

ANODES: TIME FOR A GREENER CHOICE

Written by: Canada Metal, Ltd., www.canmet.com



BY NOW WE'RE ALL USED TO MAKING environmentally friendly choices that involve paying more for products that don't work as well as the old familiar products they replace. When it comes to sacrificial anodes, boaters find themselves in the happy position of switching to something that works better than the old familiar zinc anodes used for centuries: cadmium free anodes.

Cadmium is a very nasty heavy metal. Although it has a long history of use in a variety of industrial applications, its use is steadily being banned in production and rules for its disposal as a hazardous waste are becoming ever more stringent. Its presence in anodes is of considerable concern to scientists studying estuarial pollution and the uptake of pollutants by aquatic organisms, and therefore into the human food chain. All too often, cadmium is present in fish and shellfish found in the seafood aisle of any supermarket, not to mention in organisms lower down the food chain.

States are required to deal with marinas as a source of what's termed non-point pollution in accordance with guidelines set by the EPA. Those guidelines require periodic water quality assessments. So the path is clearly open for regulation of the amount of cadmium acceptable in marina water...And that could well lead to an effective ban on zincs, because without the cadmium content, they simply won't function as anodes.

John Rothermel, VP Sales at Seattle-based Fisheries Supply, says that magnesium is the right choice "if the boat is always going to be in fresh water and never in salt water. If the boat is going back and forth, aluminum seems to be the only answer. Aluminum does lose its effectiveness in fresh water but will begin working again once the boat enters the salt water. To provide better protection in fresh water, a supplemental magnesium anode called a 'groupier' can be hung over the side of the boat."

Yet pretty clearly, whatever the anode material, the only way that the boater can be sure that what is bought will be in spec is to go to a well-known, trusted source which stocks name brand anodes. It is the key to note that CMP (Martyr brand owner) is the only magnesium anode manufacturer that offers a full line of material certified magnesium anodes.

According to CMP's John Mitchell, there are a number of anode suppliers out there who do not even have the basic alloy testing equipment and are not certified by any third party quality management auditing group. There are also reports of quality problems with some imported anodes. While some boatyard may not ask for ISO certification and the like from anode suppliers, this is certainly not the case with big name industry suppliers who have a reputation to protect.

John Rothermel of Fisheries Supply, which has been in business since 1928, says that the company only carries anodes from three trusted suppliers (one of which is CMP). All three supply MILSPEC anodes and stamp their logo on their products.

West Marine, too, only carries anodes from a limited range of trusted suppliers, again including CMP. Vice President of Sustainability Chuck Hawley makes the point that, as well as safeguarding its own reputation by supplying quality anodes that deliver as promised, they must have suppliers who have a reliable logistics supply chain. ■

ZINCS DON'T WORK

Insist On
Martyr

FRESH WATER ANODES

Magnesium

- Super Light-Weight
- Enviro-Friendly
- OEM Recommended

Scan for a dealer near you

FOR FRESH WATER ONLY
CADMIUM FREE

www.martyranodes.com