

Wet Rot Explained

Wet rot is timber decaying naturally in the presence of continuous high levels of moisture.

High Performance Products

High performance products are designed and manufactured to allow water run-off, breath through the use of water based paint systems, expand and contract, and are able to repel water at susceptible areas such as end grain through the use of sealants and v joint sealers.

All Bereco products are manufactured using specially selected timber (550kg/m³ density) and meet all current British standards and to ensure the best product Bereco are fully accredited members of the BM TRADA High Performance Timber window Scheme.

The Q-Mark High Performance Timber Window Scheme has been developed in association with TRADA Technology, drawing on their extensive knowledge of timber. The scheme was introduced to enable manufacturers of timber windows to demonstrate that their products perform at a higher level than those covered under the entry level General Performance Schemes.

What the scheme aims to achieve:

- Raise the on-going standard of timber window performance
- Ensure on-going compliance with the original product specification
- Ensure product durability and longevity
- Provide peace of mind that the manufacturer is consistently producing a quality product through independent verification by a third party certification body

In addition Bereco are one of only 3 members in the UK of the BM TRADA Q Mark Paint Application Scheme which ensures the best possible coating system is used but also ensures the paint is applied using the correct tools, that personnel are trained to the highest standards and the paint is applied in the correct environment for longevity and durability.

Our production facility undergoes bi-annual audits of the manufacturing processes to ensure the products will not only last the expected lifespan but exceed them.

Know the Cause

Problems generally arise where these design features are compromised and left for lengths of time. Below are some of the most common causes that compromise the performance of the windows and doors. These issues **MUST** be rectified if observed otherwise the longevity of products will be significantly affected. We strongly urge all owners of Bereco products to be aware of the causes of wet rot and to follow our maintenance guidelines thereafter.

The main causes are;

1. A structural defect, it may be that the wall adjacent to the timber is suffering from damp

2. Poor installation that may be as a result of:

- the product being damaged during installation
- the product not being fitted plumb and square
- the product not having sufficient tolerance around the windows which causes stress fractures at joints
- the product having none or inconsistent perimeter sealing between window frames and external facade
- the product being cut/trimmed or altered in any way and then not correctly treated and painted
- the products having additional products such as cables, ironmongery or objects affixed to them
- the products having loose materials such as beading, cills, cover mouldings fitted which have not been sealed or treated

- the products having nails/screws used to fit components where these fixing points these are not sealed
- the products having been clogged with construction debris and not cleaned affecting drainage channels and water run-off

3. Poor Building Design/Construction that may be as the result of:

- The products being subject to splash zones. Tall facades with large windows and doors where they abutt paving
- The product positioning in the structural opening. The closer the facade of any building, the less protection the building provides to any joinery
- The cavity has not been closed off correctly

4. Lack of maintenance

- The products are not cleaned. Dirt collection will trap moisture which will be absorbed into timber
- Not following maintenance schedules and guidelines

Whilst not an exhaustive list, the above constitute the most common causes of issue. It is then lack of maintenance or rectification of these issues which then results in wet rot. The longer products are left with a problem, issues can spiral and accelerate.

Below is the Bereco guide on what to look for to prevent the issues occurring. Spot the early warning signs and take appropriate actions to rectify the source of the problem area.

Damage and Exposed/Undecorated Timber

All Bereco products come with factory finished coatings to prevent excess moisture from penetrating the timber. Punctured and damaged coatings will expose timber to the elements allowing a direct access point for abnormal moisture ingress leading to ideal conditions for the onset of wet rot if left untreated. Where timber elements are cut or amended on site this factory seal is broken exposing end grain, all end grain is sealed during the production process but by cutting through this factory seal it opens the product up to potential issues of rot. Any cut elements should be sealed and decorated closing the point of moisture ingress.

Stretched, Cracked and Open Joints

Signs of stretched and rippled paintwork around joints are evidence of timber expansion. These early indicators are a precursor to the need for further investigation of the cause. If left untreated cracking of the joints will occur leaving an open access point for moisture to ingress directly into the timber. Any open joints should be suitably sealed with a flexible joint sealer and decorated.

Accumulation of Dirt, Mould and Algae Growth

The accumulation of dirt will wear away the coatings water repellent properties and may lead to mould and algae growth if left without a clean routine. Both Mould and Algae are evidence that high levels of moisture are present within the timber for growth to exist. The levels of moisture which nurture these types of fungi will lead to wet rot over time. Bereco products should be cleaned regularly and every six months should be maintained using our Gori Clean and Care sets.

Early Identification and Remedy

Early identification of the signs of moisture penetration is essential. Following the below points will ensure the longevity of your products:

- Install your products in accordance with our Survey and Installation Manual and British Standards
- Register for your warranty at www.bereco.co.uk.
- Control humidity during building and occupancy with heating and ventilation (see fact card 1) that can cause dimensional changes in the timber and cracking and blistering of the finish
- Clean and Care for your finish using the Gori Care Set. Remove ingrained dirt and replenish the water repellent properties of the surface coating that will prolong the need for redecoration
- Remedially care for your products where necessary (see care & maintenance instructions)
- Redecorate after a period (See redecoration cycle for expected redecoration with maintenance)