

# Practical Sailor™

## 'Weathered' Teak

*Rain may dampen your plans, but the wood will be OK.*

I started the touch-up process for my varnished brightwork, sanding out the bad spots, sometimes down to the bare teak wood. Then, it started raining and hasn't stopped for days. What harm is the rain doing? What should I do when the sun returns and I get back to the project?



### PS ADVISOR

Larry Yackle

Lydia, Fenwick William cat boat  
Savin Hill Yacht Club, Boston Harbor

*Isn't there an old adage about rousing the rain gods by opening a can of varnish (or paint)? Having lived (and sailed) mostly in sub-tropical climes, we can definitely sympathize with a rain-delayed boat project.*

*The rain actually isn't doing any harm to the wood or varnish so much as it's just a nuisance, adding more work and time to the job at hand. After the rain ceases, let the wood dry for several days. The higher the humidity, the longer the dry time. De-natured alcohol or Naphtha can remove surface moisture. Once the wood has dried,*

*you will need to resand any bare wood areas so that you're coating fresh wood.*

*If you'd prefer extra assurance that the wood is dry (rather than just eye-balling it), invest in an inexpensive moisture meter.*

*However, many of these require that the metal, nail-like probe penetrate the wood to get a reading, and—obviously—poking holes in brightwork is less than desirable. According to wood coatings-maker Epifanes, a wood moisture content between 12 and 17 percent is desirable.*

*Epifanes products are among the dozens of exterior wood coatings we're panel testing to determine which has the longest life. Look for the one-year test update this fall. For more tips, check out "Sparkling Brightwork" in Tools & Techniques on [www.practical-sailor.com](http://www.practical-sailor.com).*

### SWITCHING BOTTOM PAINTS

I am moving my sailboat from Michigan to the Pacific Northwest. The antifouling on the boat is Interlux VC17m. Compatibility charts show VC Offshore, Baltoplate, or vinyl-based paints as options. I will be cruising rather than racing. Which of the Interlux products is recommended? What should I use to remove the VC17m?

Peter Coggan  
Via e-mail



### ON THE HORIZON AIS TRANSCEIVERS GEAR OF THE YEAR RACE BOAT ROUNDUP BOTTOM PAINT SMALL BOAT SAILS

*Paint compatibility/overcoat requirements should always be taken into consideration when selecting an antifouling paint. Some—most abrasives—are compatible with many paints and require only light sanding before being painted over. At the other end of the spectrum are hard, racing paints like VC17m, which must be completely removed before another paint can be applied.*

*According to Interlux, VC17m is only compatible with itself; if anything else is applied over it, the paint film will lift and wrinkle.*

*Since you are not necessarily looking for a racing-type paint, Interlux recommends its Micron Extra with Biolux or Micron CSC. Both abrasive paints provide multi-season protection but wear away with use, ultimately eliminating paint buildup and reducing drag. This also means less work when it comes time to re-apply or switch antifouling paints.*

*To remove the VC17m from your hull, you can either sand off the paint down to the bare surface or you can use a paint stripper. If you decide to sand it off, be sure to wear proper safety gear like goggles and a respirator. If you go the paint stripper route, Interlux suggests using its Interstrip 299E paint remover.*

*Other paint strippers include the VOC-free West Marine Paint Remover (Peel Away Smart Strip) and Franmar Soy Strip, which we reviewed in the April 2008 issue. While both did the trick, testers tapped the West Marine remover as the top performer in that test.*



*When foul weather interrupts your wood maintenance routine, the best bet is to let the wood dry out for a few days and resand bare-wood spots before applying the finish.*