

WINTERIZATION AND STORAGE 9

When cold weather has arrived or if you will be placing your boat in storage for a longer period of time, we suggest using the following guidelines to prepare it for storage. If you live in an area that does not require seasonal storage, we recommend a thorough inspection once a year.

PREPARATION FOR STORAGE

Trailer

When you are preparing the boat for winter storage, it's also a good time to check the trailer thoroughly.

Check the electrical system for wear or loose connections, and repair if necessary. Inspect tail light lenses and inspect bulbs and sockets for excessive rust and corrosion. Coat metal base of bulb with a dielectric grease or spray with WD-40.

Examine the entire trailer and running gear for signs of cracking or metal fatigue. Repair weld cracks, and tighten any loose bolts and screws. Check the frame for signs of bending or swaying due to overloading. If rust has formed on the trailer, remove it by sanding and paint the bare spots to match the trailer. Repair or replace worn or misadjusted bunks or rollers.

Inspect the winch and fastening hook for wear. Check tie-downs for fraying. Loosen or remove tie-downs. Lubricate the winch, the coupler, all rollers and pivot points. Check the safety chains for weak links, safety cables for frayed wire and faulty hooks.

Boat

Note: Remove the bilge drain plug immediately after taking the boat out of the water. After washing, raise the bow to allow as much water as possible to drain while performing other storage preparations.

If you are placing the boat in dry storage, scrape any barnacles and other growth off the hull. Scrub the hull and deck thoroughly to remove marine growth and scum. Inspect the underwater gear and propellers for excessive wear or damage. Check whether the bottom needs repainting.

Note: Clean the hull right after the boat is hauled out of the water. Marine growth and barnacles are easier to remove while they are still wet.

Wash the deck and cockpit. Clean all metal surfaces, and apply a coat of rust inhibitor. Clean the carpet. Prepare canvas for storage. If you choose to shrink wrap your boat, be sure to provide proper ventilation to prevent condensation and mildew growth. See your dealer for additional information.

ENGINE

Refer to the engine operation and maintenance manual for detailed instructions on storing and winterization. Have your dealer or an authorized marine service dealer winterize the engine.

Fuel System

Fill the fuel tank completely to reduce condensation. Add a gasoline stabilizer solution to the fuel before storage. Follow the stabilizer manufacturer's recommended procedure.

LIVWELL

When the boat is stored, livewells should be drained. If the boat will be stored in freezing weather, be certain to remove all water from livewells, hoses, and pumps. Failure to do so could result in component cracks and leaks.

Note: The use of compressed air hoses in all fittings and drain holes is a good way to ensure that all remaining water is removed.

SHOWER

When the boat is stored, the shower tank should be drained. If the boat will be stored in freezing weather, winterize the shower system following these steps: Start the shower pump, empty the water tank and shut off the pump. Pour potable antifreeze (non-toxic) in the water tank through the filling cap. Run the shower pump opening the shower valve until antifreeze starts to come out. Shut off the pump. Your system is ready for winter.

BATTERIES

WARNING

Poison! Sulfuric acid in batteries can cause severe burns. Avoid contact with skin, eyes, or clothing. Wear goggles, rubber gloves, and protective apron when working with batteries. In case of contact with skin, flush with water at least 15 minutes. If swallowed, drink large quantities of water or milk. Follow with Milk of Magnesia, beaten egg or vegetable oil. Get medical attention immediately.

Remove the batteries. Check water level and store in a cool, dry place away from freezing temperatures. Clean the outside of the battery case, terminals, and battery clamps with a solution of baking soda and water. Do not allow baking soda solution to enter the cells. Lightly sand battery posts and clamps with fine grit emery cloth, and apply a light coat of petroleum jelly to cover the end of the battery cables.

Note: A monthly recharge or continuous trickle charge should be applied to the battery during storage.

INTERIOR CLEANING

Be sure to remove everything that can hold moisture and cause mildew. Remove all cushions, curtains, blankets, sheets, pillows, towels, and clothing from the boat for storage. If you must store cushions on board, open all zippers and lift cover away from the foam padding by placing a small plastic bowl or other round blunt object inside the cushion to allow for adequate air circulation. Where possible, seats should be stored in the down or folded out position.

PFD's and other safety equipment must be cleaned and dried. If left on board, place them where air can circulate around them.

Clean and thoroughly dry the bilge area. Remove all rags, sponges, or other cleaning materials from bilge area.

STORAGE ON TRAILER

If you are storing the boat on a trailer, make sure that the trailer supports are aligned with the structural members of the hull. Distribute the weight properly. Make sure the boat is well supported across the transom and keel. Loosen all tie-downs to relieve the stress on the hull. Position the bow to allow water to drain via the transom drain. Do not allow rain water to collect inside the boat. Put the rig on blocks or else move the trailer from time to time to prevent flat spots on the tires.

If you are not storing your pontoon boat on a trailer, support the pontoon tubes on wood blocks. Position the blocks beneath all weld seams in the pontoon tubes. Failure to properly support the pontoon tubes could lead to boat damage.

Note: If it is possible for water to accumulate on the boat covers, poke a small hole near the back of the boat cover canvas. Prepare the hole with a grommet to prevent tearing. If the boat is tilted backwards, water will run through the hole and out the bilge drain hole.

RECOMMISSIONING THE BOAT AFTER STORAGE

Follow this handy checklist to recommission your craft after storage.

NOTE: For detailed information about recommissioning, refer to the engine manual and accessory manuals in the Owner's Packet.

- Inspect the fuel system and all associated equipment for proper connections, corrosion, leaks, or other damage. Always be aware of any odor of fuel vapors.
- Charge the batteries before installing them.
- Inspect all battery wiring. Repair or replace if necessary.
- Attach the battery cables and tighten the cable clamps. After tightening, apply petroleum jelly or marine grade grease on posts and clamps to eliminate air pockets and acid build-up after clamps are tightened.
- Check bilge for signs of nesting animals and clean as necessary.
- Reinstall hull drain plug (boats) or pontoon drain plugs (pontoon boats)
- Clean the bilge area.
- Test the navigational lights and all other lighting on board.
- Inspect all wiring for fraying, wear, loose connections, and other damage.
- Inspect all switches, controls, and other related equipment for proper operation.
- Inspect all safety equipment for proper operation and physical condition.
- Launch the boat and start the engine. It may take a minute of cranking to allow the fuel system to prime. When the engine starts, keep a close watch over the gauge readings and check for leakage and abnormal noises. Keep speeds low until the engine has reached normal operating temperature. If the engine was fogged for winterization, you will see exhaust smoke for a few minutes while the fogging oil is burned off.

