



TECHNICAL BULLETIN

Understanding the difference between IRON WOODS® brand Ipe vs Generic Ipe

Timber Holdings USA is committed to the protection of our customers from an unregulated market where misrepresentations of product quality, common names, generalization of trade names and species have become common practice.

To protect our customers from species confusion, all products sold under the IRON WOODS trademark are independently inspected, graded, selected, certified, and warranted as *Tabebuia spp. lapacho* group to the specific grade specified and defined under our Iron Woods Ipe Grading Rules. These certificates and grading rules are available upon request.

The U.S. Forest Products Laboratory and U.S. Naval Research Laboratory specifically identify the Lapacho group of *Tabebuia* as having high resistance to deterioration from rot, termites, and marine borers. The Lapacho group of subspecies can be visually identified by the presence of Lapachols (a yellowish powder) contained in the wood cells which can be seen when cross cutting the timber. As for any of the particular subspecies which make up the Lapacho Group, the U.S. Forest Products Laboratory has concluded that these subspecies can only be identified microscopically, not visually. As such any claims related to specific subspecies selection for color or any other qualities within the Lapacho group of *Tabebuia* would be misrepresentation.

Generic “Ipe” is generally imported under the loose grade term of FAS (first and seconds), or various trademarks which represent no specific species or grading rules. These products may include mixed species, non-durable sapwood, borer holes, knots, shake, and other milling defects. A lack of specifically defined grading rules allows the mills to produce lumber with defects that can directly affect the performance and appearance of these materials supplied. This has led to the experience of inconsistency within the Ipe market.

We support the efforts of consumers to protect themselves by requesting specific species, grade, and quality standards for the wood products they purchase. Failure by any supplier to provide such information is a strong indicator that the consumer might not be receiving the product they believe they have paid for.

Clarity creates accountability.