

# New livewell cooling system will help keep fish from dying after they're caught

By CHAD GAY sports@knoxnews.com  
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Chad Gay/Special to the News Sentinel

Ott Defoe of Knoxville relies on the KOOLWELL livewell cooling system to keep fish cool and healthy during hot summer days.

Livewells in boats are nothing new. They are standard equipment on virtually every boat manufactured and are designed to keep fish alive on a boat. But what happens when they don't perform as they should?

Most tournament fishermen earn their paychecks by bringing live fish to the scales. Costly weight penalties are incurred for bringing expired fish to the scales, and those penalties can translate into thousands, and perhaps hundreds of thousands of dollars.

So Paul Sorey of Lenoir City decided to build a better mousetrap, so to speak.

"It's a well-known fact that after catching fish in summertime tournaments, it's difficult to keep them alive," Sorey said. "After watching local and professional tournaments it became clear to me that something needed to be done."

In summer of 2008, Sorey, along with Knoxville residents Bryan Graham and Sandy McDaniel, came up with a product that cools the water in a livewell to aid in keeping fish alive. The

KOOLWELL livewell cooling system is a 12-volt cooling and aeration system that allows anglers to control the temperature of the water in their livewell via a thermostat.

"We see people use the system anywhere from 65 to 75 degrees in practical application," Sorey said. "It comes pre-set at about 70 degrees, and most people are just leaving it right there and just letting it work."

A number of pro fishermen are using the system, including Brandon Coulter, Ott Defoe, Mike McClelland, Regi Floyd, Greg Vinson and Terry Baksay.

"Any time livewell water reaches a temperature over 80 degrees, that's the danger zone," said pro angler Michael Murphy of Gilbert, S.C., who also holds a degree in Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences from Purdue University. "If you use ice to cool the water, it has chemicals in it that are good for humans, but actually bad for fish.

"If you take a fish out of cooler water below the thermocline and put it in warmer livewell water, it really shocks the fish," Murphy added. "KOOLWELL keeps the water cooler, which allows the water to hold more oxygen and have a relaxing effect on the fish. It's a must-have, especially from the conservation side of things."

Sorey said 90 percent of the people who buy the KOOLWELL livewell cooling system install it themselves, with installation taking one to two hours depending on the configuration of the boat. Sorey said the system can be installed on every major brand of boat.

He said the main purpose is fish conservation, however, some anglers have found it helps give them peace of mind on the water.

"All of the guys who use it really enjoy the fact that they can really focus on their fishing," Sorey said. "They're not having to worry about the fish they've already caught. For professional fishermen, it's all about how many casts they can make and how many fish they can catch. If they can depend on KOOLWELL to deliver that cold water, they don't have to worry about their fish, and they love that."

Sorey said the livewell cooling system also doubles as a backup aeration system.

"There are times when the aeration system on a boat will go out," Sorey said. "The KOOLWELL acts as an additional or backup aeration system. It performs the same duties as the boat's aeration system.

The KOOLWELL livewell cooling system can be purchased in area retail sporting goods stores, at [www.koolwell.com](http://www.koolwell.com) or by calling (877) 608-7475.

Chad Gay is a freelance contributor. He may be reached at [writeoutside@gmail.com](mailto:writeoutside@gmail.com).

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