

## **Kiln Sticker Damage**

A potential physical problem with poles that has become more common during the last decade is kiln sticker damage. Kiln drying has become widely used to dry poles prior to oil-borne or water-borne treatments. Poles being stacked for kiln drying are separated by inserting stickers (usually 2 x 4 or 2 x 6 wood or metal pieces) between the rows to allow for proper air flow and uniform drying. As the poles heat up, the wood in the immediate vicinity of the stickers begins to sag, creating a flat spot at that point on the pole. Excessive weight or heat can cause these flat spots to be quite large or deep.

This kiln sticker damage has recently been included in the ANSI 05.1 Standard for Wood Poles and Products under Clause 8.3, mechanical damage, which is also referenced by RUS in their revised specifications for poles. Such damage is limited to no more than 1/10<sup>th</sup> the pole diameter at the point of damage up to a maximum of one inch.

In correspondence with WQC earlier this year, RUS noted that “Since poles are classed according to their cross-section for load carrying capacity, RUS would say that the maximum limit of crushing would be 1-inch at any one point and the cumulative total of one inch for any cross-section. So if there was a 1-inch indentation on the bottom side of the pole, there would be a 0-inch allowance for crushing on the top in the same cross-section.”