

Here's some information that I came across from the surveyor's e-mail reflector group that I belong to. I thought it might be of interest/benefit to those of you with sailboats:

This was the original question:

"I'm writing a report on an old Ranger 29 and it's got some pretty nicely renewed rigging with no sealant on the wire/fitting matings. I normally make a recommendation to seal these. Am I wrong?"

And here are some of the answers:

"I installed Norseman fittings on my boat eight years ago and the instructions called for sealant. My local rigger (Florida) took separate swage ends, one with silicon in the swage, one with 5200, one with blue Loctite, one with nothing added and the last with bee's wax. He submerged them in his salt water canal behind his house for three years. He cut each swage down the middle to examine the cable. The bee's wax had almost no corrosion, the wax was melted into the swage and there were no voids. Loctite was next, it was thin enough to penetrate into the core of the cable. The sealants were about the same, they did not penetrate into the center of the cable and the centers were corroded. The empty swage was severely corroded. I do not believe that leaving a swage so water can enter it is a wise choice. Water or moisture is needed for corrosion to begin. The lower swages are cps standing upright and hold water. Salt crystals trapped in the swage will retain moisture (salt water soaked towels never dry) and corrode the cable, expanding and cracking the swage."

"Bee's wax is an old, seldom mentioned, but very effective protective treatment for all kinds of wire and other lines as well. One of its great advantages is that it can be applied after the fact, when necessary, and still achieve good results. Rinse with fresh water, dry with heat applied and then melt the wax into the fitting with just enough heat to make it fluid. It penetrates and protects and will stand up to the tropical sun. The rigger's real life laboratory is an eye opener as it plainly shows the fallacy of trying to force thick compounds into tight spaces; it just doesn't work as well as a true penetrant. Note also that the bee's wax is the only one of the sealants the rigger used that is truly "green" and readily replaced."

Hope you find this informative! It's not as important in fresh water but for those of you who boat in salt water, it's pretty critical.

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