

What You Need to Know About Invasive Species & ISPM-15 Compliance

Invasive insects, plants, snails, soil, and animals can be stowaways on ships, trucks, and trains, and they travel globally. Once brought into an area, they are difficult and expensive to eradicate, causing damage to vegetation, property, and water quality. Prevention is the best policy: everyone must act responsibly to protect crops, forests, and livestock in the U.S.



Tiny Pests with Sizable Consequences

\$138B
in agricultural revenue

is lost annually to invasive species

- In addition to lost revenue, the unchecked spread of wood-boring pests can cause billions of dollars of damage to ornamental trees, forests, and lumber industries.
- Used heavy equipment cargo can be especially susceptible to contamination: dirt from prior use, materials accumulated while being transported (salt, sand), and pests at storage and staging areas with vegetation nearby.



How can an infestation affect your shipment?



Cargo can be detained by US Customs and subjected to demurrage, drayage, and devanning fees; fumigation, cleaning, and tenting fees; or possible re-exportation charges.

- Demurrage charges will apply to containers being fumigated or awaiting re-exportation.
- Required use of CBP-approved vendors can put your timeline at the mercy of their availability.
- The end result can be delays, penalties, re-permitting, canceled deliveries, and loss of business.

What happens when an ISPM-15 violation is discovered?

An EAN (Emergency Action Notification) will be issued to the party responsible for the WPM (i.e., the party whose bond was obligated).

- The EAN will disclose the nature of the violation and steps the responsible parties must take to remedy the situation. These options, depending on the type and extent of the infestation, can be:
 1. Cleaning of the WPM/shipment at the port
 2. Re-exportation of the WPM to be treated in another country or to Port of Origin
 3. Destroy the cargo
 4. Each option carries an expense to the party responsible and may require the use of a CBP-approved vendor to complete the task.
- Once the EAN is received, the shipper must communicate with the importer-client, determine a course of action within 24-48 hours, or be subject to further penalties and fines.
- Violations will delay the release of cargo, and demurrage charges can apply while cargo is waiting to be treated or re-exported.



Contact your UTC representative with your questions. Our Licensed Customs Brokers are well-versed in ISPM-15 policy and work with our Project Directors to assist with remediation efforts of non-compliant shipments.



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What Steps Can You Take to Comply with ISPM-15?

Educate your supply chain on the ISPM-15 requirements.



- Wood packing materials must be treated and visibly marked on two sides.
- Under IPPC regulations, WPM must be treated by either heat treatment or methyl bromide fumigation. Treatment requirements can vary by country; some do not allow methyl bromide fumigation.
- Only purchase WPM that an accredited company has treated.

Know your WPM provider. Before employing them, inquire about the following:

- Is your WPM provider accredited/ ISPM-15 compliant?
- When was their last inspection by ISPM-15 authorities?
- When was the last time their machines were calibrated to ensure full treatment of WPM?



Know about alternatives to WPM. Plastic or metal pallets; or pallets and crating made from manufactured wood products (OSB, Plywood, cardboard)



Split Bills of Lading. When coordinating large shipments, place cargo with WPM on one bill of lading and all other freight under another. If the WPM is in violation, it does not affect other parts of the shipment that are compliant.

Prior to shipping: Areas where cargo and containers are packed have the potential for contamination, especially if they are unpaved or if there is vegetation nearby.

- Ensure packing area is free from plants and pests. Visually inspect cargo and containers, inside and out, for signs of insects, animals, and plants before loading cargo.
- Avoid night loading and storing or packing cargo under bright lights that could attract insects.
- Store cargo away from vegetation; avoid setting containers on grain, soil or grass; sweep, vacuum, or spray wash containers/equipment prior to loading; store, cover, and clean pallets, dunnage, crates, etc., as needed.
- When possible, utilize paved lots to avoid contamination.

Key Terms & ISPM-15 Enforcement Timeline

IPPC: International Plant Protection Convention; a treaty to secure action to prevent the spread and introduction of pests of plants and plant products, and to promote appropriate measures for their control.

ISPM-15: International standards for Phytosanitary Measures No. 15, adopted by the IPPC, is a set of guidelines for regulating wood packaging material (WPM) used in international transportation.

WPM: Wood packaging material; hardwood or softwood packaging (including all blocking, bracing and dunnage) other than that comprised wholly of wood-based products such as plywood, particle board, oriented strand board, veneer, wood wool, etc." Examples of WPM include pallets, skids, containers, crates, etc.



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