

USE THIS PRE-LAUNCH CHECKLIST TO SPRING INTO THE BOATING SEASON

After winters cold temperatures boats need special care in the spring. Time spent with this checklist today may save you money and time later.

OUT OF THE WATER:

- ___ Inspect and lubricate seacocks. Hoses and hose clamps should be inspected and replaced as necessary.
- ___ Replace deteriorated zincs.
- ___ Check to make sure the rudderstock hasn't been bent.
- ___ Inspect the hull for blisters, distortions and stress cracks.
- ___ Make sure your engine intake sea strainer is free of corrosion and properly secured.
- ___ Check the engine shaft and rudder stuffing boxes for looseness. After the boat is launched, be sure to check as well as through-hulls for leaks.
- ___ Use a hose to check for deck leaks at ports and hatches. Renew caulk or gaskets as necessary.
- ___ if equipped, ensure that stern drain plug is installed.

Outdrives and Outboards:

- ___ Inspect rubber outdrive bellows for cracked, dried and/or deteriorated spots (look especially in the folds) and replace if suspect.
- ___ Check power steering and power trim oil levels. Replace worn-out zinc.
- ___ Inspect outer jacket of control cables. Cracks or swelling indicate corrosion and mean that the cable has to be replaced.
- ___ Inspect fuel lines, including fill and vent hoses, for softness, brittleness or cracking. Check all joints for leaks and make sure all lines are well supported with non-combustible clips or straps with smooth edges.

Engines and Fuel Systems:

- ___ Inspect fuel tanks, fuel pumps and filters for leaks. Clamps should be snug and free of rust. Clean fuel filters.
- ___ Inspect cooling hoses and fittings for stiffness, rot, leaks and/or cracking. Make sure they fit snugly and are double-clamped.
- ___ Every few years, remove and inspect exhaust manifold for corrosion.
- ___ Clean and tighten electrical connections, especially both ends of battery cables. Wire brush battery terminals and fill cells with distilled water.
- ___ Inspect bilge blower hose for leaks.

IN THE WATER:

- ___ Check the engine shaft and rudder stuffing boxes for steady leaks and looseness.
- ___ Use a hose to check for deck leaks at ports and hatches. Renew caulks or gaskets as necessary.
- ___ If equipped, ensure that stern drain plug is installed.

Trailers:

- ___ Inspect tire treads and sidewalls for cracks or lack of tread and replace as necessary. Check air pressure. Don't forget the SPARE!
- ___ Inspect bearings and repack as necessary.
- ___ Test tail and back-up lights. Test winch to make sure it is working properly.
- ___ Inspect trailer frame for rust. Sand and paint to prevent further deterioration.

Miscellaneous:

- ___ Check expiration dates on flares and fire extinguishers.
- ___ Check stove and remote tanks for loose fittings and leaking hoses.
- ___ Inspect bilge pump and float switch to make sure it is working properly.
- ___ Inspect dock and anchor lines for chafing.
- ___ Update or replace old charts, waterway guides.
- ___ Check shore power cable connections for burns, which indicates the cable needs to be replaced.
- ___ Make sure your boating license and/or registration is up to date. Do not forget your trailer tags.
- ___ Review your boat insurance policy and update coverage if needed. Be sure you have fuel spill insurance coverage.