STAINLESS STEEL & ALUMINUM CARE

Preventative Maintenance For Your Boat

TACO MARINE
**CORROSION**

**Quality Materials**

The anodized aluminum and stainless steel chosen for construction of the hard top, T-top, bimini top or other marine fabrication on your new boat has been produced to a marine specification designed to achieve the very best overall performance.

**Environmental Factors**

Despite utilizing the best materials for this application, the marine environment is one of the harshest on earth. The marine environment, atmospheric contaminants and normal wear and tear all can contribute to the onset of “pitting” on the metal’s surface. The best way to keep your aluminum and stainless steel in “like new” condition is through proper cleaning and preventive maintenance.

With proper care and maintenance, the anodized aluminum and stainless steel on your boat can be kept in first class condition for a very long time.

The information provided in this brochure is designed to give you a thorough understanding of the factors that can impact the appearance. By using this information, we hope to help you enhance the beauty and value that our products provide for your boating pleasure.

**ANODIZED ALUMINUM**

*The aluminum on your boat has been anodized.* This creates a very hard protective seal on the surface of the aluminum to protect it as much as possible from pitting. When the anodized coating is broken and raw aluminum is exposed, corrosion will take place. Damage from knives, gaffs or other abrasive impacts can break the anodized coating.

**Cosmetic Corrosion (Pitting)**

**What Causes It?**

Corrosion is a natural phenomenon that affects metals by either a chemical or electrochemical reaction. The rate at which aluminum corrodes depends greatly on the environmental conditions and the amount of preventive maintenance performed. Our goal is to slow down or stop this natural phenomenon we call pitting (or corrosion).

**Chemical Attack**

Corrosive chemicals containing high concentrations of acids or alkalis will remove the anodized coating. Solutions containing chlorine, salts, or ammonia are all harmful to the anodized aluminum on your boat. Many common household cleaners contain chemicals that will remove the anodizing and cause pitting.

**Avoidable**

» Strong acidic solutions found in cleaners, paint remover, degreasers, etc.

» Concentrated alkaline based solutions. Many concentrated soaps fall into this category

» Chlorine, sulfurs, solvents and ammonia based products

**Unavoidable**

» Saltwater (comes with the territory)

» Airborne pollution. Airborne particles from local sources: vehicles, incinerators, paper mills, chemical plants, power plants, etc.

» Harsh chemicals from work performed at local shipyards and dry docks

» Be aware of local sources that can expose your new boat to corrosive chemicals

**CLEANING**

**Do It Often! Do It Properly!**

How often you need to wash your boat depends upon how often you use it and the local environment. Naturally, you should thoroughly clean your boat every time you use it. If you store your boat in a marine environment you will need to clean it more often. If local conditions expose the aluminum or stainless steel to harsh chemicals, then washing on a regular basis is recommended.

**Keep It Simple!**

Always use a mild, non-abrasive soap and lots of fresh water. Thoroughly wash the aluminum with a soft towel or sponge. Using lots of soap and water will remove dried salt crystals and other contaminates. Rinse completely with direct water pressure.
STAINLESS STEEL
The corrosion-resistant qualities of stainless steel are inherent in the metal itself. These qualities help stainless steel to form an iron chromium oxide film which in turn protect it from rusting.

If there are signs of rusting:

» Wash with fresh water and a high-quality detergent
» Clean with a car chrome polish
» Wax with a car or fiberglass wax
» For brushed finishes… those finishes that show "grit lines", an abrasive cleaner or sand paper can be used. Always test a small area first and "go in the same direction of the grain"

Avoidable

» DO NOT clean with chlorinated cleaners (no bleach) or scouring powders
» DO NOT use sand paper or abrasive cleaners on buffed or mirror finished metals
» DO NOT clean with muratic or hydrochloric acids

IMPORTANT TIPS
Wash With Lots of Fresh Water

» Wash often enough to keep contaminates from forming or building up.
» Avoid the use of bleach or chlorides to clean the aluminum, stainless steel or nearby components. Chlorides can leach into the metal when used nearby.
» Avoid abrasive cleaning products. For anodized aluminum products, NEVER use steel or brass wool, wire brushes, polishing wheels, rubbing or polishing compounds. These items will remove the anodizing and lead to pitting.

» Pay particular attention when cleaning the pipe & tubing directly beneath the top or canvas. These areas do not receive the natural rinsing action of rainwater. The area is shielded from the sun and does not dry as completely or quickly as the rest of the frame. It is often overlooked when cleaning the boat. This area is likely to be the first place that staining or pitting will occur.
SPECIALTY BOAT CLEANERS

In the marine industry, there are many cleaners available to maintain your boat. While many work well and are safe for use on aluminum and stainless steel, others can be harmful. You should remember that not all cleaning products are intended for multipurpose use. Choose a cleaning product that is suitable and safe for aluminum and stainless materials.

Here are some brands that are safe and a few you should not use.

SAFE

Mild Dishwashing liquid (Ivory Liquid)

Specialty Marine Cleaners

Sea Safe Boat Wash

Star Brite
starbrite.com
800-327-8583

Boatwash Concentrate

Aquatech
aquatech-marine.com
800-853-7760

Super Suds

Marykate
properboatcare.com/
marykatediv.html
800-628-7596

HARMFUL

» Bleach (chlorox, etc.)

» Mild Abrasive Cleaners (Ajax, Comet, Soft Scrub, Rubbing Compounds, etc.)

» Strong Cleaners (409, Engine Degreasers, Bilge Cleaners, Teak Cleaners, Bottom Cleaners, etc.)

» Muratic or hydrochloric acids

PROTECTIVE PRODUCTS

There are many different products available to protect aluminum and stainless steel. Some are designed to seal and protect before problems occur and others are designed to use after pitting has appeared.

While these products are effective, they are not one time solutions. Metal protectors must be reapplied on a regular basis. How often a protector should be used varies according to the protector you choose, the types of exposure your boat is subjected to, and how often you use and wash your boat. Follow the application guidelines provided with the protector you choose.

Below are some metal protection products that are readily available at marine retailers.

Woody Wax CPR

Woody Wax
woody-wax.com
800-619-4363

Boeshield T-9

PMS Products, Inc.
boeshield.com
800-962-1732

Premier Polish

Aquatech
aquatech-marine.com
800-853-7760

Corrosion Block

Lear Chemical
learchem.com
800-256-2548