BIG CREEK Banner
"news you can use"
"Growing Redwoods for the Future"

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Big Creek "takes off" from old Merced-area Air Force Base

Big Creek Lumber will open its newest yard near Merced on the site of the old Castle Air Force Base. The base is now being developed as the new "Castle Aviation Business Center", operated for now as a non-profit, non-political organization of interested Merced area business owners and citizens.
The base is seen as a combination of public space for events ranging from car shows to air shows, to a large retail developement. Many businesses are open; others, such as Big Creek, are just starting to build.
The Big Creek - Merced yard will be the company's largest, at over 7 acres, and, just as Big Creek grows redwoods for the future, will help Big Creek grow as well.
The Merced yard may open as soon as November of this year, depending on construction and weather. Otherwise, it will be ready for Spring 2007. A site map can be seen online at http://www.castleabc.com/pages/site_map.html

Redwood Decking outperforms other materials in flame resistance

In a series of fire performance tests conducted on 12 commercial decking materials, California redwood ranked number one in flame resistance.
The tests, recently completed by the University of California Forest Products Laboratory (UCFPL), were specifically designed to evaluate the performance of

Laboratory (UCFPL), were specifically designed to evaluate the performance of various decking materials when exposed to wildland fire hazard conditions such as those that exist throughout much of California and the western states. For many years, redwood has been recognized for its fire resistance; in fact, redwood-clad structures were credited with limiting the extent of the great fires following the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. Redwood has historically been used in firewalls and fire doors, and currently is the only decking material allowed for rooftop decks in San Francisco. These recent tests confirm redwood's superiority.

The eleven decking materials tested in addition to redwood included many new wood/plastic composites and pure plastics. Many of these degraded during the short exposure tests while the remainder degraded prior to completion of the long exposure tests. Modes of degradation included: accelerating or runaway flaming combustion,flaming drops or particles falling from the deck and collapse of a deck board with or without load.

Construction Heart 2x6, the most widely used redwood decking material in California, was the only product that exhibited none of these four degradation effects during the long exposure tests according to Professor Frank Beall, Director, UCFPL.

The results of this study could have significant implications for the development of new fire codes for urban wildland interface fire zones.

If you would like more information, visit the California Redwood Association's web site, www.calredwood.org. We thank them for this article.

Comparing Decking Choices: Redwood vs. Composites

Characteristics of Redwood Decking

- Redwood, if allowed to naturally age, only requires periodic cleaning to keep it looking good.
- Redwood only requires a finish if you want to maintain a new-looking appearance.
- Redwood has structural value and will allow for larger spans between joists.
- All-Heart Redwood is resistive to insect and decay in most conditions.
- Redwood has been available for generations.
- Redwood does weather to a silver-grey from expo sure to the elements.
- Redwood gets high marks for being very resistant t to fire.
- Construction Heart grade decking costs between $1.60-$1.70 per lineal foot.
- Redwood is a natural product.
- Redwood is both sustainable and renewable.
- Redwood is biodegradable.
- Redwood does not ignite easily and burns slowly.

Conclusion:
Although manufacturers have made great strides with composites since the early '90s, composites simply do not look like wood…and NO composite has the look or feel of natural redwood,

Characteristics of Composite Decking

- Low maintenance; require only periodic clean ing to keep them looking good.
- Do not require any finish..
- Not structural members and have strict guide lines for joist spacing.
- Extremely resistant to decay and insect damage.
- Composites have been in the marketplace for about 15 years.
- Composites and manufacturers change; what's available today maybe not be five years from now.
- Composites do exhibit weathering (fading) and color variations from exposure to the elements.
- Do not respond well to fire.
- Range from $2-$3 per lineal foot.
- Contain anywhere from 40 to 93% recycled material.
- Primarily made from recycled products and require large amounts of energy to produce.
- Not biodegradable.

Special note: most composites have a propensity to Stain (especially with oils from cooking). The wood fiber in composites soak up the oil and are almost impossible to remove. Sanding is usually not an option and cleaning with commercial deck cleaners may only lighten the stain. The best solution for stains is to clean them up as fast as possible, but you'll have to live with the results!