Soil Treatment Facilities

Last Modified:

A permit can be issued by the Permit Unit usually within 2 weeks if the applicant has requested an authorization for less than three pounds of soil (per shipment), and the soil can be heat sterilized by PPQ at ports with appropriate facilities. Permits of this type may be provided for a single shipment or for continuous shipments over a period of up to 3 years.

Most major ports have PPQ operated facilities where soil can be treated under prescribed treatment schedules. These treatments require dry heat at 250 F. for at least two hours or steam heat at the same temperature for 30 minutes with 15" pressure.

Importers are cautioned that P525 Soil Permit does not authorize hand carried shipments to the port of entry, all foreign soil packages must be shipped via bonded carrier. As a result, handling and forwarding arrangements may be necessary to ensure that the shipment is forwarded to the destination after it has been treated and released by PPQ. The importer or permittee is responsible for all arrangements and the costs associated with handling and forwarding.

Mail and cargo shipments must arrive with postage or freight paid for delivery to the destination. Applicants indicating a need to ship by mail or freight are provided with labels (PPQ Form 508) which should be affixed to the outside of shipping packages. These labels identify the package as regulated material subject to special handling.

A copy of the permit should also accompany each shipment.

All packages for transport, authorized to be treated at APHIS' Plant Inspection Stations, must be able to be heat treated with dry heat at 250 F. for at least two hours or steam heat at the same temperature for 30 minutes with 15" pressure without removing the soil. Notes, labels, or reference materials related to the shipment should be separate to be sure that important information is not lost or destroyed during treatment. Permittees are encouraged to contact the Plant Inspection Station before shipping soil for further guidance on current treatment availability and packaging questions or concerns.

Any shipment which is not authorized under permit will be held by PPQ at the PIS pending the issuance of a formal written permit from the Permit Unit. Any shipment which is not ultimately authorized or is not in compliance with permit requirements, must be destroyed or re-exported at the importer's expense.

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