Use of Wood in Animal Facilities

The Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals states:

“Primary enclosures should be constructed with materials that balance the needs of the animal with the ability to provide for sanitation. They should have smooth, impervious surfaces with minimal ledges, angles, corners, and overlapping surfaces so that accumulation of dirt, debris, and moisture is reduced and satisfactory cleaning and disinfecting are possible. They should be constructed of durable materials that resist corrosion and withstand rough handling without chipping, cracking, or rusting. Less-durable material, such as wood, can provide a more appropriate environment in some situations (such as runs, pens and outdoor corrals) and can be used to construct perches, climbing structures, resting areas, and perimeter fences for primary enclosures. Wooden items might need to be replaced periodically because of damage or difficulties with sanitation.”

Policy
1. As a general rule, wood should be used at a minimum in animal facilities.
2. Any wood not in direct contact with animals shall be sealed using exterior-grade products.
3. Wood may be used for enrichment or primary housing such as nesting boxes. Sealing the wood should be considered. However, pressure treated and sealed wood should not be used in direct contact with animals that may chew or eat the wood.
4. Wooden handled cleaning items may be used if restricted to a single room.
5. Wooded items will be periodically replaced when they can no longer be sanitized.
6. Wood supports and shelves may be used to support cages including aquaria. Vertical wooden supports should be insulated from the floor.
7. Wood should not be in constant direct contact with water or animal feed.