

CONSUMER NEWS

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Jerry Nessenson | gnessenson@valvtect.com | 1+847.272.2278

What Boaters Need To Know About Using Fuel Additives

NORTHBROOK, ILLINOIS – Since nearly 90% of the nation’s gasoline is blended with ethanol, boaters are often encouraged to use an ethanol treatment fuel additive to prevent corrosion, fuel destabilization and help retard phase separation.

Over the past several years, a variety of fuel additives have been introduced into the marine market, all claiming to prevent ethanol related problems and even restore phase separated ethanol/water, octane rating and stale gasoline. However, at least one leading marine engine manufacturer has publicly stated that 75% of marine fuel additives they are aware of are considered “problematic”.

So how does a boater know which additives may be effective, or ineffective - and which additives may actually cause a problem or even engine failure?

Recently, the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA), held several meetings to discuss the need for the marine industry to develop a specification for marine grade fuel additives, similar to the specification developed for 2 and 4 cycle marine motor oils. The group discussed problems that ethanol may cause in marine applications and engine problems that consumers have had that may have actually been caused by some fuel additives.

“It is important for boaters to know what fuel additives can actually do and for the marine industry to develop specifications that would help boaters make an intelligent choice. It is also important for boaters to know what additives cannot do and what fuel additives should and should not be used for,” said Jerry Nessenson, president of ValvTect Petroleum, the marine industry’s largest supplier of marine gasoline, diesel fuel and marine fuel additives.

“For example, some additives claim to restore phase separated and stale gasoline. Engine manufacturers and gasoline refiners state this is not possible and if this is attempted it could cause engine damage. We believe the industry needs to help protect consumers against false claims and the misuse of fuel additives,” Nessenson said.

NMMA has called on industry leaders for recommendations to test the ability of fuel additives to prevent corrosion, fuel oxidation, moisture control (phase separation) and deposit build-up.

“ValvTect recommended various ASTM, NACE and U.S. EPA test protocols that are currently used by all gasoline refiners and engine manufacturers,” Nessenson said. “Although some additive companies using non-traditional chemistry, such as enzymes and glycol, claim their additives don’t work under those industry test procedures, we believe using existing petroleum

industry tests is the only way to verify a fuel additive's performance and that the additive would not cause harm to the engine when using the additive over a long period of time," he added.

"The bottom line is, when putting a fuel additive in your boat's expensive engine, it would be wise to check if the additive meets petroleum industry and engine manufacturer specifications and is accepted fuel additive technology. The engine you save may be your own," Jerry Nessonson said.

For more information about ValvTect Petroleum, visit www.valvtect.com or call 1+847.272.2278.

ValvTect Petroleum - 3400 Dundee Rd - Northbrook, IL 60062 USA