Boat greener and cleaner

Broads boaters are being asked to REDUCE THE USE of antifouling paints in this nationally important wetland.

Matthew Thwaites at Barnes Brinkcraft said: 'We only paint the waterline on our hire fleet. It not only keeps our costs down but helps us do our bit for green boating on the Broads.'

REDUCE ANTIFOULING USE

- Paint the waterline only – this is the bit you can see. This keeps your boat tidy and the environment healthy for future generations.
- Reducing antifouling use not only makes environmental sense it also reduces your costs.
- Know where algal and mussel build up is worst. The lower river reaches, such as St Olaves, have a higher algal build up than Stalham and Potter Heigham.
- Use the right paint for your craft and its usage, only buy as much as you need. Where possible, use water-based antifoulings which are low VOC (volatile organic compounds). Look out for alternatives to biocide antifoulings e.g. silicon paints or others which are suitable for regular pressure washing.

BEST PRACTICE

- Don't pressure-wash self-eroding antifouling. For less severe fouling, manufacturers recommend sponging is more effective in preserving the biocide qualities. If you have to pressure wash, choose a boatyard or marina that recycles or discharges waste water to the sewers, not back into the watercourse. Only use sufficient water pressure to remove the fouling, not the paint!
- When renewing antifouling, clear up all paint residues after you and dispose of in the hazardous waste container. Skirt the hull and capture all paint shavings on a tarpaulin, or simply sweep up after you. The key is to prevent unnecessary fouling entering the water.
- Dispose of all paint tins, brushes, rollers and rags in the hazardous waste when you have finished.
- Regular cleaning is important to remove algae and mussels. Boatyards in Horning have reported lots of zebra mussels on hulls that are not serviced on a regular basis. Zebra mussels do not appear to cause a problem for the hull, but regular cleaning is recommended.

For more details see the contact details overleaf

ALTERNATIVES TO ANTI-FOULING

Consider dry sailing. If the vessel is small and can be easily stored ashore, dry sailing might be the alternative for you.

Silicon based antifoul. Best suited to fast craft, which get a lot of use, and can be expensive. However, mussels do not attach and a quick pressure wash will remove all fouling with ease, with no contamination of watercourses.

Ceramic coatings. A good alternative on fibreglass and metal hulls. Can be pressure washed.

Electric current systems. Based upon the generation of an electrical current, which sterilises the hull. Limited in its use.

ANTIFOULING FACTS

- Antifouling paints are applied to boat hulls to prevent growth of organisms, such as algae and mussels.
- Antifouling paints work by creating a toxic barrier, which prevents organisms attaching to the hull.
- Fouling increases the resistance of the hull to its movement through the water, which slows the boat and reduces its energy efficiency and manoeuvrability. The loss in efficiency may result in more fuel being used.
- Thousands of litres of antifouling paint are used in the Broads each year. Recent research shows that past use of antifouling paints, such as TBT (tributyl tin) based products, had a severe impact on wildlife in the Broads. Although today's antifouling products are less persistent, they are still potentially harmful to aquatic life. For example increased copper levels are now being found in the sediment, which can have harmful effects on water snails.

For more information on antifouling, its safe and environmentally sound application and disposal contact:

for environmental impact:
Broads Authority
tel 01603 610734
www.broads-authority.gov.uk

for disposal regulations:
Environment Agency
tel 08708 506506
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

for best practice and alternative products:
The Green Blue
www.thegreenblue.org.uk

Royal Yachting Association
www.rya.org.uk

British Marine Federation
www.britishmarine.co.uk

Broads Authority
The Broads - a member of the National Park family

Environment Agency