



# Monaro Timber News

The monthly newsletter for people who love timber

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## Timber cracking?

With the warmer weather upon us it's worth remembering that if timber dries out too quickly it can crack quite badly. I've mentioned this before, but think of a piece of timber as if it were a bundle of straws full of water. Naturally, in the straws the water will flow out the ends. The cell structure of timber is much the same so the water is lost out the ends faster than through the sides of the board. You will notice with your boards that it's the ends that usually crack and only sometimes the faces. I am referring to timber that is already furniture dry and just undergoing small moisture content adjustments. With green sawn timber you will see cracking all over the boards.

Furniture dry? Yes, the Australian Standard covering this stipulates that for timber to be considered dry enough for applications such as furniture and flooring it's moisture content must not exceed 14%. This is actually a ratio of weight of water to weight of timber. It's possible to have a moisture content exceeding 100%!! There is another term worth a mention here and that is equilibrium moisture content (EMC). EMC refers to the MC that is applicable in a given environment. Typically in Canberra, especially during winter with windows shut and heaters on, the EMC in many homes can go down to as low as 5 or 6%. This is very dry and steps should be taken to maintain a higher EMC in your house. On the other hand, one of our floor layers reported the EMC of a timber floor at Bawley Point was a fairly constant 14%. The house was a stones throw from the surf.

How do you manage all this moisture? Well, with rough sawn timber it's a good idea to wax the ends of the boards with Logshield. This is an emulsified wax solution available from Monaro Timber. It dries clear so you can see any markings on the ends of the boards. Sealing the ends slows down the rate of moisture loss therefore reducing any likely cracking. Logshield also works really well as a glue release on clamps and other areas you don't want the glue to stick. If you have dressed and docked to length timber you should get a finish onto it as soon as possible. If this is likely to be a few days then some cello tape across the ends of the boards can slow down the drying rate for you. We tape the ends of our raw benchtops as soon as they are cut to length. Finally, be careful where you store your timber. If you leave it in the car after picking it up from us it may not be too happy. Also, when you get it home

put it in a place where it is shaded and not getting a through breeze. Timber can serve you well for many years if cared for but it is a natural product that requires some special attention. If you need any assistance looking after your timber please call us.

## Christmas closure.

After another busy year we are looking forward to a few days off. This year our last trading day will be December 23rd and we will return to work on Monday 5th of January. We will have both timber yard and workshop staff back on the 5th so is you need machining services we will be able to help. Over the next couple of weeks we are fitting in what we can in the workshop but any major jobs will probably need to be looked at next year. Whatever your Christmas requirements are call us to discuss.

## New stock

There has been quite a bit of new timber come in over the past month. A fresh pack of 25mm Danta was put in the rack last week. As expected, it is all pretty good looking stuff with some fairly wide boards, around 300mm, in the pack. The other exciting arrival was a long pack of 38mm Southern Myrtle. These boards are up to 3.7m in length which is long for this species. We have already broken the pack and dressed quite a bit of it. Looks great.

We don't get in as much 50mm thick timber as other sizes so our new arrivals of Silky Oak and American Oak are most welcome. We also have other sizes in these species so overall stocks are good.

I've talked before about F27 and F17 structural hardwood. We currently have a lot of Blackbutt and Blue Gum in boards up to 290 x 45 and 4.5m long. Excellent for external steps and handrails. To compliment the structural stuff don't overlook our Blackbutt and Aussie Red decking boards. This is fantastic stuff and in stock now.

From all at Monaro Timber have a happy and safe Christmas.

Cheers

*Shaun*

Questions or comments? E-mail us at [shaun@monarotimber.com.au](mailto:shaun@monarotimber.com.au) or call 02 6280 6467

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8.00—4.30 weekdays.  
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