Specifiers Guide

Best Management Practices

For the use of preserved wood in aquatic and sensitive environments

Developed for the U.S. and Canada by:
Western Wood Preservers Institute • Southern Pressure Treaters’ Association
Southern Forest Products Association • Wood Preservation Canada • Creosote Council
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ABOUT THE GUIDE
This guide and the companion Production Guide - Best Management Practices For the Use of Preserved Wood In Aquatic and Sensitive Environments were developed for the U.S. and Canada though an industry consensus process by Western Wood Preservers Institute (WWPI), Southern Pressure Treaters’ Association (SPTA), Southern Forest Products Association (SFPA), Wood Preservation Canada (WPC) and the Creosote Council.

The BMP Mark and responsibility for registering qualified wood treaters are held by Western Wood Preservers Institute, 12503 SE Mill Plain Blvd., Suite 205, Vancouver, WA 98684, phone 360-693-9958, email info@preservedwood.org.

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Chapter 1: The Importance of Best Management Practices

Introduction
Protection of water quality and the diversity of life forms found in lakes, streams, estuaries, bays and wetland environments of North America is a goal and responsibility shared by everyone. An endless list of activities can impact these environments: storm water that runs off streets, exhaust from boats and cars, municipal and industry discharges, and construction of homes, docks and piers. It is everyone’s responsibility to maintain the quality of our treasured resources.

Pressure treated preserved wood is a building material widely used to construct piers, docks, buildings, walks and decks used in or over aquatic and wetland environments. The preserved wood products industry is committed to assuring its products are manufactured and installed in a responsible manner that minimizes any potential for adverse impacts to these important environments.

Western Wood Preservers Institute (WWPI), Southern Pressure Treaters’ Association (SPTA), Southern Forest Products Association (SFPA), Wood Preservation Canada (WPC) and the Creosote Council are the Supporting Organizations who have developed and encouraged the use of these Best Management Practices (BMPs) for preserved wood used in aquatic and wetland environments. These BMPs are based on research conducted through the Oregon State University Environmental Performance of Treated Wood Cooperative (EPTW) at eptw.forestry.oregonstate.edu.

What are Best Management Practices (BMPs)?
BMPs are recommended guidelines for the production and installation of preserved wood products destined for use in, near or over water. The guidelines were developed by the Supporting Organizations through a consensus process, based on research and a core philosophy of chemical minimization.

Both environmental and economic concerns support the goal of placing enough preservative into a product to provide protection while limiting the amount of preservative used to just above the required standard minimum. This, in turn, reduces the amount potentially available for movement into the environment while providing the necessary protection.

Specification Considerations
There are a variety of preservative systems and preserved wood products approved for use in or above aquatic and wetland environments. The first step in specifying a particular treatment is to ensure the preservative is approved for the intended application through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Canadian Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) registration and/or review process. These government agencies establish the legal parameters for use of wood preservatives.

To meet any BMP guideline a treatment must comply with any restrictions defined by the agencies. The common goal of using the BMPs is to produce products having effective levels of protection with minimum environmental impact by limiting the potential for migration or leaching of the preservative chemicals from the preserved wood products.

The second step in specifying involves the application of the appropriate product standard from the Use Category System developed and maintained...
by the American Wood Protection Association (AWPA) or Canadian Standards Association (CSA). Standards published by these associations establish the minimum amount of chemical (retention) and depth of injection (penetration) needed to assure effective performance against decay or other wood destroying organisms.

The BMPs for treating processes are separate from and in addition to the product standards. There is a shared responsibility between the specifier and treater to meet the goal of minimizing the migration of the treating chemicals into the environment.

Environmental Assessment Modelling

The preserved wood industry has developed computer models to predict the environmental impact for any project. These models are based on research into preservative loss from BMP-treated wood products, coupled with site-specific environmental data such as water current speeds and background levels of metals and organics.

An online Environmental Assessment Modelling Tool (wwpi.forestry.oregonstate.edu) is available to evaluate structures above and below water built with wood treated with 11 of the most commonly used preservatives. The model has been peer-reviewed, field tested and proven to protect the environment. It is accepted for use by the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Park Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Environment Canada and the Canadian Department of Fisheries & Oceans, as well as a host of local and state regulatory agencies.

BMP Applicability

BMPs are applicable to product processes and species produced in the United States and Canada. Specifying BMPs may result in longer production time, additional cost and sourcing constraints in meeting the production and quality assurance guidelines.

A user or permit regulator should specifically require compliance with BMPs where it is determined there is a sufficient need or justification. BMPs are intended for preserved wood products used in aquatic and wetland environments. They may not be necessary for preserved wood applications in a non-aquatic or wetland area.

NOTE: While BMPs can apply to products produced in the U.S. and Canada, there are some slight differences in product standards established by AWPA for the U.S. market and CSA for Canada.

BMP Product Production Systems

The material preparation, treatment and post treatment procedures and technologies for achieving the BMP objectives vary among preservatives and individual treating plants. A treating plant may choose to produce some or all products in compliance with production BMPs or a purchaser may specify compliance with BMPs in a particular purchase agreement.

In either case, compliance with production BMPs for products that are designated for use in aquatic or wetland environments is the responsibility of the treating firm. The required BMP processes for treating wood products with the selected preservatives are detailed in a separate publication, Production Guide – Best Management Practices For the Use of Preserved Wood In Aquatic and Sensitive Environments, available at www.PreservedWood.org.
BMP Quality Assurance

Quality oversight and inspection to assure compliance with production standards is important in any manufacturing process. For BMPs this is accomplished at two levels: internal quality control at the production level; and inspection with certification by an independent third party agency.

In-plant quality assurance inspection standards and procedures are detailed in the *Production Guide – Best Management Practices For the Use of Preserved Wood In Aquatic and Sensitive Environments* available at [www.PreservedWood.org](http://www.PreservedWood.org). Treating plants agree to adhere to these procedures when producing BMP products.

A specification for BMPs is not complete or accurate unless it includes a requirement for independent third party inspection by an accredited agency, and certification documented by either the BMP Mark or a letter issued by the agency certifying inspection and compliance.

Virtually all sawn preserved wood treated under the AWPA standards is inspected by agencies accredited by the American Lumber Standard Committee, Inc. (ALSC). Since BMP requirements are outside AWPA and CSA standards, ALSC does not accredit BMP inspections. However, those preserved wood inspection agencies accredited by ALSC are the most qualified to apply the BMP inspection guidelines and determine compliance.

For pilings and poles, agencies authorized through the Rural Utility Services (RUS) may conduct inspections for BMP compliance.

Agencies accredited by ALSC or authorized by RUS are the only inspection firms accepted for third-party inspection within the BMP Mark Program.

**BMP User Responsibilities**

Achieving the shared goal of BMPs cannot be accomplished unless the product user follows the appropriate guidelines regarding transportation, handling, inspection, storage, installation, demolition, maintenance and disposal of the product. These recommended guidelines are detailed in Chapter 4 of this document.
Chapter 2: Guide to Selection, Specification and Quality Assurance

Preservative Selection
A key step in designing a project in an aquatic or wetland environment is the specification of the preserved wood to be used. There are a variety of preserved wood products available for use in and/or above water, depending upon the intended use, species, required performance and environmental conditions.

The specifier should carefully consider the options in terms of required retention levels (AWPA or CSA standards) as well as potential environmental impacts. The industry treats only with preservative chemicals registered for the specific uses by federal, provincial or state agencies.

The most common products addressed by this document are those treated with the following preservatives:

- ACQ (Alkaline Copper Quaternary)
- ACZA (Ammoniacal Copper Zinc Arsenate)
- CA-B & CA-C (Copper Azole)
- MCA (Micronized Copper Azole)
- CCA (Chromated Copper Arsenate)
- EL2 (DCOI/Imidacloprid/Stabilizer)
- PTI (Propiconazole/Tebuconazole/Imidacloprid)
- Creosote
- CuN (Copper Naphthenate)
- Penta (Pentachlorophenol)

Performance
The purpose of preserving wood products is to provide protection from decay fungi and other wood-destroying organisms, thus extending the useful life and structural performance of the material.

The appropriate applications of each product, the minimum penetration and the minimum retention (amount of preservative) are established by the AWPA in its Use Category System or by the CSA 080 Standards. These standards delineate the various limitations and results of product treatment.

Environmental and Aesthetic Considerations
In designing a project, one needs to consider the characteristics of various preserved wood products in relation to the purpose of the project and the environmental characteristics of the site. Products used in a heavy industrial application with high risk of deterioration will likely be different from those used in a public structure, such as a boardwalk.

Similarly, the use of a moderate amount of preserved wood in a fast-flowing river or stream is likely to pose a minimal risk, while use of large amounts of preserved wood in somewhat stagnant water may pose greater risks.
The best available science shows that pressure-treated wood poses minimal risk to aquatic environments when:

- Used in accordance with the AWPA and CSA specifications.
- Used following the guidance provided by the appropriate required documents, such as Consumer Information Sheets or the preserved wood Safety Data Sheets (SDS).
- The project risks are evaluated using the online Environmental Assessment Modelling Tool (wwpi.forestry.oregonstate.edu).
- Material is produced to BMP guidelines.

Help is Available

Environmental assessment documents and models have been developed for most preservative systems used in aquatic applications. Projects using small volumes of preserved wood immersed in and/or above water can be evaluated utilizing minimal site-specific information. Projects that include large volumes of preserved wood products may require more detailed site-specific information.

A complete set of guide materials and peer-approved environmental assessment tools are available to help evaluate risks, select preservatives systems and specify products. These are available online in the Technical Library at www.PreservedWood.org and in an interactive online Environmental Assessment Modelling Tool, which can provide assessment documentation, available at wwpi.forestry.oregonstate.edu.

Specifying Best Management Practices

There are three steps to assuring that products to be used in aquatic and wetland environments are produced in compliance with BMPs:

1. Specify the appropriate material in terms of preservative and performance as defined in American Wood Protection Association (AWPA) or Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standards.
   Information on properly selecting and specifying preserved wood may be obtained from AWPA, WWPI, SPTA, SFPA or WPC. See the end of this chapter for website links.

2. Specify that the material must be produced and utilized in compliance with BMPs. Include the following suggested language in project specifications:
   These products are to be produced in accordance with the most current version of the Production Guide – Best Management Practices For the Use of Preserved Wood In Aquatic and Sensitive Environments issued by Western Wood Preservers Institute (WWPI), Southern Pressure Treaters’ Association (SPTA), Southern Forest Products Association (SFPA), Wood Preservation Canada (WPC) and the Creosote Council.
3. Require third-party independent inspection agency assurance that the products are produced in conformance with BMPs.

Include the following suggested language in project specifications:

All preserved wood in this project shall be certified by an independent third-party inspection agency to have been produced in compliance with the BMPs. Compliance will be documented by either Item A or B below:

A. For Products Produced by Companies Participating in the BMP Mark Program

The presence of the BMP Mark legibly stamped, branded, marked, end tagged or an equivalent designation on each piece of material or lot arriving on site; or in lieu of placing the BMP Mark on each piece of material or lot, a certificate of compliance issued and signed by a qualified inspection agency certifying that the material and/or its production was inspected in compliance with procedures published in most current version of the Production Guide – Best Management Practices For the Use of Preserved Wood In Aquatic and Sensitive Environments available at www.PreservedWood.org. The BMP Mark shall be shown on the certificate of compliance.

B. For Products Produced by Companies Not Participating in the BMP Mark Program

A certificate of compliance issued and signed by an inspection agency certifying that the material and/or its production was inspected in compliance with procedures published in the most current version of the Production Guide – Best Management Practices For the Use of Preserved Wood In Aquatic and Sensitive Environments available at www.PreservedWood.org. An independent wood inspection agency of the producer’s choice and acceptable to the purchaser can be used to provide the inspection service.

BMP Mark Program

WWPI owns and has sole rights in authorizing the use of the BMP Mark. The presence of the BMP Mark shows the user that the materials were produced in compliance with BMPs.

The application or display of the BMP Mark on material is authorized exclusively to producers registered with WWPI as participants in the BMP Program. As a condition of the agreement with WWPI, treating companies must demonstrate in writing that they have a contractual relationship with an ALSC accredited treated wood inspection agency or RUS authorized inspection agency. These agencies must have a contractual agreement with WWPI authorizing their oversight services for the use of the BMP Mark under the BMP Quality Assurance Inspection program.

WWPI is not an inspection agency and conducts no oversight of the treating or inspection processes per se. Any unauthorized use of the mark is subject to civil and criminal actions.
A list of producers currently authorized to use the BMP Mark and the approved agencies can be found online at [www.PreservedWood.org](http://www.PreservedWood.org).

WWPI should be notified immediately if the BMP Mark is used by any company not on the list.

A producer wanting to treat to BMPs, but choosing not to participate in the BMP Program can produce products that meet BMP requirements. These producers can provide a certificate of compliance signed by an independent treated wood inspection agency of its choice and acceptable to the purchaser. They may not, however, use the BMP Mark.

**Specifier, User Responsibilities**

In addition to production guidelines, BMPs also include guidelines that purchasers should use for installing, maintaining and disposing of preserved wood products. For full compliance with BMPs, the specifier should provide for on-site inspection prior to installation and conformance with applicable Installation and Maintenance Guidelines found in Chapter 4.

To ensure the user responsibilities are communicated, include the suggested language in project specifications:

*Project managers, contractors and subcontractors on this project shall be familiar with and apply as appropriate Chapter 4: Installation and Maintenance Guidelines shown in the most current version of the Specifiers Guide – Best Management Practices For the Use of Preserved Wood In Aquatic and Sensitive Environments available at [www.PreservedWood.org](http://www.PreservedWood.org).*

**Preservative Information**

Further information on uses and specifications for each preservative treatment system can be found at the following websites:

- Western Wood Preservers Institute

- Southern Pressure Treaters’ Association
  [www.spta.org](http://www.spta.org)

- Southern Forest Products Association
  [www.sfpa.org](http://www.sfpa.org)

- Wood Preservation Canada
  [www.woodpreservation.ca](http://www.woodpreservation.ca)

- Creosote Council
  [www.creosotecouncil.org](http://www.creosotecouncil.org)

- American Wood Protection Association
  [www.awpa.com](http://www.awpa.com)
Chapter 3: Production of BMP Qualified Wood Products

General

Qualified BMP treating companies must conform to specific practices in producing BMP compliant preserved wood products as outlined for each listed preservative. The overall objective of these production practices is to place enough preservative into a product to provide protection while minimizing the amount of preservative available for movement into the environment.


It is not recommended that a specifier or regulator designate a specific BMP treatment process for a product where more than one method of meeting a performance goal is available. It is the quality of the final product that matters, not how that end result is achieved.

Preservatives

The preservative chemicals used to treat wood in accordance with these BMPs shall be those listed in AWPA Use Category System (UCS) Standard U1 Section 4: Standardized Preservatives and shall comply with the requirements referenced therein or as appropriately specified by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA 080).

Production Processes

BMP-specific production processes have been developed for the following preservatives:

- ACQ (Alkaline Copper Quaternary)
- ACZA (Ammoniacal Copper Zinc Arsenate)
- CA-B & CA-C (Copper Azole)
- MCA (Micronized Copper Azole)
- CCA (Chromated Copper Arsenate)
- EL2 (DCOI/Imidacloprid/Stabilizer)
- PTI (Propiconazole/Tebuconazole/Imidacloprid)
- Creosote
- CuN (Copper Naphthenate)
- Penta (Pentachlorophenol)

The required processes are unique for each preservative to achieve BMP objectives. Specific practices for each preservative are listed for the following categories:

- Preservative
- Treatment Processes
- Post-Treatment Procedures
- Technical Notes

General requirements also are shown for plant and product cleaning, processing and record keeping.
Inspection guidelines are key factors in producing and providing a quality treatment and a clean BMP product. Specific requirements are detailed in the publication *Production Guide – Best Management Practices For the Use of Preserved Wood In Aquatic and Sensitive Environments*, available at [www.PreservedWood.org](http://www.PreservedWood.org).

The BMP inspection process addresses the following items:

- **Inspection** – To the degree practical, material should be inspected to assure it is reasonably clean and free of dirt and sawdust prior to treatment.

- **Monitoring of Treating Solutions** – The plant operator shall inspect treating solutions and plant process filters to minimize debris in the treating solution and confirm that it meets the requirement for the specific preservative.

- **Post Treatment Visual Inspection** – A visual inspection shall be performed to verify the treated product meets the criteria specified for BMP compliant material and that no excessive residues or surface deposits are present. If the criteria are not met, the product shall be rejected or reprocessed using appropriate post treatment conditioning techniques to meet the BMP criteria.

- **Reinspection Option** – Wood can be highly variable, so reinspection is permitted when there is a dispute over BMP treatment conformance. This should be requested within 10 days of receiving the shipment.

- **Pre-shipment Inspection and BMP Certification** – A final visual inspection shall be conducted prior to the material leaving the treating facility. This will ensure the surface of the treated product has no excessive residues or preservative deposits present, the wood has not developed any excessive bleeding and verification of the presence of the BMP Mark on the material or treating certification. Any problems detected shall be corrected prior to shipment.
Chapter 4: Installation and Maintenance Guidelines

Achieving the goals of BMPs can only be fully achieved if the users of the products are also engaged. The following guidelines are suggested practices, but other applicable practices may be determined by the specifier or project managers.

Design and Purchasing

- It is recommended that any order for the purchase of preserved wood materials should involve communication between the purchaser/specifier and the seller or treating company, whichever is most practicable or customary. The order for BMP compliant material and any environmental concerns with the project should be reviewed in detail with the producer.

- Projects should be designed and specified so that the maximum amount of cutting, prefabrication and framing is performed prior to treatment. This allows for better treatment of products and minimizes the need for field cutting and treatment.

- Where preserved wood may be subject to continual abrasion, such as floating docks against piling, the project should incorporate design features to prevent the ongoing contact. This will increase the life of the project and minimize preserved material entering the environment.

Transportation

- When additional protection from precipitation is desired or warranted, it is recommended preservative-treated sawn wood material be top wrapped or covered while being transported to its designated location.

- Care should be taken during the loading and unloading of the preserved wood to prevent or minimize damage to the product that causes untreated areas to be exposed. Untreated areas exposed by damage should be field treated with an approved preservative (Copper Naphthenate or Oxine Copper) per AWPA Standard M4.

Inspection, Acceptance, Rejection

- Within 10 days after receipt of the shipment, the material and the accompanying paper work should be inspected. The inspection assures the product has been treated to specified AWPA standards and certified as treated under the BMP Program, as confirmed by the presence of a BMP Mark with a legible stamp, brand, mark, end tag or equivalent designation on the material or by a letter of certification from an independent third party inspection agency. If any problems exist, the supplier should be contacted within 10 days of receiving the shipment.

- BMP materials should be inspected to assure they are reasonably free of surface debris and excess surface chemical. Material treated with oil type preservatives should be examined for signs of preservative migration and excessive residues or bleeding.

- Where the products are of concern, they should be withheld from installation and the treating company should be contacted immediately for corrective action.
Storage

- **Onsite** – The material should be stored away from the water until it is needed for installation. When preserved wood is stored on the jobsite for an extended period and/or there is a threat of the material being exposed to precipitation, it is recommended the material be kept out of direct soil contact.

  The area where the material is to be stacked should be free of debris, weeds and dry vegetation and should have adequate drainage to prevent the material from being subjected to standing water. Also, if warranted, all stacked material designated to be removed from service should be covered for disposal and material designated for use should remain covered until used.

- **Offsite** – In situations where preserved wood materials are being inventoried prior to distribution to the jobsite or when material removed from service is taken to a storage site prior to its disposal or reuse, it should be stacked in a well-drained area free from debris, weeds and dry vegetation above the ground on bunks or pallets. The stacked material may be stored under a covered area or top wrapped with a tarp to minimize exposure to precipitation.

Field Treating Guidelines

End cut solutions containing Copper Naphthenate or Oxine Copper are commonly used in field treating of holes, cuts or injuries which occur to preserved wood products. The objective of field treatment is to assure complete product treatment.

The following guidelines should be followed in field treating projects in aquatic or wetland environments:

- Follow the procedures outlined in AWPA Standard M4, Standard for the Care of Preservative-Treated Wood Products.
- When field treating by brushing, spraying, dipping or soaking do so in such a manner that the preservative does not drip or spill into the environment.
- Whenever possible, apply field treatments prior to assembling the structure over the body of water or wetland environment.
- Conduct the application of the preservative so any overspray or drippage of preservative can be recovered or retained.
- Specifiers and installers should follow the directions for use on the Copper Naphthenate-based or Oxine Copper-based end cut solution labels and Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for the product.
Installation

- When field cutting, drilling or fabrication is necessary, it should be done away from the water or wetland area to the degree practical and all waste, including sawdust, should be collected and disposed of appropriately. (See Disposal below).

- There are many approaches to ensuring that the debris from field fabrication and maintenance activity is properly collected and removed. The method will depend on the situation and the construction or maintenance crew.

- In most cases, fabrication should be done at specific cutting stations in order to consolidate the collection of debris. The use of a tarp is suggested for collecting sawdust from circular saws and chainsaws. Plastic tubs or similar containers are suggested for collecting debris created from drilling holes on-site.

- The importance of collecting debris from construction and maintenance activities should be stressed in planning and budgeting for projects. Crews should clearly understand that debris collection is an integral part of the construction and maintenance process in order to minimize the release of preservative into the environment.

- Installation of oil type preserved products may initially result briefly in a thin oily sheen on the water surface. Such sheens are generally of an aesthetic rather than biological concern and will dissipate in a relatively short period of time. Absorbent booms or barriers can be used to control and collect the sheens.

Demolition

The removal of existing preserved wood structures from aquatic and wetland environments should be done with care to minimize the potential for treated debris entering the environment. The guidelines used in construction of new projects should be applied to demolition wherever applicable and the added effort should be considered in determining the cost of the project.

- The preserved wood structure or as large a portion as practical should be removed well away from the area for final demolition.

- All scraps and sawdust from the demolition should be collected and removed for appropriate disposal. In aquatic applications, absorbent booms should be considered if needed to control drift of scrap materials from the work area or to control sheens that may develop with the disturbance.

- **Piling** - If not otherwise specified by the regulatory permit or project plan, preserved wood piling may be: 1) left in place; 2) pulled and moved off site; 3) cut off at the mud line; or 4) cut off below the mud line and capped with clean material.

- **Salvage and reuse** - Depending upon the condition of the preserved wood materials removed, the product may retain enough of the structural and preservative characteristics to make it suitable for reuse in a manner compatible with its original purpose. Common secondary applications include use as posts, landscape timbers and retaining walls.
Distribution of such materials to the market, through sale or donation, should be done with great care to assure the structural and treatment integrity of the product and to assure that the new user is provided information on the use of the material including applicable EPA-approved Consumer Information or Safety Information Sheets.

**Note:** It is extremely difficult to detect internal degradation in any materials intended for reuse and it may be prudent to avoid the use of salvaged marine piling in foundation piling or structural applications.

**Disposal**

Preserved wood scraps and sawdust as well as material that is not reused must be disposed of appropriately in a timely manner. The disposer should check with local authorities that have jurisdiction over this process to assure disposal is accomplished in compliance with all applicable requirements, which may supersede the following guidelines.

For more information on preserved wood disposal, go to the Disposal section of the Technical Library at [www.preservedwood.org](http://www.preservedwood.org).

All disposal activities should follow these general recommendations:

- **NEVER BURN PRESERVED WOOD IN OPEN FIRES OR FIREPLACES!**
- Do not use preserved wood as mulch.
- Do not leave the waste material on site or in stockpiles for extended time periods.
- Under federal regulations, preserved wood waste is classed or managed as a non-hazardous material and may be disposed of at municipal landfills approved to receive such material by state, provincial and local authorities.
- A few state or provincial governments have more stringent requirements for classification of wastes. However, in such cases, the issue of preserved wood has been addressed in law and/or regulations allowing for disposal in approved municipal landfills. For specifics, local state and provincial authorities should be contacted.
- There are various incinerators, waste-to-energy burners and industrial furnaces across the country that are approved and permitted for utilization of creosote and pentachlorophenol preserved wood waste.
If you have questions, need additional copies of this document, or guidance on specifying preserved wood in aquatic environments, please contact:

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For more information on wood preservative treating standards and the Use Category System, please contact:

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