

From the Fisher's Mouth

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The holiday season for many of us involves spending time near water. Whether we travel to the coast or camp on an inland river, or just take the kids yabbying for a few hours, its part of our culture to spend the summer holidays on the water.

If your annual pilgrimage to the coast, the mountains or the river involves digging your boat out of the shed where twelve months of junk have piled on top of it, there are several things you should do to make sure your boat will make it, and also that it will run reliably when it gets there. You can do most of these checks yourself, but for peace of mind and to save time, use a professional outfit such as Wagga Marine (www.waggamarine.com.au) to do the work for you.



Any trailer that has been in salt water will develop corrosion. The key places to look for structural rust problems are along the welds and where holes have been drilled through the trailer to bolt things on. If checked regularly, most rust can be cleaned up and painted, or at worst, the rust cut out and a new section of steel welded in. Springs are a prime source of rust and should be replaced before the rust weakens the steel (with catastrophic results). Winches and winch cables should also be inspected.

Wheel bearings are the number one cause of trailer breakdown. Get your bearings checked and/or replaced before you travel. To check a bearing, simply jack up the wheel and spin it by hand. It should spin silently and smoothly and have little movement. Any noise is a problem and should be addressed.

Corrosion ruins trailer lights and wiring. Fitting submersible LED lights resolves the issue of globes rusting up and is very reliable when compared to older style globe lighting. The connector that attaches trailer lighting to the cars electrical system is a common area where corrosion prevents contact resulting in trailer lights not working correctly.

A boat that has been sitting for some months will need a few simple checks.

1. Make sure the battery is charged and that terminals, and all connections that fit on the terminals, are clean.
2. Check that the boats electrical components work, especially safety items such as EPIRB, compass, GPS, bilge pumps, navigation lights.
3. Check the fuel system for perished or split fuel lines. The primer bulb is a common area where problems start. Also check fuel filter.
4. Check that the steering is free. Salt water seeps into the steering cables and can rust the whole cable solid.

5. Start your motor at home (with the ear muffs on). Listen or look for warning alarms from the engine and ensure that the water is pumping (it's advisable to replace water pump impellers every twelve to eighteen months).
6. Check and replace gearbox oil. If oil is 'milky' replace propeller seal as water is mixing with the oil and corroding your expensive gearbox.
7. Check engine oil levels in four stroke engines. Replace as per service schedule.

With these simple checks behind you, you can be assured that when you are on holidays you can focus on fun and not worry about equipment failure ruining your valuable time with family and friends.

Happy fishing.

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