

Use the RIGHT Wood for Decking



Mechanics, when the wood decking in your M870/A1 semitrailer cracks and buckles, don't replace it with unapproved wood or rubber/composite products.

Unapproved products will just create bigger problems, like sagging, bent rails, cracked welds and busted cross members.

Purpleheart or apitong wood are the way to go when replacing the decking. These woods are stronger and more durable than other woods or composite boards. They resist rotting and ultraviolet rays, repel water and require little maintenance.

Purpleheart and apitong are also denser than other woods, so you'll need a carbide blade to cut them. Same goes for drilling holes. Use carbide-tip drill bits.

Apitong wood comes as a kit, NSN 5510-01-525-6325. The kit has all the wood you need for your semitrailer for just under \$5,700. Purpleheart wood, NSN 5510-01-454-8568, must be purchased by board feet (BF). It takes 325 BF to re-deck your trailer, so the cost is a little over \$2,000.

When ordering purpleheart wood, keep in mind that the boards will come in random widths and lengths. The boards range from 4 to 10+ inches wide with lengths running from 8 to 17 feet. So while purpleheart costs less than the apitong wood kit, you'll need to do more planning and cutting when re-decking your semitrailer.

Oil Preserves Decking

Constant exposure to the elements can eventually cause even these woods to dry, crack and splinter. Prevent that damage by spreading boiled-linseed oil on the decking. NSN 8010-00-684-8789 gets five gallons. Use NSN 8010-00-242-6114 for a 55-gal drum. Re-treat the deck whenever water stops beading on the surface.