all main timber posts carrying a twenty year warranty against rot and infestation.

Main timber posts are slow grown from managed, sustainable sources and pressure treated to exacting standards.

Sovereign only use galvanised steel core ropes that are nylon coated with hydraulically pressed ends. All joints and connectors are made from heavy-duty metal or moulded plastic.

Ropes are a consumable item subject to wear and tear and come with a one year warranty.

All metal components are either made from stainless steel or steel that has been put through pre-treatment processes to provide non-toxic, weatherproof and extreme atmospheric resistance properties.

Chains and fixings are covered under warranty for the duration of the equipment except for misuse or vandalism.

Roof units and coloured panels are made from 12mm, co-extruded high-density polyethylene, which benefits from being vandal resistant, chemical resistant, UV stable and provide excellent wipe clean surfaces.

Wetpour and Rubber Mulch surfaces and Grass Tiles all come with a five year product warranty and a one year installation warranty.

Please be aware that normal wear and tear, acts of vandalism and accidental damage are excluded from all warranties.

AFTER CARE

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

**IMPORTANT:- EQUIPMENT MUST BE LEFT FOR 48 HOURS AFTER
INSTALLATION TO ALLOW CONCRETE TO SET**

General

Your equipment should be inspected and maintained in accordance with the British Standards Institution's recommendations as detailed in BS EN 1176 part 7: Guidance on installation, inspection, maintenance and operation for Playground Equipment.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The frequency of inspection will vary with the type of equipment or materials used and other factors, e.g. heavy use, levels of vandalism, coastal location, air pollution, age of equipment.

If any part of the equipment is discovered to be unsafe during an inspection and that part can not be repaired or replaced immediately the equipment unit or the part/s concerned should be secured against use, this may involve immobilisation or removal from site.

Routine Visual Inspection

A routine visual inspection enables the identification of obvious hazards that can result from vandalism, use or weather conditions, e.g. broken parts.

A daily routine visual inspection is recommended especially for playground equipment that has heavy use and/or is subject to vandalism and should include the inspection of the following as a minimum:-

- a) General equipment and surfacing cleanliness
- b) Equipment ground clearances are maintained
- c) Foundations not exposed, loose in the ground or cracked
- d) Parts not missing or damaged
- e) Surface finishes not damaged, rusting or deteriorating
- f) Safer surfacing (if applicable) not compacted, damaged, puddling, with no sharp objects or contaminates
- g) All parts secure with no excessive movement between them that could lead to

an entrapment

- h) Consumable items not missing, damaged, loose or with excessive wear

AFTER CARE

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Running In Period (for new installations)

When new playground equipment is first put into use the novelty of the new equipment may lead to initial above average use. It is considered essential that DAILY VISUAL INSPECTIONS be made during the initial "Running In" period. This inspection should be as detailed in the *Routine Visual Inspection* (as per previous page).

Operational Inspection

The operational inspection is a more detailed inspection to check the operation and stability of the equipment, especially for wear. This should be carried out every 1 to 3 months and should be recorded using the checklist below.

Please note that some of the items below may not be applicable to any or all of the units being inspected, please copy and use this checklist or draw up your own check list/s based on the relevant sections for each piece of equipment.

General/Structure Checklist

CHECK

- 1) Play equipment and play area clear of rubbish, foreign objects and clean.
- 2) That the correct ground/surface clearances are being maintained, possibly due to erosion.
- 3) The foundations are not exposed, loose in the ground or cracked.
- 4) That all fixings are tightened and have no protruding sharp edges.
- 5) Surface finishes have no sharp edges, damage, splinters, rust or other deterioration.
Note: timber will expand and contract due to atmospheric conditions, this may lead to air cracking of the timber which is quite normal (see attached details).
- 6) Ensure all welds show no sign of visible cracks or corrosion.
- 7) All components are secure and that there is no excessive movement between them, which could lead to finger traps.
- 8) Safer surfacing (if applicable) not compacted, damaged, puddling, with no sharp

objects
contaminates.

or

9) That all components are in place.

AFTER CARE

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Rope Components

- a) Eyebolts
- b) Shackles and Links
- c) Ropes themselves

10) Ensure that all ropes are not frayed, vandalised and have no protruding wire.

11) Check that all the fixings are tight, in plane and have no protruding sharp edges.

Annual Main Inspection

The annual main inspection should be carried out at intervals not exceeding 12 months. This inspection is intended to establish the overall level of safety of the equipment, foundations and surfaces.

In ADDITION to the standard checks carried out in the Operational Inspection the following typical checks should include:-

The effects of the weather, evidence of rotting or corrosion (excavation may be required) and any change in the level of safety of the equipment as a result of repairs made, or of added or replaced components.

Spare and Replacement Parts

Spare and replacement parts must either be supplied by Sovereign or to the Sovereign specification.

Help in identifying these parts can be sought by contacting the Installation Division at Sovereign on: Phone: +44 (0) 1702 291129 Fax: +44 (0) 1702 290092 Email: info@sovereign.gb.com

SOVEREIGN COMPLIANCE INFORMATION AND PRICING

Option 1 – Single Inspection

- £99.00 plus VAT

Includes:

- 1 A single safety inspection by a RPII (Register of Play Inspectors International) qualified inspector
- 2 The safety inspection will include a detailed report on all the equipment with reference to current BS EN 1176 standards
- 3 Should the report contain recommended repair work not covered by warranty, a full quotation will be provided

Option 2 – Operational Inspection

- £190.00 plus VAT

Includes:

- 4 All items listed in Option 1

Plus:

- 5 During the site inspection we will tighten any loose fittings and replace bolts and plastic caps where necessary. When inspecting other manufacturers equipment, it may not be possible to tighten or replace fixings

Option 3 – Single Year Operational and Maintenance Contract

- £349.00 plus VAT

Includes:

- 6 All items listed in Option 2

Plus:

- 7 Two further safety inspections by a RPII qualified inspector to provide a safety inspection during each school term
- 8 Increased equipment installation warranties for the duration of the contract
- 9 10% discount off recommended repair work not covered by warranty

Option 4 – Five Year Operational and Maintenance Contract

- £1,495.00 plus VAT)

Includes:

10 All items listed in Option 3

Plus:

11 10% discount off all brochure prices on future orders for the duration of the contract

Please Note

- 1 All consumable items that are subject to wear and tear i.e. ropes, surfacing etc. that require replacement will be chargeable.

AFTER CARE PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Maintenance Information and Procedures

Machine Round Timber

- 1) Most of the machine round timbers used in our equipment are first quality home-grown pine and softwood from sustainable sources which are dried under controlled conditions and then they are vacuum pressure treated with an ACQ treatment to BS EN 599 Part 1 and BS EN 335.
- 2) Our First Grade and Landscape Grade machine round timbers are treated for a desired life of 20 years against decay or insect attack.

As part of the normal inspection routine, any visual signs of decay or infestation should be reported to Sovereign Design Play Systems Limited.

On receiving a report highlighting possible decay or infestation, a full inspection by one of our RPII Qualified Inspectors will be arranged.

The result of this inspection will confirm if decay or infestation has occurred and suitable action will be recommended, including monitoring regimes, repair and, if required, replacement timber components.

The inspection will also identify probable causes of decay and infestation.

Please note, any signs of decay and infestation caused by altering, cutting, drilling and shaping of the timber retrospectively could expose the timber unnecessarily, thus voiding the warranty.

Special attention should also be given to maintaining the grounds around the timber equipment.

Your grounds maintenance personnel or responsible persons should be made aware that damage to the timber caused by strimming too close to the timbers, removing the outer layer of treatment and exposing the timber unnecessarily, will void the warranty. We would therefore advise not to use strimmers near the equipment as if this breaks the timber seal it can cause infestation.

- 3) The timbers will continue to adapt to atmospheric conditions. It is perfectly natural for air cracking to take place, this will not affect the strength or the life of the timber. Because we use first grade timber this should not be as prominent as with other grades offered by some other companies.

- 4) During hot dry weather air cracking is most likely to occur and this should recede during cooler damp weather.

- 5) Rough edges caused by weather or general use should be sanded down with medium grade abrasive paper.

- 6) Structurally damaged timbers should be replaced immediately. Minor damage should be re-treated with an approved preservative to maintain the life expectancy of the timber.

- 7) Preservative treatments or stains used will naturally fade and weather. The timbers can be re-stained as necessary using approved stains, preservatives or micro-porous coatings.

Galvanised Steel Surfaces

Surface damage through the galvanising into the steel underneath should be touched in with an approved zinc/aluminium enriched paint.

Painted Steel Surfaces

Damaged or scratched paintwork should be touched up using approved primers, undercoats and finishing paints that have been formulated to comply with the Toys (Safety) Regulations.

Any bare metal should be sanded suitably to remove loose scale or rust prior to painting. The manufacturer's recommendations should be followed for the coatings chosen.

Ropes, Chains and Connectors

Damaged or badly worn ropes, chains and connectors such as D-Shackles and Quicklinks should be replaced as soon as possible.

Fixings

Check that all bolts are in place, tight and in good condition. Damaged or missing fixings should be replaced immediately while damaged or missing plastic caps can be replaced as soon as convenient.

Tightening – if any fixings require tightening, first remove the plastic cap carefully with a screwdriver, using a 19mm or 17mm (depending on fixing size) box spanner or long reach socket, tighten as necessary, then refit the plastic cap.

DO NOT OVER-TIGHTEN ANY FIXINGS especially during hot dry conditions as during damp conditions the timber will expand again and over-tightening may result in damage to the timber or fixings.

Tyres

Check for splits and exposed wire caused by wear or vandalism. Periodically paint the tyres with approved tyre black paint. This will reduce black rubber marks on clothing. Damaged tyres must be replaced.

Traversing Wall holds

Check all holds are firm and in good condition. If tightening is required tighten as necessary with the special key provided. Check holds for damage caused by wear or vandalism. Damaged holds should be replaced immediately.

Magnetic Wall Activity Panels

Check that the magnetic surface remains clean and free of dirt. Should any magnetic pieces be dropped, these should be thoroughly cleaned of grit or dirt before re-use to avoid scratching of the panels surface.

NOTE – Plain Wall Panels are for the use of magnetic pieces only and **must not** be used in conjunction with marker pens as this will damage the surface.

AFTER CARE

SHADE SAIL CANOPIES

Shade Sail Canopy

Your new Shade Sail has been manufactured with quality fabric, thread and fittings. It is therefore important to protect your investment from potential damage by following these instructions

- 1 Never place a BBQ or similar heat source directly beneath the sail. The fabric is not heat resistant and could melt. Smoke laden fat can also build up in the fibres of the fabric and catch alight or discolour the material permanently.
- 1 Protect the product from sharp instruments or hot sparks from electrical tools. It is advisable to not permit tradesmen to work beneath or above the sail without first asking what they intend doing.
- 1 Do not allow the sail to come into contact with rust, petroleum based solvents, strong acids, alkalise or chlorine based products.
- 1 Do not drag the sail, or any part of it, over rough ground or concrete.
- 2 If your sail is over any part of a swimming pool do not allow it to come into direct contact with pool water. Be very careful when removing or fitting the sail. Wash thoroughly with clean water immediately if immersed in pool water.
- 3 Do not allow branches of trees or other foliage to come into contact with the sail. Always prune enough back so that in high winds these will not touch the sail.
- 4 Be sure to fasten all shackle connection pins tightly using an adjustable spanner or screwdriver to ensure they are not loose and regularly check this, especially following high winds.
- 5 Report any loose or frayed thread, fabric faults or connection difficulties as soon as they are noticed.

Snow Instructions

- 6 Your new Shade Sail has been engineered to take a snow load of 15kgs m²
- 7 It is impossible to say how deep the snow will be at the 15kgs m² but you must try

to remove the snow from the structure so it does not reach this level.

AFTER CARE

SAFER SURFACING

Safer Surfacing

Loose Fill Pits

Check there is no evidence of broken glass or foreign objects in the bark or rubber mulch pit especially when raking.

Loose fill surfaces require regular forking over and raking to maintain an adequate depth. Sovereign would recommend that this be carried out every 7 to 10 days. Periodical topping up is advised when the level has reached half the original amount. Topping up can be made with any approved playgrade bark or rubber mulch. Should surfaces not be maintained properly grass and weeds may grow through the surface.

Bonded Rubber Mulch

Maintenance procedures are designed to ensure the following:-

- The playing surface is kept clean and free from grass weed growth
- The playing surface gives consistent performance

These objectives are achieved by:-

- Visual inspection of the play surface every 5 to 7 days
- Removing grass cuttings, weed spores and other detritus from the surface
- Brushing the surface to prevent any tendency to form an impervious skin on the surface that may impair drainage
- Ensuring the appropriate footwear is used on the surface (i.e. no high heeled shoes)
- Inspecting the surface for signs of damage and arranging remedial repairs promptly

Keeping the Surface Clean and Free from Weed and Grass Migration

Leaves, tree flowers, pine needles and other detritus should not be allowed to remain on the surface for any length of time. If this happens they rapidly rot down forming a drainage-inhibiting 'skin' within the surface, providing a growing medium for algae, moss, weeds and grass.

Special attention should be made to the migration of grass cuttings. All grass cuttings should be immediately removed from loose fill pits and bonded rubber mulch pits/areas. Failure to do so will result in the grass cuttings germinating, so voiding all warranties.

Please note, there may also be a small amount of migration of the Rubber Mulch from the top layer of the surface.

Wetpour

Maintenance procedures are designed to ensure the following:-

- 1 The playing surface is kept clean
- 2 The playing surface gives consistent performance

These objectives are achieved by:-

- 2 Sweeping leaves and other detritus from the surface.
- 3 Brushing the surface, to prevent any tendency to form an impervious skin on the surface that may impair drainage.
- 4 Ensuring appropriate footwear is used on the surface (i.e. no high heeled shoes)
- 5 Inspecting the surface for signs of damage and arranging remedial repairs promptly.

Keeping the Surface Clean

Leaves, tree flowers, pine needles and other detritus should not be allowed to remain on the surface for any length of time. If this happens they rapidly rot down forming a drainage-inhibiting 'skin' within the surface, and providing a growing medium for algae, moss and weeds.

Discolouration

When the Wetpour is laid there will be a thin layer of resin left on top of the surface and with most colours this is not visible.

With the light blue, if the surface is exposed to direct sunlight during the curing time it may turn the surface a slightly different colour. There is nothing that can be done to prevent this, however it is only a temporary effect as the excess layer of resin will wear off with usage and the surface will return to the desired colour.

Stain Removal

Most stains can easily be removed with a solution of hot (not boiling) water and household detergent e.g. washing-up liquid. The removal of chewing gum can be effected using a freezing aerosol. Heavy oil marks can be removed with a cloth and methylated spirits.

Weeds

No matter how much care is taken, weeds may occasionally appear on the surface usually as a result of wind blown seeds. Small numbers of weeds can be removed by hand without damaging the surface. Localised areas of self-set weeds can be treated with

domestic weed killers without causing damage to the surface. Oil-based weed killers should not be used.

Snow and Ice

Snow and ice are not harmful and can be permitted to melt through. Brushes or rubber edged scrapers may be used to remove snow. Metal shovels or scrapers may damage the surface and should not be permitted. Chemical de-icing agents should not be used. If heavy rain falls immediately after a very cold spell, the surface may become flooded for a few hours. Do not worry, the ice will soon melt and the surface will then drain normally.

Maintenance Schedule

Weekly

Clear leaves, rubbish and debris from the surface. Deal with any new weeds, moss or algae. Inspect the whole surface for signs of damage, seek advice from manufacturer as required.

Twice Yearly

Check for moss and algae growth, food-stains, shoe-marks etc. and remedy as appropriate. Inspect the whole surface for signs of damage, seek advice from manufacturer as required.

Grass Tiles

Grass Tiles are subject to movement & subsidence if the existing grass/soil surface is soft, loose, suffers from poor drainage or is prone to flooding during periods of inclement weather.

Grass Tiles should be inspected routinely as per the schedule below:

- 1 Daily visual inspection
- 2 Weekly recordable visual inspection
- 3 Quarterly operational inspection
- 4 Annual inspection

Maintenance

Where the Grass tiles show signs of subsidence or subside below the existing grass/soil surface, the following action is required:

- 1 Remove all retaining pins & ties from the tiles within the affected area.
- 2 Remove the Grass Tiles & stabilising membrane [if fitted]
- 3 Rotavate & compact the affected area & either replace turfs or reseed as required.
- 4 Re-install tiles ensuring all tiles are tied in & pinned.

If the ground is compressed through use and the grass roots pull the tiles & stabilising membrane down but with no signs of subsidence, the retaining pins may remain in their original position & stand proud of the tiles. The following action will be required.

- 1 Using a rubber or wooden mallet all retaining pins standing proud should be driven back into place below the finished level of the tiles.

All Grass Tiles should be regularly visually inspected as per the routine inspection schedule and the retaining pins pushed back into place or removed if appropriate as part of routine maintenance.

AFTER CARE

MAINTAINING YOUR LIVING WILLOW STRUCTURE

This product is made from the first week of November to the last week of March; all living structure work must be built within this time period. This will guarantee the growth of a living structure. The materials for this structure are only cut during the winter, once the sap has stopped rising and there is no leaf on the willow. This type of wood management is called coppicing, an ancient way of managing wood. In addition, the willow needs to be planted before the sap starts to rise and the ground is wet and soft, which allows for easier planting.

The following guidelines are simple and easy to follow and require minimal time and effort. However there is a big difference between low maintenance and no maintenance and following these simple guidelines will ensure your living willow structure grows and thrives year after year.

WATERING

In a normal British spring on most soils there is adequate moisture in the soil to ensure good establishment of your willow structure. However due to recent climate change this cannot be relied upon as before.

In a dry spring (from March onwards) give the soil around the structure a thorough soaking.

Leaky pipe around the whole structure is an ideal method or put a sprinkler on for a good few hours or even overnight. Move the sprinkler periodically to cover the whole structure.

When established, willow structures are very resilient but check for signs of stress during extended dry hot periods and on dry soils (Leaves turning yellow and dying in summer) and water as necessary.

Mulching with membrane and/or wood chip or similar will help to conserve moisture in the soil and minimize watering requirements.

WEEDING

Ideally your willow structure will have been planted through a weed suppressing membrane. In this case weeding will be minimal, remove by hand any weeds, including grass, that are emerging through the planting holes. Repeat this until weeds no longer appear.

If no membrane has been used then you will have to weed by hand on a regular basis to minimize competition for water, nutrients and light. Willow will often grow in the presence of weeds but will not thrive as well as it would without competition.

TRIMMING

There are several options for maintaining your willow structure.

1. To keep the shape of the structure throughout the growing season the shoots need trimming 2 to 3 times. Shears or powered hedge trimmers are suitable. You may trim lightly or hard according to preference but remember some leaves should be left on during the growing season. Good times to trim are early June and late July and a hard trim in winter before new spring growth.

This method maintains the shape of the original structure, encourages even growth and helps to maintain structural integrity. **It is the best maintenance method for healthy, long lived willow structures and is strongly recommended!**

2. As the shoots grow longer weave them back into the structure. This is an enjoyable activity particularly for children but the structure may eventually become choked causing some die back. Most plants prefer free circulation of air and light and willow is no exception.

3. Allow the shoots to grow during the growing season and then harvest the rods in the winter. The rods may be up to 10ft long and useful for craft work.

However there are disadvantages with this option:

The new growth will be less even and more bare at the bottom.

The overall appearance will be less neat and more wild looking.

The long shoots at the top make the structure top heavy and may catch the wind causing the structure to pull apart.

PESTS

All grazing animals, including rabbits, sheep, cows and deer like willow! Established willows can tolerate some nibbling but heavy nibbling of bark or leaves especially early on may cause die back. 2ft tree spirals may offer protection from rabbits but larger grazing animals will need to be excluded from the site.

Large black aphids are sometimes found on willow. These do not cause the willow to suffer in any way but may attract wasps in the late summer which feed on the aphids excretions.

Wasps and children generally do not mix very well!

The aphids may be dealt with by trimming that part of the willow with the aphids on and then disposing of in sealed bags.

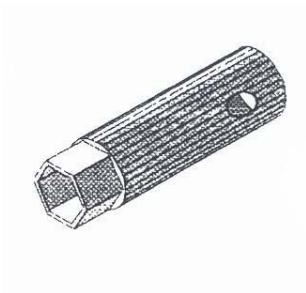
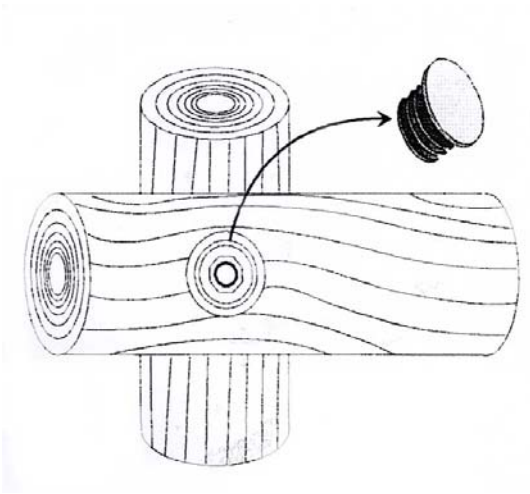
If this is not practical, they may be sprayed with a soft soap or washing up liquid solution several times until most are destroyed.

With good and timely maintenance your living willow structure may last for decades giving endless hours of enjoyment!

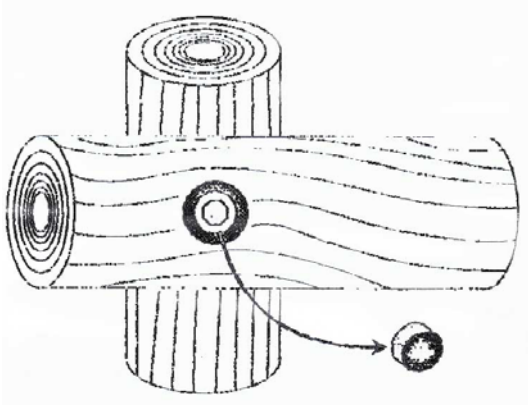
AFTER CARE
PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Tightening Equipment Fixings

Countersunk Plastic Cap Type



Raised Do-Nut Cap Type



DO NOT OVER-TIGHTEN during hot, dry conditions. During cooler damp weather the timber will expand again and over-tightening may result in damage to the timber or fixings.

AFTER CARE

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Air Cracking in 1st Grade Machine Round Timber

Most of the machine round timber used in our equipment is 1st Grade Quality Pine and Softwood which is dried under controlled conditions and then vacuum pressure treated with an ACQ treatment which conforms to the required British European and International standards for use in hazard classes 1, 2, 3 and 4 including BS EN 599 Part 1 and BS EN 335 (we no longer use a CCA, arsenic based preservative treatment on our timber equipment).

The timbers will continue to adapt to atmospheric conditions. It is perfectly natural for air cracking to take place, this will not affect the strength or the life of the timber adversely. Because we use 1st Grade Timber air cracking should not be as prominent as with other grades of timber offered by some other companies.

During hot and persistently dry weather air cracking is most likely to occur and this will recede during cooler and damp weather.

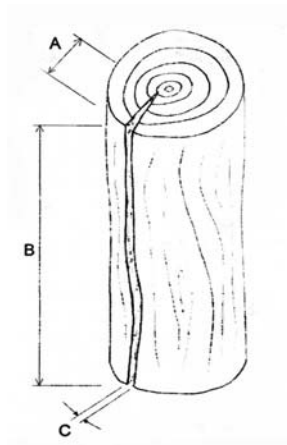
Air Cracking

1st Grade Timber should not crack more than 8mm in width (dimension C), the length of the crack does not matter (dimension B) but the depth should not be more than half of the diameter of that log (dimension A).

200mm diameter Step Up Logs and Log Walk Logs are supplied in Landscape Grade Timber, this timber is only used for the purpose of stepping and therefore have no structural requirements placed on them, and because it is Landscape Grade it may well open up more than 8mm under extreme conditions, this is still normal.

Splintering

It is possible that in the event of air cracking that the timber itself will generate splinters, these can be easily remedied with a quick rub with glass paper along the crack. We do make every effort to go around the installation before we leave site to check and sand down if necessary any splinters caused naturally or not.



- A) The depth of the crack should be no more than half the diameter of the piece of timber.
- B) The length of the crack does not matter.
- C) The width of the crack should be no more than 8mm (1st Grade Timbers Only).