



GOOD BOAT OWNER HABITS

- **Have a shop manual for your engine:** This can frequently be found online as a PDF and will include your engine's basic maintenance schedule.
- **Consider creating your own custom maintenance schedule:** Remember the the shop manual will not include many peripheral marine items (e.g. control cables, raw water hoses, strainers, seacocks, shaft, seals, etc).
- **Check all fluids and conduct a quick visual inspection before starting the engine:** If done routinely, you'll know what things should look like and can catch issues early.
- **Keep track of the amount of oil added between oil changes:** Consider periodic **engine oil analysis** for insights into oil change intervals, engine wear, potential contamination.
- **Change oil at the end of the season:** The engine will thank you.
- **Create a system for knowing when the seacock is closed:** For example, the key is in the ignition when seacock is open.
- **Change anodes (zincs) when they're 50% wasted:** Consider changing to aluminum anodes for longer service life and less impact to the environment.
- **Store gasoline in spaces that are vented and not connected to other areas of the boat:** Gasoline vapors are heavier than air and gas should never be kept in lazarettes.
- **Carry spares:** Keeping frequently-needed items (e.g. fuel filters, raw water impellers, and belts) close at hand will make your life easier.
- **Listen for clues:** Pay attention to changes in engine sounds and investigate.
- **Be proactive in your maintenance:** A lot of confidence comes from understanding and taking care of your engine.
- **If something doesn't seem right, it probably isn't:** Good seamanship can often mean doing exactly what you don't want to do.



Note: If you'd like support in establishing a maintenance routine or walking through any of the items covered today, partnering with boat-owners is something I enjoy offering.