

READERS' WORKBENCH

Freeing Those Sticky Zippers

It's no secret that *Practical Sailor* is no fan of zippers on boats. If left to their own, zippers—particularly the small metallic variety—tend to cement shut in short order. The worst offenders? Those zippered life-jacket storage bags that would have to be knifed open in an emergency. The Conklin family (Cavijj, Marilyn, and Bruce), owners aboard *Reflection*, a Stamas 44 in Punta Gorda, Fla., dodged an expensive dodger repair project by soaking the zippered sections in vinegar and hot water (3:1 ratio). A few scrubs with a tooth brush helped the concoction penetrate the teeth. After soaking for a day and a half, the frozen zippers were free. Previous *PS* articles have highlighted vinegar's many uses



Small metallic zippers are particularly prone to losing their zip.

aboard, ranging from cleaning in the galley to routine flushing of raw-water heads to removing salt from the hull. It's inexpensive, is useful for cooking and making salad dressings.