

Newport Bay Copper Reduction Program Offers Boater Incentives

First boat receives nontoxic bottom paint through program.

By Ambrosia Sarabia

NEWPORT BEACH — Boaters contemplating making the switch from copper-based antifouling hull paints to environmentally friendly coatings are being encouraged to take advantage of incentives offered through the Newport Bay Copper Reduction Program.

The city of Newport Beach, through a partnership with Orange County

Coastkeeper, launched the program last year in an attempt to improve water quality in the bay. Along with providing harborwide boater education on the issue of copper as a pollutant, the availability of nontoxic bottom paints has been essential to the program. Coastkeeper and several other environmental organizations view the copper that leaches from antifouling paint on boat hulls as a significant source of water pollution.

To help boaters make the change from copper-based bottom paints to more environmentally friendly hull coatings, a four-year public program for

boat owners in Balboa Yacht Basin offers a financial incentive to cover a portion of the repainting cost.

“The idea is to get 50 percent of the boats in the 162-slip marina switched over to nontoxic paint,” explained Ray Heimstra of Orange County Coastkeeper. Water quality monitoring is also being conducted as part of



Clean Paint – Boaters who keep their vessels at Balboa Yacht Basin are encouraged to take advantage of the Newport Bay Copper Reduction Program, offering financial incentives to use nontoxic bottom paints on their boats. The program was implemented to help reduce copper pollution in the bay.

Stephen Auerbach photo

the program at the public-owned boating facility.

Earlier this month, Balboa Yacht Basin boater Stephen Auerbach was the first to participate in the program, when his 25-foot Catalina sailboat was painted with Interlux Intersleek 900 at South Coast Shipyard.

The self-proclaimed environmentalist and active boater signed on after learning of the project last year. His concerns with copper's effect on marine life and water quality led him to participate in the program promoting nonpolluting paint use.

“It definitely caught my interest,” said Auerbach, who contacted Heimstra one year ago about the project, to find out how he could volunteer. The financial incentive is an added bonus, but bettering the environment was the real purpose, he noted.

Prepping the vessel for application of copper-free antifouling paint is quite extensive, when compared to a typical paint job, Auerbach said. While the price is higher, the program is covering a portion of the cost.

Auerbach has not let the numbers dissuade him from being the first in the basin to abandon copper-based paint for the green alternative. Instead, he has been telling fellow boaters about the program and alternatives to copper-based antifouling paints.

One aspect he has considered is that nontoxic paints require a six-month waiting period before the hull can be cleaned — and harsh chemicals and scrapers cannot be used on the paint.

“Other than that, I am not concerned,” he said. “I’m actually looking forward to it.”

Nontoxic paint is available to all boaters, but the financial incentive program is only being offered to boaters who keep their vessels in Balboa Yacht Basin. Orange County Coastkeeper will provide educational presentations harborwide later this summer.

There are several components to the Copper Reduction Program, including a two-year study that will sample water and sediment from eight marinas and adjacent channel sites in Newport Bay, to determine if boats were culprits in elevating copper levels in the harbor. A stormwater analysis is also part of the study that will run through June 2012.

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Teens Launch Hand-Built Boat at CI Harbor

New program targeting at-risk youths teaches teamwork, new skills and responsibility.

By Catherine French

CHANNEL ISLANDS HARBOR — Four proud young men launched a wooden boat they built themselves June 6, at Marine Emporium Landing.

The teens were participants in the American Tall Ship Institute's *Bill of Rights* pilot boat-building program, created in conjunction with a new initiative called Operation Peaceworks, an anti-gang program designed to provide alternative experiences for at-risk youths. "By enrolling in the program, they gain work and life skills to help turn their lives in more positive directions,"

explained M.J. Taylor, education and outreach director.

About 30 family members, friends and volunteers were on hand to cheer the teens' success and watch them row away from the dock.

For the past 18 weeks, the teens have spent six hours a week building, from scratch, a lateen-rigged wooden Granny's Pram the boys named *Selosa*. The craft's hull, stem and stern are made of marine-grade mahogany, the rails are cedar and the yet-to-be-installed hand-built carved mast is made of pine.

"None of these boys had any of the skills needed to build a boat, or anything else for that matter," said program instructor Bob Petersen, assistant manager of Woodcraft in Ventura.

"Through the program, each gained a

working knowledge of carpentry skills like how to use a plane or cut wood. They also learned workplace skills — working on a team to achieve a shared goal.

In addition, the teens learned to sail on *Bill of Rights'* cat-rigged tender and have become more connected with the ocean environment — a completely new experience for them.

"Bob Petersen and others have donated a huge amount of time and resources to help us get this pilot program off the ground," Taylor explained. She also noted that much-needed financial donations from the Ventura County Sheriff's Association and several individuals helped get the program off the ground.

Tools and materials have been donated by Fess Tools, Bessey Clamps,

Stock Building Supply and System 3. "A recent donation was made by Dr. Marco Amadeao of Agoura Hills who, upon learning of our program, donated his entire woodshop," Taylor said.

One of the teens — a senior at Foothill Tech High School in Ventura — helped Taylor plan and implement the pilot project, as well as help build the boat. "He did this as a school project and was instrumental in helping put the program together," Taylor said.

"Through the pilot program, we recently received grant funding for four more boat-building programs for expelled middle school students from Oxnard, beginning in October," Taylor said. "We are very excited."

For information, visit americantallship.org.

Fishing Vessel Runs Aground, 22 Passengers Removed Safely

62-footer issues 1:30 a.m. mayday call, off Coronados.

By Jack Innis

SAN DIEGO — Twenty-two passengers were safely removed from the 62-foot charter vessel *Sea Adventure II* after it apparently grounded on Mexico's Los Coronados islands and began flooding June 18.

Authorities learned of the incident when a mayday call was issued at approximately 1:30 a.m. The Coast Guard launched a helicopter and diverted the cutter *Edisto* to the scene.

The passengers were ferried to H&M Landing in San Diego aboard *Edisto* and a San Diego Harbor Police boat. There were no injuries reported.

Meanwhile, the Coast Guard supplied dewatering pumps to keep *Sea Adventure II* afloat as it was towed to a South San Diego Bay boatyard. A hoist was used to lift the 73-ton vessel out of the water.

Four crewmembers stayed aboard the vessel while it was being towed. One witness described a bowling ball-size hole below the waterline.

Coast Guard investigators are trying to determine the circumstances

surrounding the grounding. "Field sobriety tests of the crew came back negative (sober), and drug tests are pending," said Coast Guard spokesman Henry Dunphy.

According to the *Sea Adventure II* website, the Coast Guard-licensed vessel offers trips from one-half day to three days for fishing, whale watching and sea life excursions, bay cruises and burials at sea.



Returned Safe — Anglers aboard the charter vessel *Sea Adventure II* returned home to safety aboard a police boat and the cutter, *Edisto*.

Courtesy of U.S. Coast Guard

Copper

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"The Copper Reduction Program will be helpful, because we will get information from a voluntary program that will help us determine if the switch to different kinds of paint actually makes a difference in the amount of copper in the bay," said Newport Beach City Council member Nancy Gardner.

City council members this year approved a resolution that promotes the use of nontoxic copper paints in Newport Bay. The U.S. Environmental

Protection Agency estimated that 50,000 pounds of copper are released in Newport Bay per year.

The California Department of Pesticide Regulation launched a re-evaluation of copper paints after the release of a June 2009 report, "Monitoring for Indicators of Antifouling Paint Pollution in California Marinas," indicated an abundance of copper in marinas statewide.

For more information on the Copper Reduction Program, visit coastkeeper.org.

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