

New-wave Bottom Paints

New formulas from top makers get a six-month checkup.



After six months in the water in Sarasota, Fla., only a few paint samples emerged with no slime. The copper-free Epaint EP2000 (white sample in foreground) was one.

Sure, grading antifouling paint panels probably doesn't qualify for the television show "Dirty Jobs," but after 20-plus years of counting barnacles, one's mind does wander toward a spring that doesn't include resins, heavy metals, and solvents.

That is why this spring's bottom paint report is so much more exciting than our previous reports. (Really, we promise.) The year 2010, you see, marks a significant shift toward environmentally-friendly bottom paints.

The epicenter of this movement is San Diego, Calif., home of one of the nation's busiest ports, a U.S. Navy base, and more than 17,000 boaters. More significantly, it is also home to the Scripps Institute of Oceanography, one of the nation's most highly regarded marine research centers. Sharing the waterfront with dozens of doctoral-seeking biologists is a double-edged sword for boaters. On one side, there is no shortage of reliable water-quality data. On the other hand, that data might well lead to laws that lead to your wallet.

Scientists have known for years that San Diego harbor has unusually high levels of copper, but only recently have regional authorities been given the funds and regulatory tools to try to address this problem. Currently, the local water-quality districts have set incremental goals of

reducing copper levels in the port waters by 76 percent by 2022.

With the help of about \$200,000 from the Environmental Protection Agency, the port is into its second round of no-copper or low-copper paint tests, and most of the major antifouling paint makers have signed on to participate.

So, while San Diego dips into paint evaluations on the West Coast, we plough ahead with our second decade of studies in the East. This report tracks the performance of more than five-dozen paints after six months immersion in Florida. The test primarily covers conventional copper-based antifouling paints, but (and this is the exciting part) it also presents the very first look at the latest no-copper concoctions.

WHAT WE TESTED

This six-month update covers 65 antifouling paints that were submerged in June 2009 in Sarasota, Fla. and inspected in January 2010. (See page 24 for results on a separate set of 18-month panels; the results of field tests on various boats are on page 26). The players include six familiar names—Blue Water, Epaint, Flexdel, Interlux, Pettit, and Sea Hawk—and one newcomer, Copper Coat, an epoxy-copper blend that claims multi-year protection. An experimental stick-on antifouling, BoatKoat Laminate

also joined the field.

The six-month results are tabulated on pages 22 and 23, which are split between hard and ablative paints. The two types of paints work differently, but for most sailors, the key distinction is the maintenance regimen for each.

Hard paints resist scrubbing well and can usually be burnished smooth for racing. However, they leave behind resins and pigments that build up over the years and will eventually need to be sanded off. Also, many hard paints lose their punch when they are stored out of the water for long periods.

Ablative paints wear away through use, so they don't build up thick layers. Basic workboat ablatives slough away with water friction to expose more biocide. Other, copolymer ablatives release biocides at a controlled rate. Although some "hard" ablative paints resist light scrubbing and are suitable for trailering or racing, ablatives generally won't tolerate abrasion like most hard paints.

Cuprous oxide (or copper thiocyanate in aluminum-friendly paints) is the primary biocide in most of the tested paints, but some also add algacides such as Irgarol (NCN), and biocide boosters such as zinc omadine and zinc pyrithion. The blends yield paints for specific needs: freshwater paints, aluminum paints, racing paints, water-based paints (easy for

PS VALUE GUIDE HARD PAINTS at 6 MONTHS

NAME	MAKER	PRICE*	SPECIAL USES, COMMENTS	BIO-BOOSTER	COPPER**	6-MONTH RATINGS
BoatKoat Laminates	BKL	NA	Stick-on experimental coating	None	NA	Poor
Copper Pro 67 Hard ✓	Blue Water	\$125	High copper, dual biocide	Irgarol	67%	Fair
Copper Pro SCX 67 Hard ✓✓	Blue Water	\$175	High copper, dual biocide	Irgarol	67%	Fair
Copper Shield 45 Hard \$ ✓	Blue Water	\$90	Economical hard paint	None	45%	Good
Copper Coat <i>new</i>	Copper Coat	Call for price	Long life copper/epoxy paint	None	Varies	Fair
EP2000 ✓	Epaint	\$250	Water-based, race paint, aluminum-safe, photoactive	Zinc pyrithione	None	Excellent
ZO-HP ✓	Epaint	\$240	Dual biocide, racing, aluminum-safe	Zinc omadine	None	Excellent
Fiberglass Bottomkote Classic ✓	Interlux	\$140	Fast dry, abrasion resistant, racing	None	43%	Fair
Bottomkote Aqua ✓	Interlux	\$130	Water-based, easy apply	None	47%	Good
Trilux Prop and Drive	Interlux	\$25/pt.	Aluminum-safe aerosol	None	9%	Fair
Ultra ✓	Interlux	\$200	High copper hard paint	Irgarol	67%	Poor
VC 17m	Interlux	\$47/qt.	Freshwater, racing, with Teflon	None	20%	Poor
VC 17m Extra ✓	Interlux	\$55/qt.	Freshwater, racing, with Teflon, dual biocide	Irgarol	20%	Good
VC Offshore ✓✓	Interlux	\$270	Race paint	None	41%	Good
Trinidad ✓✓	Pettit	\$190	High-copper hard paint	None	76%	Good
Trinidad SR ✓✓	Pettit	\$225	High copper, dual biocide	Irgarol	70%	Good
Unepoxy \$	Pettit	\$80	Standard hard single season	None	41%	Good
WM Bottomshield (Unepoxy LD) <i>new</i>	Pettit	\$100	Copper composite technology	None	29%	Fair
Vivid ✓	Pettit	\$175	Bright colors, white	Zinc omadine	25%	Fair
Sharkskin \$	Sea Hawk	\$110	Budget-priced hard paint	None	45%	Fair
Silver Bullet <i>new</i>	Sea Hawk	\$32/qt..	Thin-film freshwater racing, bright colors	None	20%	Fair
Smart Solution <i>new</i>	Sea Hawk	\$195	Metal-free, slick-film racing paint	None	None	Fair
Tropikote ✓✓	Sea Hawk	\$170	Multi-season, high copper	None	76%	Good
Tropikote Biocide Plus ✓	Sea Hawk	\$250	High copper, dual biocide, multi-season	Irgarol	74%	Good

✓ Recommended \$ Budget Buy ✓ 18-month Finalist

*Prices, per gallon based on online search. Shipping excluded. **Cuprous oxide; copper-thiocyanate in aluminum-safe paints.

Tables above and on page 23 track antifouling performance over six months. Checks indicate Recommended paints in one or more of five key categories—overall, aluminum-safe, water based, eco-friendly, and racing. Budget Buy paints offer good value. Paints that did well in the 18-month test (see page 24) have blue checkmarks.

the do-it-yourselfer to apply), and eco-friendly paints. We've flagged the best of each of these subcategories with Recommended check marks in the tables.

Whatever type of paint you buy, check the application guidelines to be sure it is compatible with the paint you have on your boat. If in doubt about prep work, ask the paint maker for guidance.

HOW WE TESTED

Each test involves one fiberglass panel set: The six-month set was hung from a dock on Sarasota Bay in Sarasota, Fla.; the 18-month panels were suspended in a canal in Key Largo. (Look for a two-year update on another panel set in Connecticut this fall.) Following the

makers' instructions for preparation and number of coats (usually two), testers applied 10 samples per 6-foot-by-2-foot-long panel.

Prior to rating, testers sluice the panels with a bucket of salt water. Paints were rated Excellent (no growth), Good (light growth), Fair (moderate to heavy soft growth), and Poor (hard growth). Any paint that rates Fair or better has generally met its designed purpose.

A Recommended paint is one that performs best overall or rates best among its specialized peers (best aluminum-safe paint, best water-based paint, best racing paint, etc.). The Budget Buy paints represent the least expensive among Recommended paints.

Remember: Any antifouling paint test is subject to a number of variables, and we recommend supplementing our data with local knowledge from other independent sources.

FINDINGS

Nearly all of the paints repelled barnacles at the six-month mark and would easily clean with a sponge. Panels with barnacles could still be pressure-washed clean. If you want long-term protection, check the 18-month tables. Some paints are like Aesop's hare: They start off amazingly clean for six to 12 months, but then lose potency. Others are tortoises: They are

Continued on page 25

AS VALUE GUIDE ABLATIVE PAINTS at 6 MONTHS

NAME	MAKER	PRICE	SPECIAL USES, COMMENTS	BIO-BOOSTER	COPPER**	6-MONTH RATINGS
New England Copper <i>new</i>	Blue Water	\$60	Economy ablative	None	25%	Fair
Copper Pro SCX 67 Ablative ✓	Blue Water	\$175	High copper, multi-season, for high-fouling seas	Irgarol	67%	Good
Copper Shield 45 Ablative \$ ✓	Blue Water	\$90	Multi-season antifouling	None	45%	Good
Aqua Shield 45 \$ <i>new</i>	Blue Water	\$90	Multi-season water-based antifouling	None	45%	Good
Copper Shield SCX 45 Ablative	Blue Water	\$145	Biocide boosted high copper	Irgarol	45%	Good
Kolor SCX	Blue Water	\$170	Aluminum-safe, bright colors	Irgarol	45%	Fair
SPC 99 <i>new</i>	Blue Water	\$225	Self-polishing copolymer	Zinc pyrithione	45%	Fair
Shelter Island <i>new</i>	Blue Water	\$135	Copper free ablative	Zinc pyrithione	None	Fair
Ecominder	Epaint	\$185	Water-based	Zinc pyrithione	None	Fair
EP-21 ✓	Epaint	\$115	Freshwater, aluminum safe	None	None	Excellent
Aquagard Alumi-Koat II	Flexdel	\$150	Water-based, aluminum safe	Zinc-based	3%	Fair
Aquagard Bottom Paint \$ ✓	Flexdel	\$100	Water-based, dual biocide	Zinc-based	26%	Good
Fiberglass Bottomkote ACT	Interlux	\$110	Multi-season, ablative slime fighter	Irgarol	30%	Good
Micron 66 ✓	Interlux	\$205	Dual biocide ablative, not for fresh water	Zinc pyrithione	36%	Excellent
Micron CSC ✓	Interlux	\$180	High-strength ablative	None	37%	Good
Micron Extra	Interlux	\$205	High-strength, dual biocide, ablative	Irgarol	39%	Fair
Bottomkote \$	Interlux	\$75	Soft workboat paint	None	42%	Good
Bottomkote XXX	Interlux	\$165	Soft workboat paint	None	28%	Fair
Trilux 33	Interlux	\$230	Aluminum safe, bright colors	Zinc pyrithione	17%	Fair
Alumacoat SR ✓ ✓	Pettit	\$180	Aluminum safe	Zinc omadine	None	Excellent
Horizons	Pettit	\$140	Ablative multi-season	None	48%	Good
Hydrocoat ✓	Pettit	\$100	Water-based, trailerable	None	40%	Fair
Ultima Fusion <i>new</i>	Pettit	\$240	New multi-season copolymer	Zinc omadine	40%	Poor
Ultima SR 40 ✓	Pettit	\$160	Multi-season dual-biocide	Irgarol	40%	Good
Ultima SSA	Pettit	\$160	Single-season economy paint	None	38%	Good
Vivid Eco ✓ <i>new</i>	Pettit	\$275	Multi-season ablative with Ecomea	Ecomea, Zinc omadine		Good
Vivid Free ✓ ✓	Pettit	\$200	Aluminum-safe, bright colors	Zinc omadine	None	Excellent
West Marine CPP* ✓	Pettit	\$120	Uses composite copper technology	None	38%	Good
West Marine PCA Gold* ✓	Pettit	\$160	Industry standard	Irgarol	40%	Good
AF-33	Sea Hawk	\$90	Harder ablative, economical, trailerable	None	34%	Fair
Biocop TF ✓	Sea Hawk	\$200	Dual biocide	Zinc omadine	38%	Fair
Cukote	Sea Hawk	\$165	High copper	None	48%	Poor
Cukote Biocide Plus ✓	Sea Hawk	\$200	High copper and biocide	Irgarol	48%	Fair
Islands 77 Plus <i>new</i>	Sea Hawk	\$240	Caribbean only, high copper, 24-month paint	Zinc pyrithione	42%	Good
Inflatable <i>new</i> ✓	Sea Hawk	\$58/pt.	Low VOC, flexible, durable, high copper	None	55%	Good
Mission Bay	Sea Hawk	\$145	No copper, aluminum-safe	Zinc omadine	None	Good
Mission Bay CSF	Sea Hawk	\$155	No copper, water-based, aluminum-safe	Zinc omadine	None	Fair
Monterey \$	Sea Hawk	\$100	Water-based, high copper, semi-hard paint	None	55%	Good
Transshield <i>new</i>	Sea Hawk	\$31/pt.	Transducer paint	None	55%	Fair

✓ Recommended \$ Budget Buy ✓ 18-month Finalist * Pettit paints rebranded for West Marine.
 ** Prices based on online search. Shipping excluded. ***Cuprous-oxide; cuprous thiocyanate in aluminum-safe paints.

	TYPE	NAME	MFR.	PRICE/GALLON*	SPECIALTY/COMMENTS	BIO-BOOSTER	COPPER**	18-MONTH RATINGS FL
BEST	ABLATIVE/SOFT	Awlstar	Awlgrip	\$81/qt.	Multi-season high copper		40%	Good
		Copper Pro SCX 67 Ablative ✓	Blue Water	\$175	High fouling areas	Irgarol	67%	Good
		Copper Shield 45 Ablative \$	Blue Water	\$90	Economical ablative		45%	Good
		Copper Shield SCX 45 Ablative ✓	Blue Water	\$145	Biocide boosted high copper	Irgarol	45%	Good
		Kolor ✓	Blue Water	\$170	Aluminum safe, bright colors		45%	Good
		Aquagard Bottom Paint \$	Flexdel	\$100	Water-based, dual biocide	Zinc-based	26%	Good
		Micron CSC ✓	Interlux	\$180	High-strength ablative		37%	Good
		Tarr & Wonson Copper Paint \$	Interlux	\$100	Soft workboat paint		25%	Good
		Tri-Lux II ✓	Interlux	\$260	Aluminum safe		22%	Good
		Alumacoat SR ✓	Pettit	\$180	Aluminum safe	Zinc Omadine	None	Good
		Hydrocoat ✓	Pettit	\$120	Water-based, trailerable ablative		40%	Good
		Ultima SR 60 ✓	Pettit	\$190	Biocide boosted multi-season ablative	Irgarol	60%	Good
		Ultima SR 40 (WM PCA Gold) ✓	Pettit	\$160	Multi-season ablative	Irgarol	40%	Good
		Vivid Free ✓	Pettit	\$200	Aluminum-safe ablative	Zinc Omadine	None	Good
	HARD	Biocop TF ✓	Sea Hawk	\$200	Dual biocide	Zinc Omadine	38%	Good
		Cukote Biocide Plus ✓	Sea Hawk	\$200	High copper and biocide	Irgarol	48%	Good
		Copper Pro SCX 67 Hard ✓	Blue Water	\$150	High copper, dual biocide	Irgarol	67%	Good
		Copper Shield 45 Hard \$	Blue Water	\$90	Economy hard paint		45%	Good
		Fiberglass Bottomkote ✓	Interlux	\$140	Dual biocide, fast dry, racing	Irgarol	43%	Good
		Ultra ✓	Interlux	\$200	High copper, dual biocide	Irgarol	67%	Good
		Ultra-Kote ✓	Interlux	\$190	High copper hard paint		67%	Good
		VC Offshore ✓	Interlux	\$270	Race paint		41%	Good
		Trinidad ✓	Pettit	\$190	High copper hard paint		76%	Good
		Trinidad SR ✓	Pettit	\$225	High copper hard paint	Irgarol	70%	Good
		Vivid ✓	Pettit	\$175	Bright colors, white	Zinc Omadine	25%	Good
		Sharkskin \$	Sea Hawk	\$110	Budget-priced hard paint		45%	Good
		Tropikote ✓	Sea Hawk	\$170	Multi-season, high copper		76%	Good
		Tropikote Biocide Plus ✓	Sea Hawk	\$250	High copper, dual biocide, multi-season	Irgarol	74%	Good

✓ Recommended \$ Budget Buy

* Prices based on online search. Shipping excluded.

Wide Range of Paints Make the 18-month Cut

If long-term protection is what you want, the list above is a good place to start your search.

These are the best performing paints out of 72 that have been continuously submerged for 18 months. The paints were selected based on cumulative ratings during the period. (See "How We Tested," on page 22.) Unlike the six-month table, which represents scores in one location, these paints were painted on two separate sets of panels, one immersed in Connecticut, one in Florida. The Connecticut panels were rated at the six- and 12-month intervals. Florida panels were rated at the six-, 12-, and 18-month intervals. We will pull and rate them again at 24 months.

To make the 18-month list, a paint must rate Good at 18 months, have no Poor ratings, and at least one other Good during the rating period, or it must have the best cumulative rating score in its category (water based, aluminum friendly, etc.). Test and ratings procedures followed those used for our six-month paints.

FINDINGS

Most of the paints that made the 18-month mark are ablative paints. Pettit dominated this category with seven different paints, covering the range of special purposes (aluminum friendly, water-based, etc.). Flexdel and Blue Water had top contenders in the budget paint category. Interlux (three paints), Sea Hawk (two paints), and Awlstar (one paint) rounded out the ablative field. One of our perennial long-term finalists, Interlux Micron 66, missed the cut this round, but based on past results and an ongoing field test (see page 26) we still regard it as a good choice.

Of the 11 top hard paints, four were Interlux brand and three were Sea Hawk. Two paints each from Pettit and Blue Water also made the cut. Not surprisingly, most finalists had high quantities of copper in the blend. The field was nearly split between those that used a biocide booster or algicide and those that didn't. The cheapest paint was Coppershield 45, and Interlux's racing paint, VC Offshore, was the most expensive.

Continued from page 22

average slime-fighters at first, but they win the endurance race, fighting off barnacles for 18 months or longer.

BLUE WATER

Blue Water reformulated all its paints for 2009 with good results. It scored particularly well in the lower price range ablative paints. Its new Aqua Shield 45 kept up with other water-based ablative paints near the \$100-per-gallon mark. Its economy hard paint Copper Shield 45 also did well. Blue Water offers most of its formulas with and without added algicides or boosters. At six months, most of the non-boosted blends did as well or better than the more expensive boosted blends. Blue Water Paints are also available at boatyards and through distributor Donovan Marine (www.donovanmarine.com) under the MarPro label.

EPAINT

Specializing in copper-free paints, Epaint was one of the big winners at the six-month mark, with three of its four paints coming out virtually clean of any growth. Standouts among its hard paints were ZO-HP, an abrasion-resistant paint that can be sanded to a very smooth finish for racing, and EP2000, a consistently good performer in the aluminum-friendly category. The one-season freshwater paint EP-21 was among the cleanest of all the ablatives. Because Epaints are photoactive, they will ablate faster in warm, sunny waters, and at least one extra coat near the waterline is recommended. EP2000 isn't compatible with other bottom paints, so switching paints requires significant prep work.

FLEXDEL

Based on these six-month results and our recent field test (page 26), Flexdel's water-based and aluminum-friendly Aquaguard competes closely with Pettit's Hydrocoat, a similar water-based blend. At the six-month checkup, Aquaguard was doing a better job at combatting slime. However, in the field test, Hydrocoat had fewer barnacles. Staying barnacle-free for 15 months or more with either paint will likely require bottom cleaning.



Most of the slime on the test panels washed away with a bucket rinse, and all but a few paints proved very effective at combatting hard growth for six months.

INTERLUX

Interlux's Micron 66 has done consistently well in our long-term testing over the past five years. This paint is particularly potent during the first six to eight months or so, when almost nothing seems to grow on it. Micron CSC wasn't far behind in slime fighting, followed by Fiberglass ACT and budget-priced soft workboat paint Bottomkote. In the hard paint category, water-based Bottomkote Aqua, slick freshwater racing paint VC-17m Extra, and VC Offshore racing paint all scored well in their respective categories. Ultra, a paint that has done well in the past, had several barnacles.

PETTIT/WEST MARINE

Pettit was the first major player to launch a paint with the new biocide Econe, which is getting a lot of hype in mainstream media. Early results are good, but not stellar. The paint, Vivid Eco, was relatively clean, but not a standout, at six months. Its experimental Hydrocoat Eco—also with Econe—succumbed to hard growth in our 18-month test.

Pettit scored a nearly clean sweep in the hard paint division. Among the expensive hard paints, regular Trinidad edged the more expensive biocide-boosted Trinidad SR this time, although previous longer-term tests have put Trinidad SR on top. Unepoxy has been a consistent performer among budget hard paints.

In the ablatives, the West Marine CPP and the West Marine PCA Gold offer good protection, as did the Ultima SR 40 and Ultima SSA. Several barnacles made themselves comfortable on a panel painted with the new Ultima Fusion. Pettit's aluminum-friendly Vivid Free and Alu-macoat SR paints (identical blends with marketing monikers) scored Excellent.

SEA HAWK

Sea Hawk's best performer at six months was its California-inspired eco-paint, Mission Bay, a zinc-omadine formula that came up nearly clean of any growth. Second was Islands 77 Plus, a biocide-boosted ablative paint designed—as the name implies—for island cruising. Although this formula has 7 percent less copper than its previous formula, the switch from biocide-booster zinc pyri-thione to zinc omadine appears to have offset the copper reduction. Among the hard paints, its copper-laden Monterey and Tropikote Biocide Plus stood out. Sea Hawk's new metal-free paint (the only one on the market), Smart Solutions was not a top slime fighter, but it held barnacles at bay.

COPPER COAT

Promoted as a powerful paint that can last up to 10 years, Copper Coat showed no sign of barnacles at six months, but it had more slime than the majority of the other panels. This three-part, high-solvent epoxy coating, requires careful application and cannot be applied over previous coatings. The product is relatively expensive, and whether it is worth the extra expense will depend on whether it lives up to its claims. The makers call for regular hull cleaning to prevent the buildup of slime.

BOATKOAT LAMINATES

The prize for the most novel approach to antifouling goes to the stick-on laminate from BoatKoat Laminates, of Clermont, Fla. The product, still in development, comes in long, recyclable, sticky, antifouling-laced rolls that are "taped" to the hull like shingles (or fish scales). This stick-on and peel-off approach could significantly reduce the amount of airborne and wa-

Test Boat Notes

To get a better idea of how some of the better panel-tested antifouling paints do in actual use, *PS* applies a select number of paints to test boats and monitors the performance. Here is the update on results from the field.

FLEXDEL AQUAGUARD vs. PETTIT HYDROCOAT

These two water-based ablatives held off hard growth for about 15 months on the Chesapeake Bay. The boat, a Union 36 (right), rarely moved from its slip, presenting a significant challenge. The bottom was cleaned once during the period.

BLUE WATER KOLOR vs. INTERLUX MICRON 66

This was a bit of a mismatch since Blue Water Color is an aluminum-safe paint that uses cuprous thiocyanate instead of cuprous oxide, found in Micron 66. After 15 months on a 23-foot *PS* test power boat that saw regular use, the Micron 66 was clearly more potent, showing very little slime growth and only a six barnacles. The Kolor sections had more slime and several dozen barnacles along the waterline. Most of the barnacles came off during a pressure wash.



After 20 months in the water, both Flexdel Aquaguard (left) and Pettit Hydrocoat (right) showed significant growth at haulout. Hydrocoat had more slime but fewer barnacles.

EP2000 vs. PETTIT VIVID FREE

These two paints, both billed as low-copper and aluminum-friendly, were applied to a 22-foot, davit-stored powerboat kept in the Florida Keys. After nine months of use, both paints were still repelling hard growth, but the Pettit Vivid Free was clearly softer, and wearing away at a faster rate. It became obvious that for boats that see a lot of bumps from trailering, the EP2000 or another harder paint is a better choice.

terborne copper generated at boatyards. It also allows new boat owners to preserve their original gel coat. However, testers noted five barnacles on the BoatKoat panel. The maker is developing a more potent blend.

CONCLUSION

This six-month update shouldn't guide a search for long-term protection, but it is an excellent resource for two types of sailors: one, the sailor who wants a super clean bottom for the summer season without having to scrub, and the sailor who hauls and paints his boat every year.

If you are in the first group, consider the four ablatives that rated excellent—Micron 66 (saltwater only), EP-21 (freshwater), Pettit's Alumacoat SR and Vivid Free (aluminum-friendly)—or Epaint's two Excellent hard paints EP2000 or ZO-HP. Keep in mind, however, that only one of these paints, Micron 66, has consistently been a two-year finalist in our tests.

If you haul out and paint annually, look for the least-expensive ablatives that rated Good and meets your specific needs. Ablative is preferable because if you are painting every year, you'll build

up hard coatings fast. In this test, seven such paint were priced at about \$120 or less: Blue Water's Copper Shield 45 and Aqua Shield 45, Flexdel Aquaguard, Interlux Bottomkote ACT, Interlux Bottomkote, West Marine CPP Plus, and Sea Hawk Monterrey.

Past *PS* tests have shown that, except where noted, the best-rated saltwater paints also excel in fresh water. However, lake sailors should closely consider hard, low-copper or no-copper, fresh water paints that reduce their impact on the environment.

As for the march toward eco-friendly

marine paints, so far none of the newest formulas boost our hopes in that area. If you want to join the eco-train, EP2000 or ZO-HP are excellent bets, but the prep work for EP2000 can be significant. If you want to baby-step toward a greener bottom coating, but still want an ablatives coating, consider a water-based, low- or no-copper ablatives. Again, if you go past the 12-month mark free of barnacles with any of these eco-paints, you are doing well.

Practical Sailor will be publishing an update on all of these bottom paints in the October issue. ▲

Photo by Frank Lanier

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KOP-COAT (PETTIT)
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