

U.S. Playground Equipment Manufacturer and Purchaser Perceptions of Treated Wood

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Presentation Sections

- Overview
- The Studies
- Results
- Implications



It extends the life span of lumber, but the Environmental Protection Agency says arsenic treated wood might cut life short for our children.

“EPA chops down potential killer”, 24 Hour News 8-Grand Rapids, MI,
December 29, 2003

"I believe this is a children's safety issue,"
Crow pleaded. "If you don't protect these
children, their blood will be on your hands."

Rep. Larry Crow, Palm Harbor, Florida, after his bill to ban arsenic-treated wood from Florida's public playgrounds failed to pass.

“Wave of opponents kills Crow's treated-wood bill” St. Petersburg Times,
November 28, 2001

Pressure-treated wood linked to Mississippi couple's health nightmares

Poisoned dreams

■ As publicity increases, more people are coming forward with medical problems believed caused by arsenic in pressure-treated wood.

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By RON MATUS

Sun staff writer

Hernando, Miss.

Lynn and Thomas Milam live in a cramped travel trailer 50 yards from the dream home they never finished.

In front of the house, with its giant windows overlooking a small lake, stacks of lumber sit in a weed-ridden yard. Inside, the sawdust is so thick the Milams could write their names in it.

"It makes me sad every time I see it," said Thomas Milam, emerging from the trailer one day last week.

And for good reason: Doctors say the arsenic-treated wood the Milams were using in the house made both of them seriously ill.

And it apparently put enough arsenic in Lynn Milam's system to lead doctors, local police and even the FBI to investigate her husband for attempted murder.

What happened to the Milams has led to another product liability lawsuit against the treated-wood industry.

It is also the most dramatic example yet of illness or injury linked to chromated copper arsenate, or CCA, the potent pesticide that has come under fire for health risks ever since a Gainesville playground closed two years ago.

In this case, the alleged



TROY GLASGOW/Special to The Sun

Tom and Lynn Milam stand in front of their unfinished dream home in Hernando, Mississippi. The couple claim to have been poisoned by using arsenic-treated wood.

WOOD WORRIES

A CONTINUING LOOK AT THE CONTROVERSY OVER ARSENIC-TREATED WOOD

FOR MORE ON ARSENIC-TREATED WOOD

ONLINE: Go to www.gainesvillesun.com/ARCHIVES/articles/woodarchive.shtml

victims have unusual sympathizers in their corner — the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the local prosecutor.

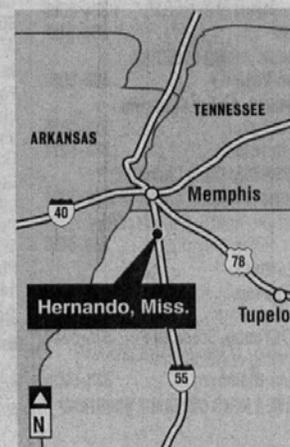
The FBI put Thomas Milam under scrutiny two years ago after his wife was repeatedly hospitalized with severe vomiting, diarrhea, nausea and cramps. According to a complaint filed in a Mississippi circuit court, baffled doctors eventually found arsenic levels in her system more than 100 times above normal.

They told Lynn Milam she probably was being poisoned by her husband, and then called police.

"We thought we potentially had an attempted murder," Mississippi District Attorney John Champion said.

But the case took a bizarre

WOOD on Page 11A



ROB MACK/The Gainesville Sun

If Arsenic-Treated Wood is Too Toxic for Zoo Animals...



From the Bronx Zoo to the San Diego Zoo, wood products treated with arsenic have been found in "lands for animals."

Why is Home Depot still selling these products in American jungles?

The nation's largest home improvement chain sells "pressure treated" lumber containing a pesticide called chromated copper arsenate (CCA). It's used in park benches, wooden furniture, even swing sets and playgrounds.

Everyone knows arsenic can kill you. Studies show that high-level arsenic causes a rash of all these problems and more than 100 others. The National Research Council says that ingestion of arsenic, even at low levels, is responsibly linked to skin, bladder and lung

Why Does



Think it's Safe for Your Kids?

arsenic, and that there are strong links to diabetes, high blood pressure, reproductive and respiratory problems.

Many reputable playground manufacturers no longer use arsenic-treated wood. The Consumer Product Safety Commission is investigating why, for despite all of the evidence, Home Depot continues to keep its hands in the sand.

Now that you're at Home Depot, please ask the manager to stop putting arsenic in your wood. That's the only way to protect your family's health.

It all starts at Home Depot. Lumber stores showing levels of arsenic concentrations. See our web site for details and information on companies better keeping kids

“The amount of arsenic that could be absorbed from playground soil and CCA treated wood is not significant compared to natural sources and will not result in detectable arsenic intake.”

“The level of arsenic in or around CCA treated wood in playgrounds and recreational facilities does not appear sufficient to adversely affect the health of children or adults.”

“Panel Finds No Danger From Playground Wood”, The Florida Physicians Arsenic Workgroup, August 8, 2002

“The risk of immediate illness from short-term exposure to chemicals from CCA-treated wood is low. Although arsenic can be poisonous at very high doses, the amounts measured on CCA-treated wood are a thousand times less than a lethal dose.”

*Chromated Copper Arsenate-Treated Wood (Pressure Treated Wood).
Fact Sheet. Toronto Public Health, Canada. July 2003.*

The Studies

Sample Frames:

- 1) Census of 188 playground equipment manufacturers
 - 2) A national random sample of 2,800 playground equipment purchasers
- The source of sample frame information is U.S. census data purchased from Best Lists, a national survey list company.
 - The method of data collection was a mail survey questionnaire
 - Conducted in 2003
 - Survey procedures, follow up efforts and data analysis were conducted in accordance with Tailored Design Method (Dillman 2000)

Results-Response Rates

Manufacturers:

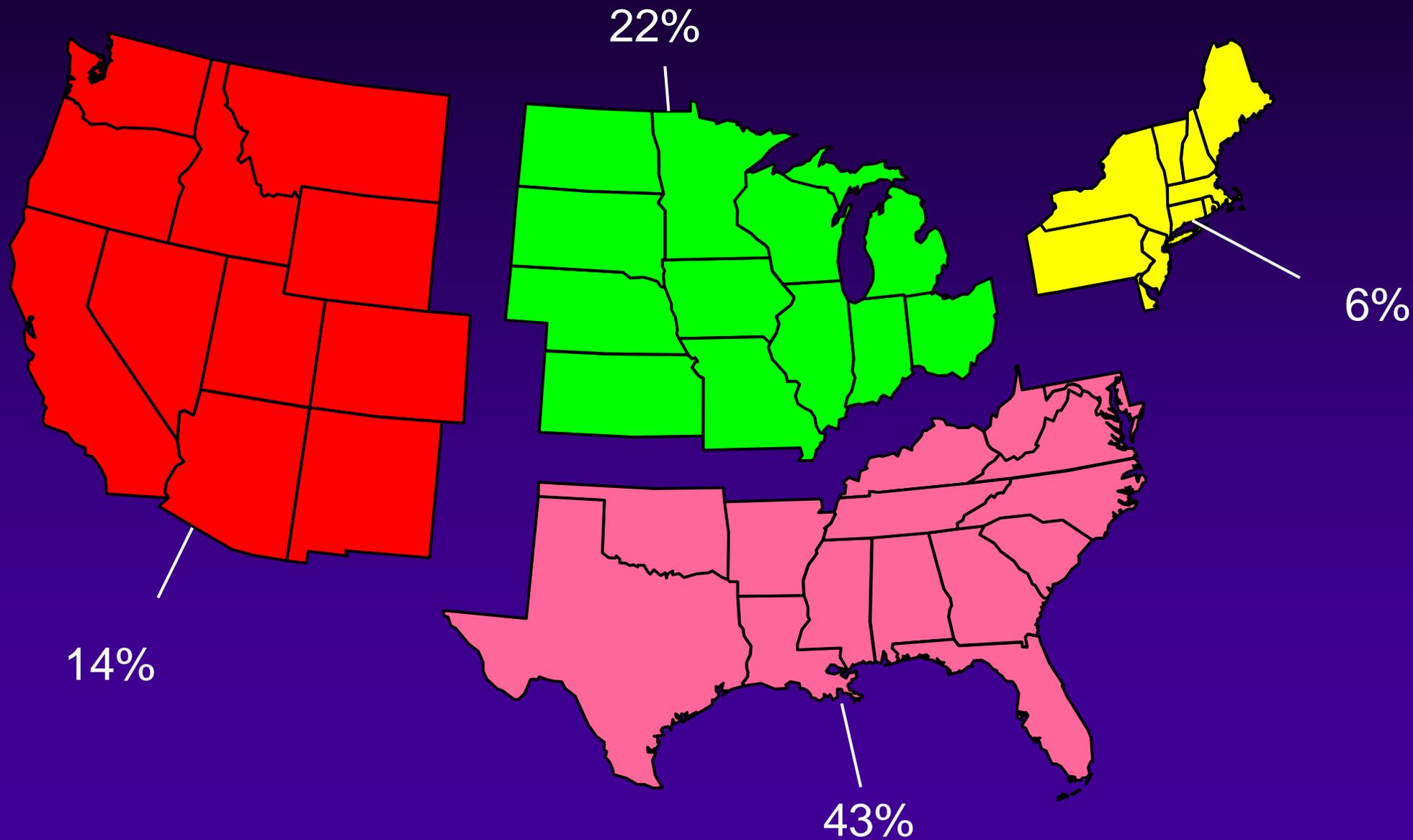
- 188: mailed
- 141: adjusted sample size
- 52 returned/useable
- 37% response rate

Purchasers:

- 2,800: mailed
- 2,580: adjusted sample size
- 431 returned/useable
- 17% response rate

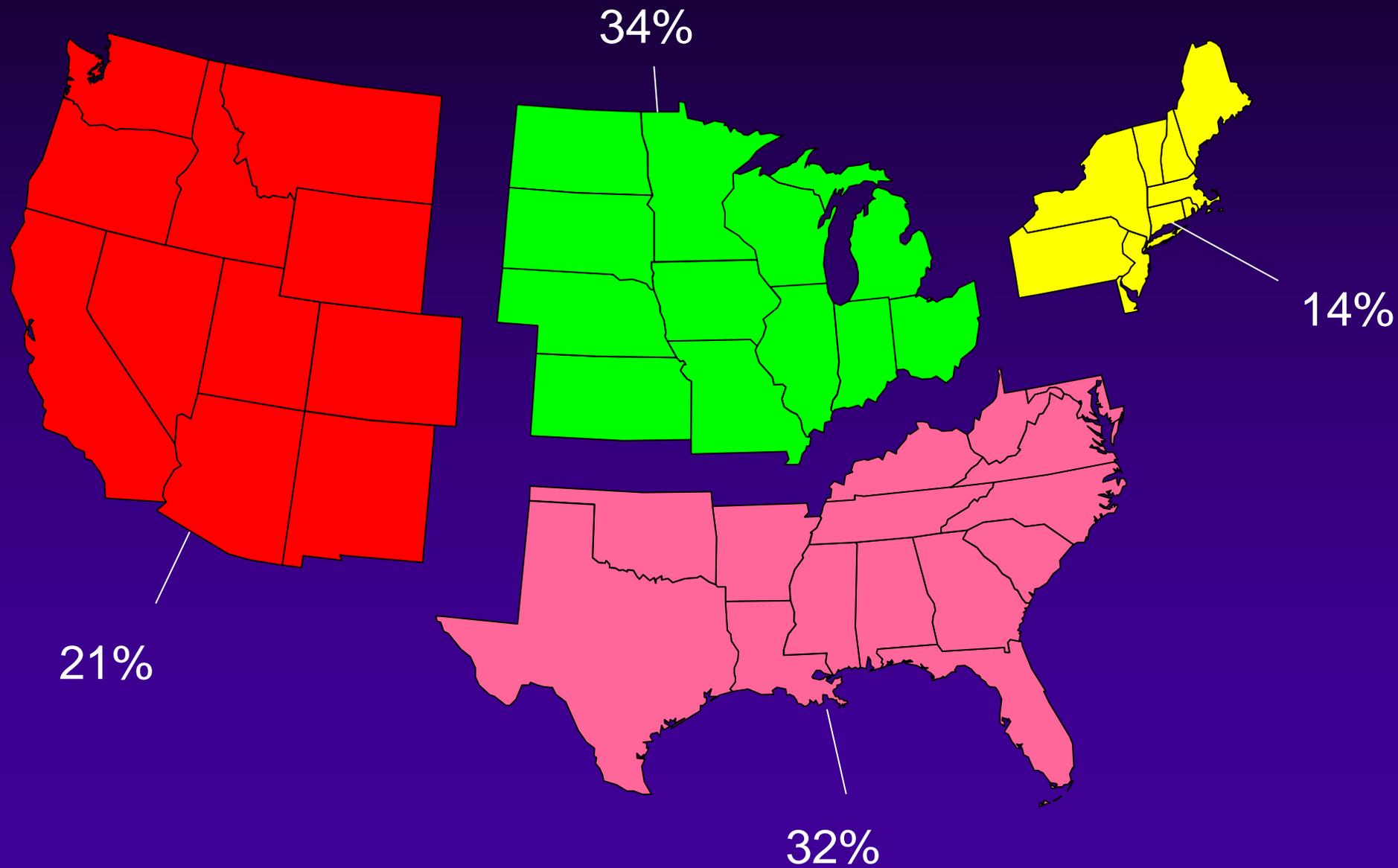
Children's Playground Equipment Manufacturers

(n=52)

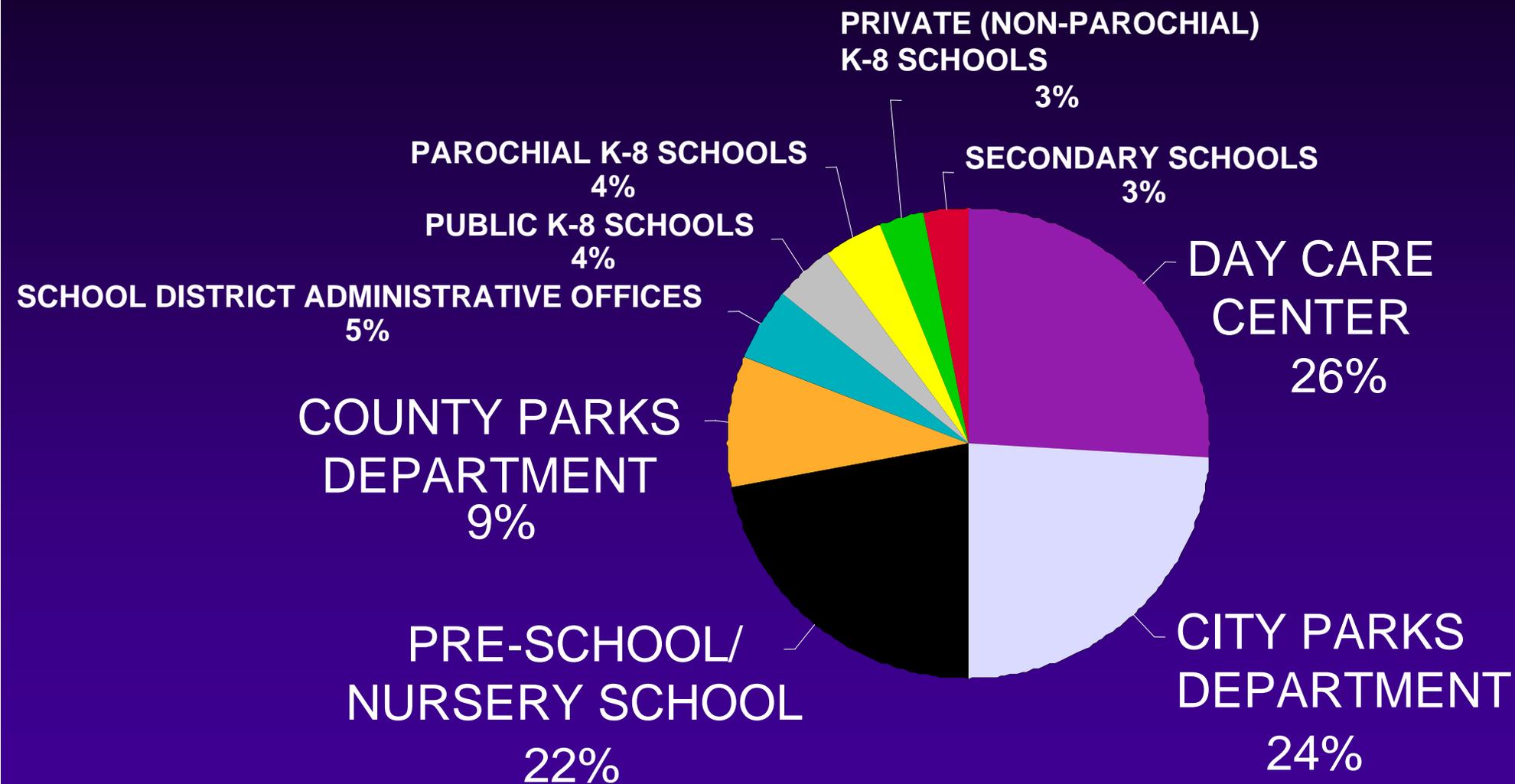


Children's Playground Equipment Purchasers

(n=431)



Children's Playground Equipment Purchasers



Children's Playground Equipment Manufacturers/Purchasers

Playset Materials Manufacturing/Purchase Criteria

Scale: 1=Not Important at All; 3=Somewhat Important; 5=Very Important

Manufacturers

Purchasers

Free from as many chemicals as possible

Minimize health risks

Long-term performance

Cost of the play set

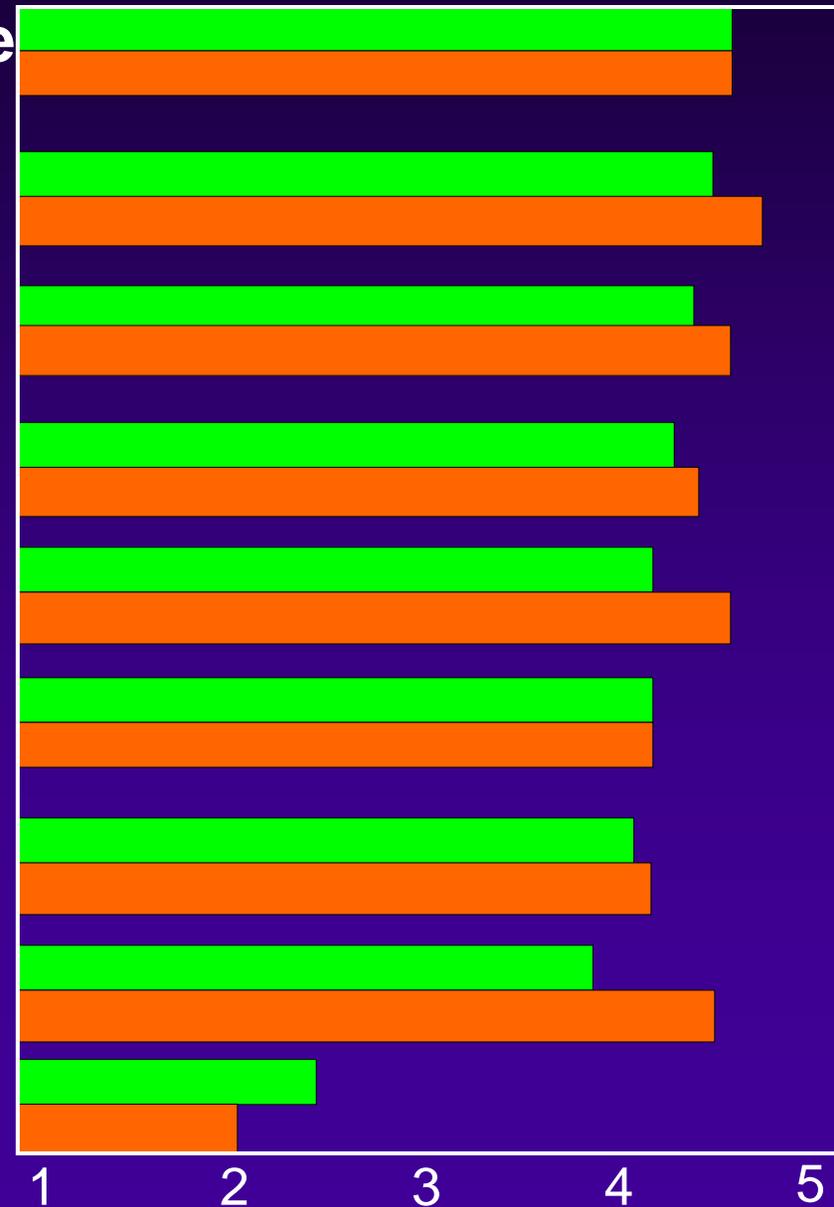
Effective years of service

Resistance to harsh climate

Resistance to wood destroying insects

Low maintenance

Resale value



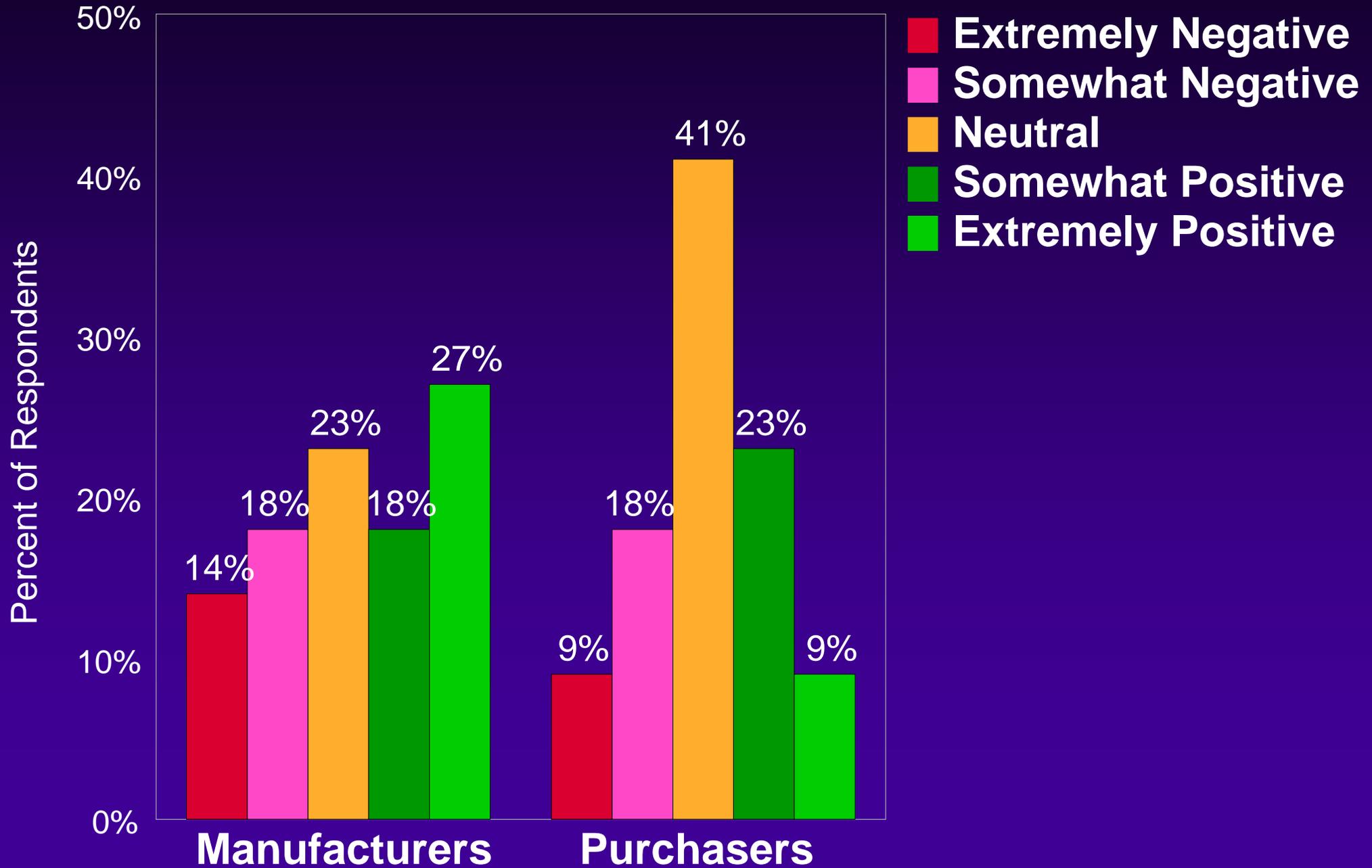
Children's Playground Equipment Manufacturers/Purchasers

Perception of the Number of Years Materials Last in Weather Exposed Above Ground (Percent of Respondents)

	0-10 Years		11-25 Years		More than 25 years	
	M	P	M	P	M	P
Concrete	4%	6%	33%	36%	62%	59%
Steel	7%	7%	54%	36%	40%	56%
Naturally durable species (cedar, redwood)	64%	33%	31%	61%	5%	5%
<i>Treated lumber products</i>	23%	42%	52%	49%	25%	10%

Children's Playground Equipment Manufacturers/Purchasers

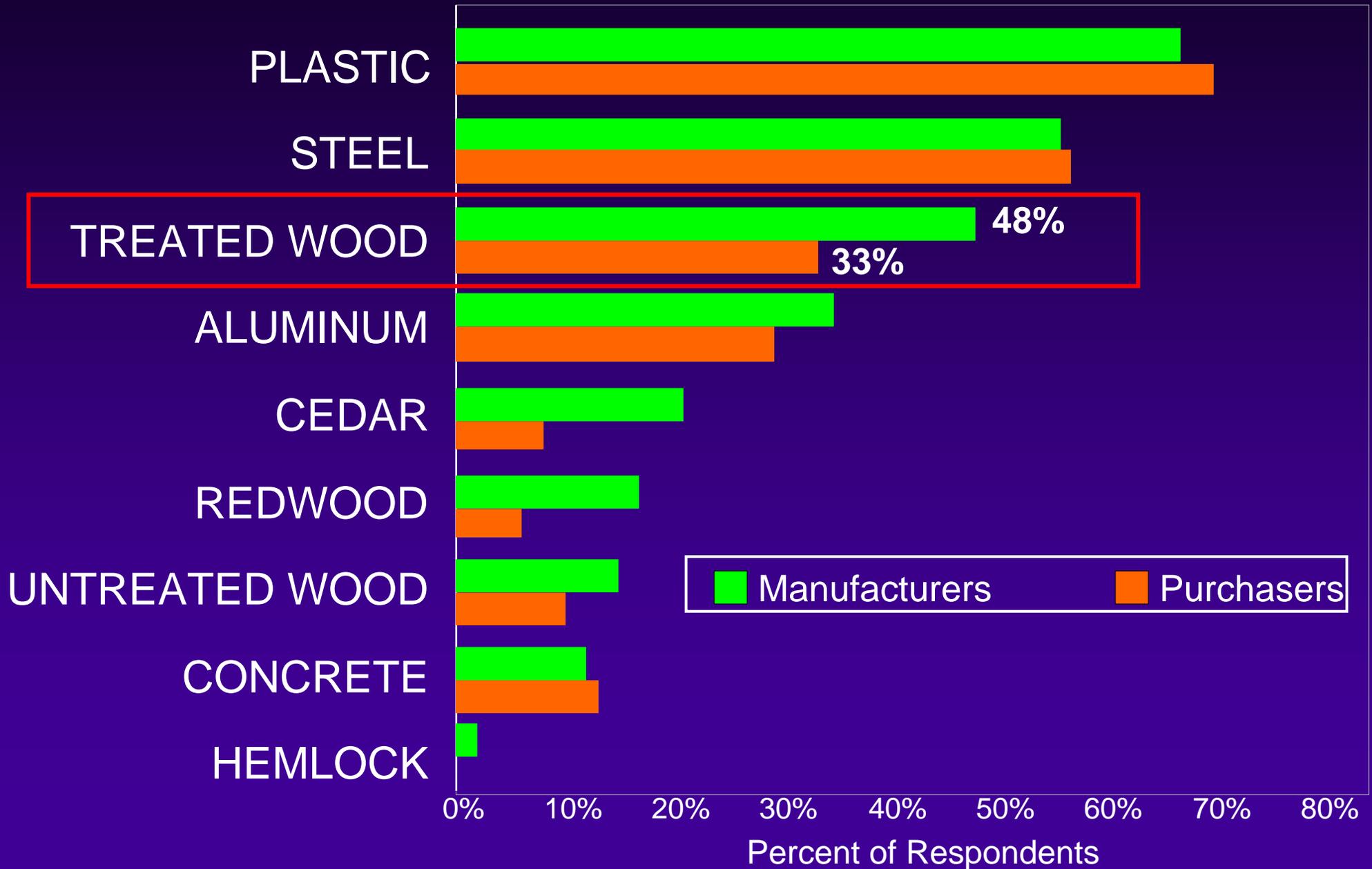
In general, what is your overall perception of treated wood?



Children's Playground Equipment Manufacturers/Purchasers

Playset Materials: Manufacturing/Currently Installed

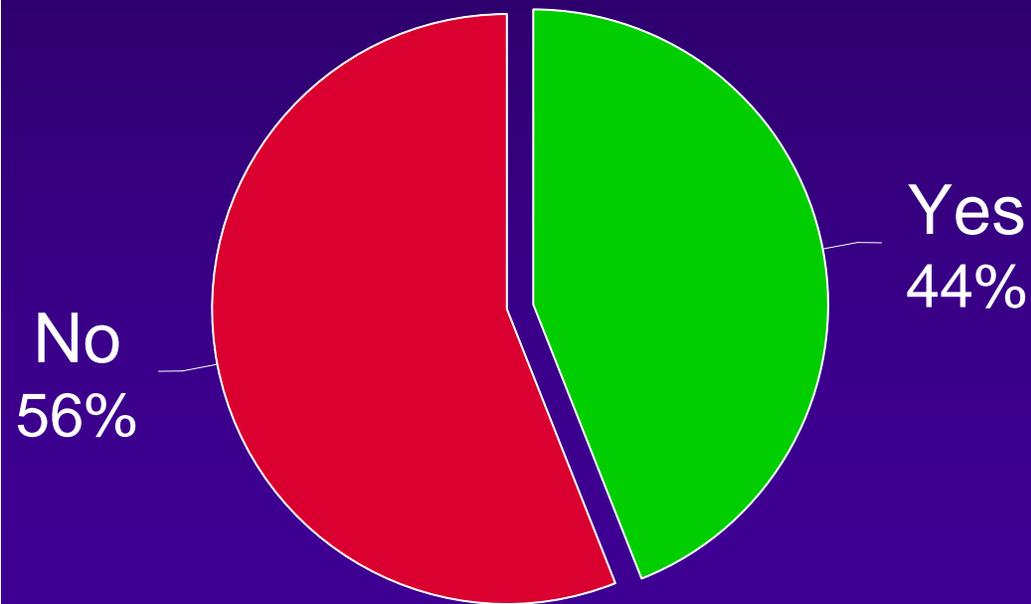
(Percent of Respondents)



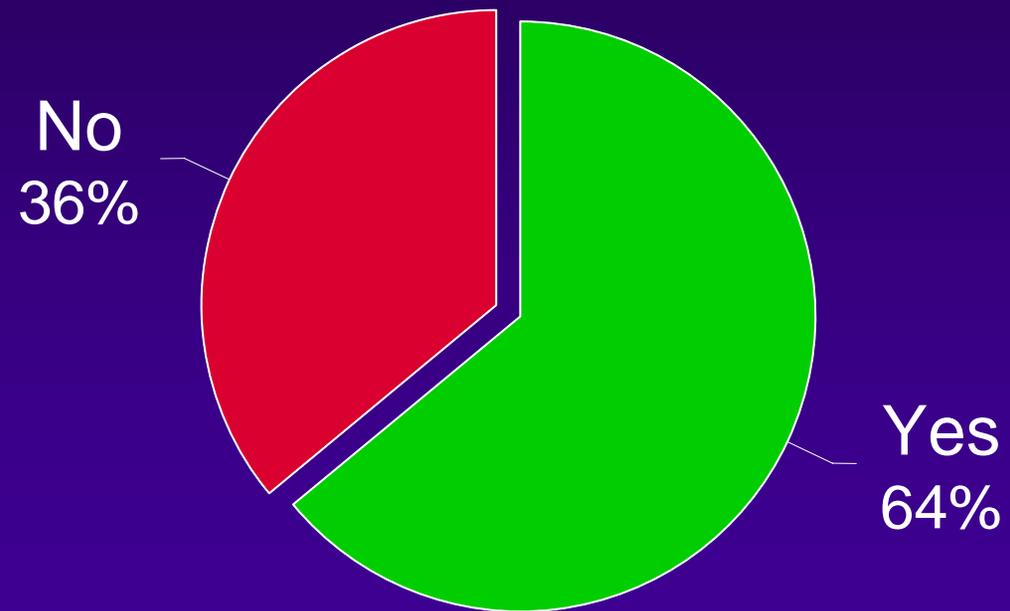
Children's Playground Equipment Manufacturers/Purchasers

Would you be willing to purchase/manufacture outdoor children's playground equipment that is fabricated in part with treated wood?

Buyers



Suppliers



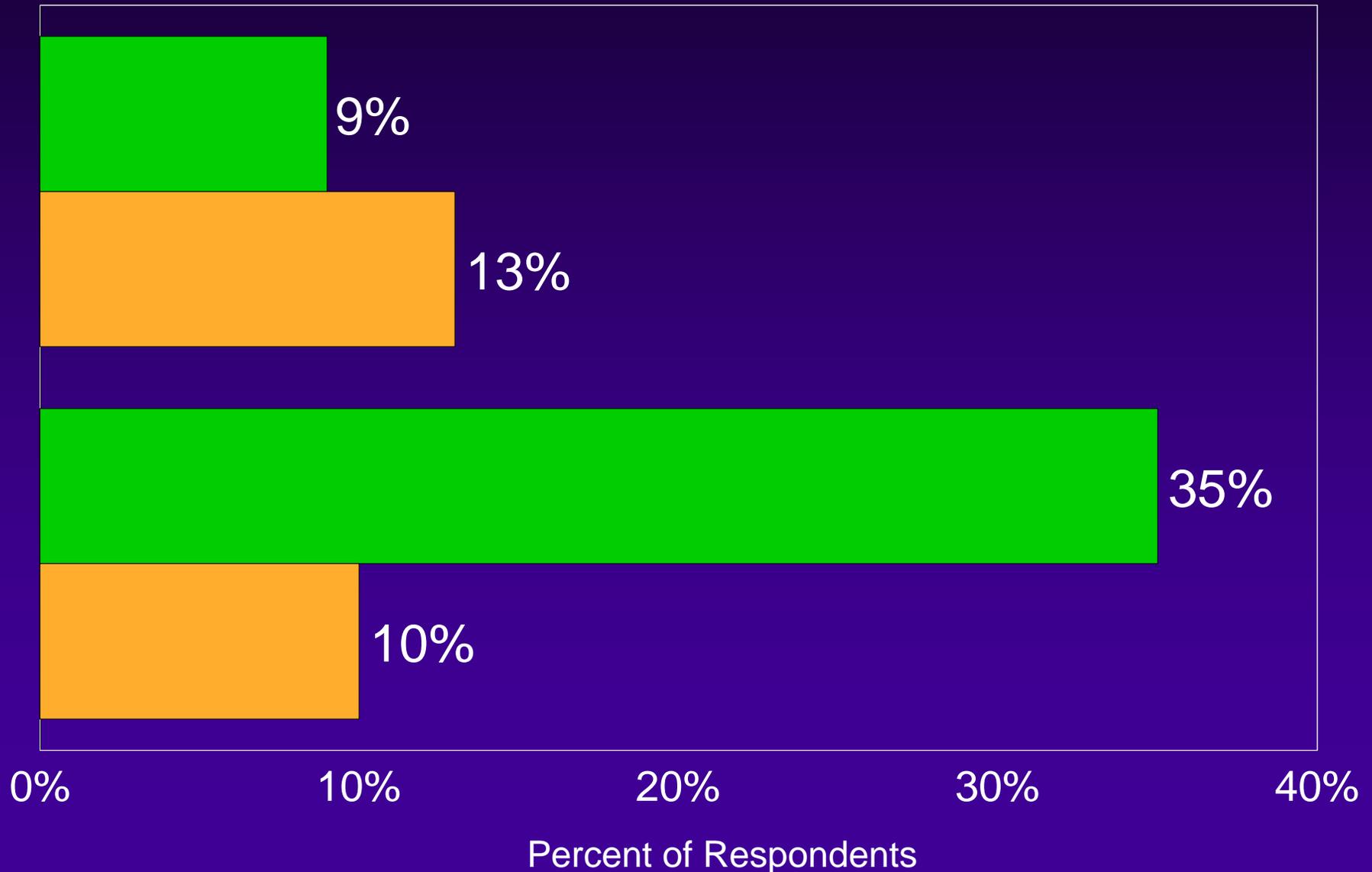
Children's Playground Equipment Manufacturers/Purchasers

I Understand the Concept of Treating Wood

Scale: 1=Do Not Agree at All; 3=Somewhat Agree; 5=Strongly Agree

Manufacturers

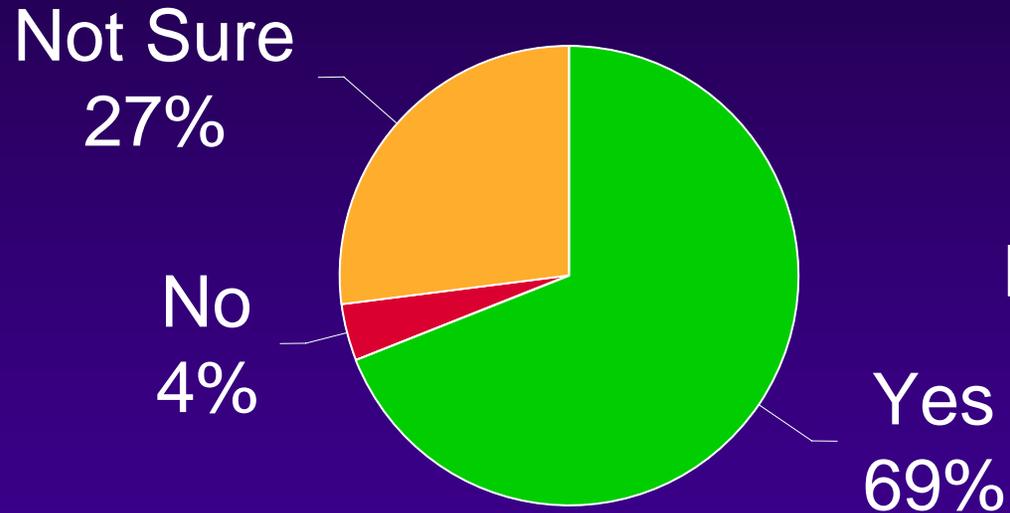
Purchasers



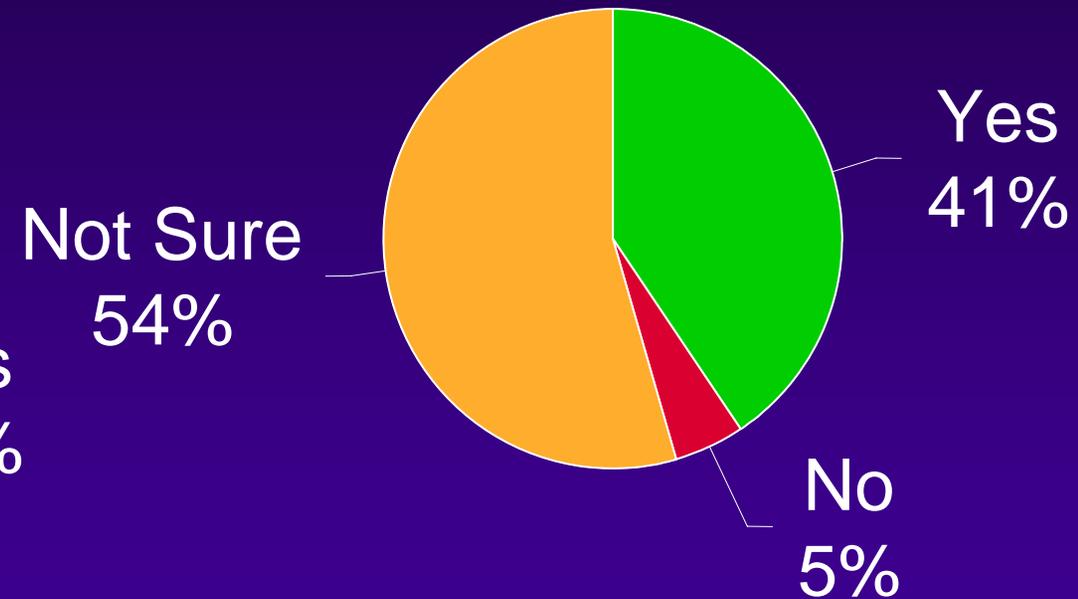
Children's Playground Equipment Manufacturers/Purchasers

Do you think that some types of treated wood are safer than others?

Manufacturers



Purchasers



Children's Playground Equipment Manufacturers/Purchasers

Entity Trusted to Provide Consumers with Treated Wood Safety and Handling Information

Manufacturers

Centers for Disease Control

Playground equipment mfgrs.

Treated wood companies

Environ. Protection Agency

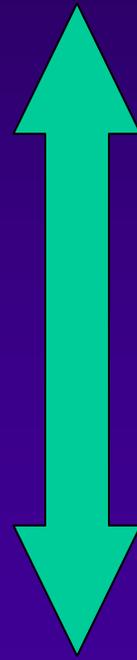
Federal government

State government

Chemical mfgrs.

Depts. of education

Most Trusted



Least Trusted

Purchasers

Centers for Disease Control

Environ. Protection Agency

Depts. of education

State government

Federal government

Playground equipment mfgrs.

Treated wood companies

Chemical mfgrs.

Children's Playground Equipment Manufacturers/Purchasers

Perception of Risk to Human Health from Exposure to Selected Chemicals

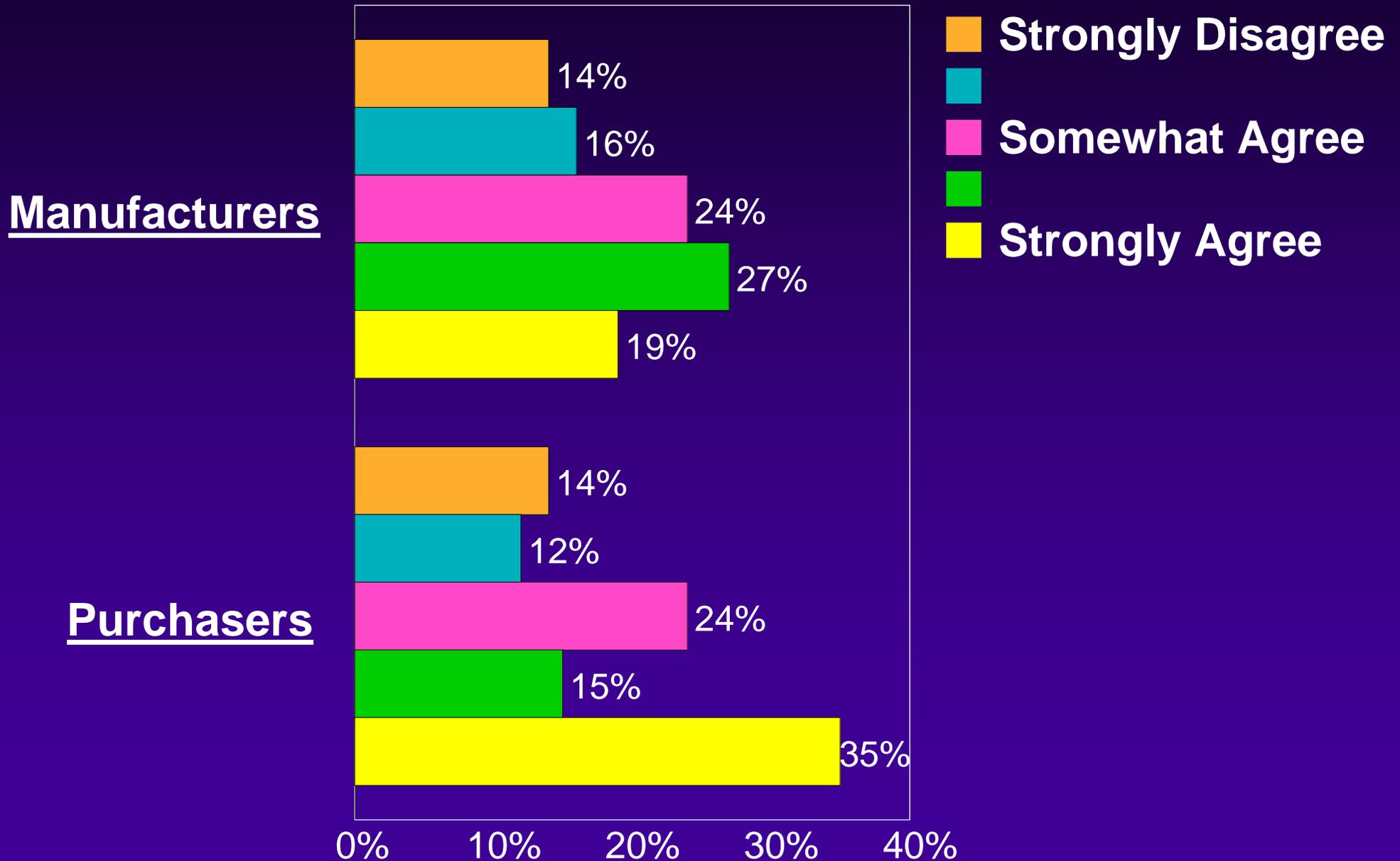
Not a Risk At All

Is a Significant Risk

	Mfgrs	Purchasers	Mfgrs	Purchasers
Arsenic	2%	2%	42%	84%
Chromium	12%	6%	24%	32%
Boron	35%	10%	13%	28%
Borax	34%	12%	8%	18%
Copper	38%	15%	3%	13%
Hydrogen	58%	35%	0%	7%
Zinc	29%	11%	0%	14%
Water	76%	48%	0%	4%
Oxygen	83%	58%	0%	3%

Children's Playground Equipment Manufacturers/Purchasers

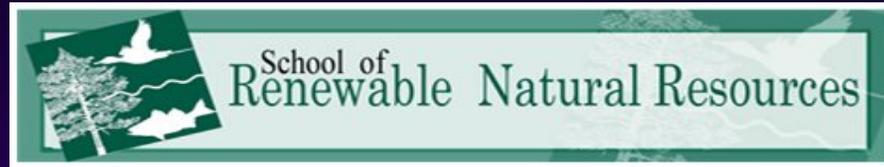
Desire for More Information on Proper Treated Wood Use and Handling



Implications for the Future



Questions?



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