
From: rhodes22-list-bounces@rhodes22.org on behalf of Rob Granger [rgranger@sbc.edu]
Sent: Sunday, January 15, 2012 10:20 PM
To: The Rhodes 22 Email List
Subject: [Rhodes22-list] Home Made Peel Away Bottom Paint Remover

Okay guys... I thought I had posted this here before but I guess I belong to too many groups and lost track. On another list I belong to, I read a post where a guy claimed that peel away bottom paint remover is nothing more than sodium hydroxide mixed with hydrated lime. The paper only serves to keep the paste moist so it remains active. Well I'm a chemist so that piqued my curiosity and I gave it a try.

I mixed about 2lbs of potassium hydroxide with a bag of garden lime in a 5 gal PVC bucket and then rolled it onto the bottom of my new-2-me Rhodes. I also added some glycerol to keep it moist instead of using paper. I left it on for two days and then pressure washed the boat. Attached are pictures. It worked remarkably well.

So here is the thing you need to know. Lye used for canning or most drain cleaners are either sodium or potassium hydroxide. Read the label before you buy. The lye is probably the most economical way to go here. Garden lime costs \$4 at Lowes. So for less than \$8 you can strip your old bottom paint. To keep the paste moist so it remains active, add 5lb of sugar.

Sugar is hygroscopic and will trap moisture out of the air.

I could not believe my eyes as the bottom paint on the boat just flaked off with the pressure wash. And I wish I had known this trick several boats ago.

Fair winds all,

... the other Rob

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From: rhodes22-list-bounces@rhodes22.org on behalf of Rob Granger [rgranger@sbc.edu]
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2012 12:05 AM
To: The Rhodes 22 Email List
Subject: Re: [Rhodes22-list] Home Made Peel Away Bottom Paint Remover

It is the hydroxide that is the active ingredient. The sodium or potassium is just a spectator ion that goes along for a ride with the hydroxide ion....so NO it does not matter.

I would not use brown sugar. It is more expensive and you are correct that brown sugar is more acidic than white sugar.... and it would neutralize part of the hydroxide in your mix. Hydroxides are basic. So it would work against you. You could possibly even skip the sugar and just simply mist the pastw with the garden hose a couple of times a day for a few days to moisten it and reactivate it. That would save you money and probably work just as well.

The garden lime is just a binder to give you a paste like substance that will hold the hydroxides against the paint. I'm guessing flour would work just as well. I'm not sure how big the bag was. I think Lowes only carried once size bag and I'd guess it at 25 ish pounds. Make sure you get hydrated lime (also known as slaked lime, or garden lime). Mason's lime would work even better if you can get it since it is also very basic (Calcium oxide) You do not want the crushed limestone. The hydrated lime looks like a fine white powder. Make sure that is what you are buying.

Mix the hydroxide salt with the lime, add water and stir until you have a consistency similar to pancake batter.

Be VERY CAREFUL not to get this on your skin or in your eyes. It will burn you skin and will damage your eyes. Wear long sleeves, long pants, gloves and eye protection. Especially while mixing it.

I have a Ph.D. in chemistry and I'm the chemical hygiene officer where I work so I'm being serious about not getting this in your eyes. WEAR SAFETY GLASSES. I used a paint roller on a long pole so never got my hands near the stuff.

It really does work so if you have a pressure washer this is the easy way to get your bottom paint off of your boat.

Now to the environmental issues. If you want to collect the bottom paint chips that will be stripped off by the pressure washer, get some of that black cloth used in gardens. The water from your pressure washer will pass through and the chips will remain on top. I personally raked mine up and disposed of them that way.

It really does work so... have fun,

the other Rob

On Sun, Jan 15, 2012 at 11:44 PM, Rusty Gesner <rgesner@gmail.com> wrote:

> Rob,
>
> What size bag of garden lime?
> Do either either sodium or potassium hydroxide work equally well?
> How much glycerol?
>
> I've heard that (in baking) brown sugar is more acidic and hydrophilic
> so it absorbs more moisture than white.
>
> Thanks - Rusty
>
>
>

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