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Three Sheets
N O R T H W E S T

The Essential Pacific Northwest Boat Winterization Checklist

No matter how much you use your boat during the winter, completing some portion of a checklist you will make it easier to commission and use it once the spring sunshine breaks through the clouds.

Below is a list of items to help you keep tabs on all the particulars of winterization, which can be customized and updated to fit how you use your boat.

Engine(s)

- ☐ Change engine oil
- ☐ Change primary and secondary fuel filters
- ☐ Change air filter
- ☐ Consider closing or covering exhaust port to prevent muskrats or other varmints from nesting there or eating through the hose.
- ☐ Place a note on the engine key to remind you what needs to be done before startup

Potable Water

- ☐ Drain water tanks, clean them and then let them dry
- ☐ Drain water heater tank and turn on bypass valve if installed
- ☐ Run propylene glycol (RV) antifreeze such as Star Brite Winter Safe through plumbing system (but don't put any in the clean and dried tanks or in water heater tank!)
- ☐ Drain and dry shower sump and hose

Fuel

- ☐ Fill tanks full to prevent condensation moisture from affecting fuel and tanks
- ☐ Add biocide and fuel stabilizer
- ☐ Check fuel lines, manifolds and vent lines

Batteries

- ☐ Check and fill lead acid batteries
- ☐ Clean outside of batteries
- ☐ Check battery connections and apply anti-corrosive coating to terminals
- ☐ Ensure proper trickle charging to keep batteries topped-up healthy
- ☐ Turn off the boat's main battery switch or disconnect negative terminal

Electrical

- ☐ Turn off all electrical breakers
- ☐ Check shore power cord and terminals for burn marks or other signs of arcing. Replace immediately if you see a problem
- ☐ Do not run an electric heater if you are not on board the boat

Holding tanks and heads

- ☐ Pump out holding tanks
- ☐ Flush propylene glycol (RV) antifreeze into head, hoses and tank

NOTES: _____

Bilge/below water line

- ☐ Close through-hulls except for scuppers and bilge pumps
- ☐ Consider removing speedo and transducer and replace with dummy plugs
- ☐ Tighten non-dripless shaft seals (write note to loosen before next use)
- ☐ Check all hose clamps and make sure they are double clamped on all below water through-hull hose fittings
- ☐ Test automatic bilge pump
- ☐ Clean and dry bilge

Cabin

- ☐ Remove all electronics (if possible) and store at home
- ☐ Remove perishable food from refrigerator and lockers, and open door to prevent mildew
- ☐ Close propane valves, including those on the tanks
- ☐ Remove signal flares and store at home
- ☐ Check for signs of above deck leaks and address
- ☐ Secure all ports and hatches
- ☐ Replace smoke and CO detector batteries
- ☐ Open cabinets and holds to promote airflow and reduce mildew
- ☐ Vacuum, clean and store cushions on their side or at home
- ☐ Wipe down surfaces with a vinegar solution to prevent mold and mildew
- ☐ Add anti-mold air purifiers such as Kanberra
- ☐ Install dehumidifiers

Exterior

- ☐ Clean out scuppers and ensure they can't get clogged with leaves, etc.
- ☐ Clean, protect and store canvas
- ☐ Replace zincs
- ☐ Maintain windlass
- ☐ Oil security locks
- ☐ Leave spare key with marina
- ☐ Leave note with emergency phone number visible on boat

Fenders and lines

- ☐ Properly inflate fenders
- ☐ Tie fenders securely so they won't damage lifelines and stancions or get caught under dock
- ☐ Install and check dock line chafe guards
- ☐ Tie your boat up as if preparing for a windstorm — including spring lines and extra lines

Sailboat

- ☐ Restrain all halyards and control lines
- ☐ Consider removing running rigging that isn't reeved through mast or replace with messenger lines
- ☐ Remove and store sails or ensure they are properly protected and secured
- ☐ Ensure mast drain is properly functioning

Outboard/Dinghy and small boats

- ☐ Flush outboard cooling system (salt away)
 - ☐ Replace lower unit oil
 - ☐ Dispose of unused gasoline or add a fuel stabilizer
 - ☐ Fog engine (per manufacturer)
 - ☐ Touch-up paint
 - ☐ Remove boat drain plug
 - ☐ Clean and properly store and cover dinghy
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