

SPRING LAUNCHING SAFETY WORKSHEET

An hour or two spent looking over the boat this spring could save a lot of hassles later this summer. The worksheet below is intended to cover the main systems on a boat that are likely to need your annual attention.

Boat's Name: _____

Your Name: _____

Marina Phone #: _____

Date: _____

LIST OF EQUIPMENT YOU MAY NEED

CAULK

- Polysulfide (deck hardware, below the waterline) Silicone (Plastic/Plexiglas ports)



ANODES

- Shaft
- Engine
- Outdrive
- Trim Tabs

- Lubricants
- Stainless Hose Clamps
- Rigging Tape (Sailboats)
- Power Steering Fluid

- Mechanic's Flashlight
- Mechanic Tools
- Transmission Fluid

GETTING STARTED

- If necessary, reinstall batteries. Make sure they're fully charged. Top up battery electrolyte if applicable and needed.
- Open and close seacocks; handles should move freely. Hoses should be double clamped with stainless-steel hose clamps. Replace any that look rusted. Check hoses for deterioration.
- Is the raw-water intake strainer clean and free of corrosion? Does the strainer's top fit snugly?

- Check running and anchor lights. Replace bulbs and/or tighten connections to assure that all are operating properly.
- Look for indications of leaking at trim cylinders and hoses as well as at hydraulic steering and rams, which indicates the o-ring or gasket needs to be replaced.
- With conventional stuffing boxes, make sure the stuffing box is sufficiently tight and completely dry when the boat is at the dock. Check again

underway to make sure there is a steady drip.

- Use a garden hose sprayed at ports and hatches to identify leaks that need to be recaulked.
- Check flares (expiration date) and fire extinguishers (charge). Or replace if needed.
- Test bilge pump and high-water switch and alarm.

BOATS ASHORE

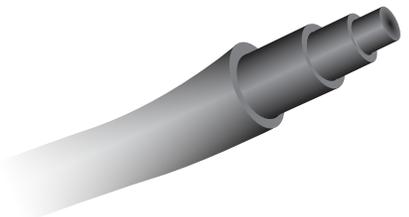
- Inspect props for dinging, pitting and distortion.
- Replace plastic fittings near the waterline with bronze or Marelon®.
- Inspect the anodes on the shaft, outdrive and trim tabs. Replace any that are more than half deteriorated.

OUTDRIVES AND OUTBOARDS

- Check outdrive bellows for cracks and tears (look especially in the folds).
- Check the hydraulic trim fluid. If you didn't change it last fall, change it now.
- Check lower unit lube level. Creamy oil indicates water (and a bad seal). Many manufacturers recommend changing the oil every year.

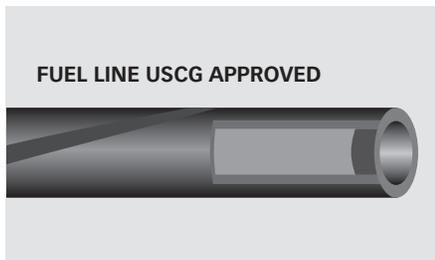
CONTROL CABLES

- Inspect outer jacket for cracks and swelling, both of which indicate the cable must be replaced. Use waterproof grease at the ends.

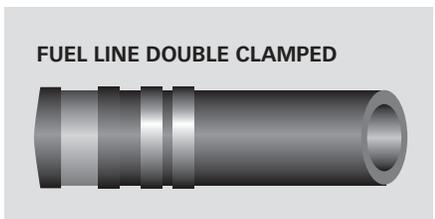


ENGINES AND FUEL SYSTEMS

- ❑ Flexible gasoline lines should say "USCG Approved, J1527".

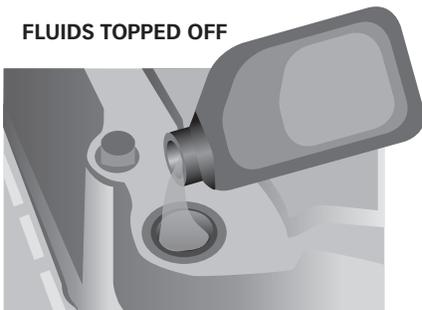


- ❑ Are fuel hoses supple, with no cracks, bulges or soft spots? Do the lines smell like gasoline (wipe the lines with a clean rag and then smell the rag)? Did you also use a rag to detect odors at connections? Cooling hoses should fit snugly and be double clamped.



- ❑ Replace fuel filters.

- ❑ Check oil and transmission fluid levels. Also hydraulic steering fluid, trim/tilt system oil and coolant. Change oil unless done in fall (preferable).



- ❑ Check belts for tension and wear.

- ❑ Check raw-water and fresh-water pumps for seepage, which indicates a gasket or shaft seal needs to be replaced.

- ❑ Examine exhaust manifolds for signs of corrosion and water seepage that indicate blockage. (Another indication is an engine that runs hotter

than normal.) If you suspect a problem, the only way to know for sure is to remove the manifold. How often you pull the manifold depends on where and how often you go boating (fresh or saltwater). In some tropical areas, manifolds may need to be inspected every other season.

- ❑ Replacing the (inexpensive) end-plate gaskets at the heat exchanger every year helps prevent corrosion at the housing and also lets you look for gunk that can clog the stacks.

HEAT EXCHANGER END COVER ASSEMBLY



- ❑ Clean and tighten electrical connections, especially both ends of the battery cables. Use a moisture-displacing lubricant at any connection that is exposed to excessive moisture.

- ❑ Check engine zincs.

- ❑ Test bilge blower and inspect hose.

SAILBOAT RIGGING

- ❑ Inspect swage fittings for rust and cracks. Running rigging should be supple and free of chafe.

- ❑ Inspect stays and shrouds for "fishhooks," barbs of metal from the rigging that can injure crew and indicate the wire is at the end of its useful life and needs to be replaced.

- ❑ Ensure that spreaders bisect the shrouds at an equal angle. Ends should be protected to prevent chafe.

- ❑ Remove tape at turnbuckles, inspect for corrosion, and lubricate threads (preferably with Teflon®).

- ❑ Using a hose, check chainplates for leaks. Look for rust streaks. Recaulk as necessary.

VHF & GPS ANTENNA

- ❑ Check VHF and GPS antenna connections by disconnecting, spraying with moisture-displacing lubricant, then reconnect and test.

SAFETY GEAR

- ❑ Check and service safety gear such as life jackets, MOB gear etc. Check smoke/CO alarms if applicable and service if needed. Check tank vents for plugging by mud daubers or other creatures.

REMEMBER

Follow relevant recommendations in manuals for all equipment.