



**Capt. Bennie Ficarrotta**

**USCG Licensed Captain**

**ASA Certified Instructor**

*Seafarers Way*

**SeaFarersWay@gmail.com**

**727-412-1765**

## **PRE-DEPARTURE CHECK LIST**

If you haven't taken your boat out in a while or if you just bought a new boat (new or new to you) that you are not familiar with, make sure to not leave the slip until you've done some pre-departure checking.

Here's a list that will help give you some ideas as to what to check for.



## **PRE-TRIP CHECK LISTS**

### **A couple of days before departure...**

- Have bottom, prop and rudder cleaned of any growth and/or barnacles
- Top off fuel and water
- Empty holding tank
- Check weather (Local and on NOAA site)

### **The following must be on-board...**

- One approved Type I, II or III PFD for each person on board and one throwable Type IV
- Sound signaling device
- Approved visual distress signals for both daytime and night-time use (in-date flares)
- Two B-I type OR one B-II type approved portable fire extinguishers (or more)
- Boat documentation/registration and insurance papers and/or temporary running papers.

### ***Make sure the prop, rudder and bottom are cleaned just before you leave on your trip...***

*We were heading East into Charlotte Harbor via the Boca Grande Pass. We had 30-40 knots of wind and six foot seas on the nose. We were barely making way. At one point, we seemed to lose way and began to drift dangerously close to running aground. Luckily we made it. Why did we get into this sticky situation? Although the prop, rudder and bottom were cleaned a couple of weeks prior, they had become thick with barnacles. Especially in Florida, it happens quickly.*



*See the prop in there?*

**The following should be on-board...**

- First aid kit
- Charts, chart tools (parallel rules, dividers)
- Flashlights and High lumen hand-held spot light
- Spare batteries (AA, AAA, C, D as required)
- Binoculars
- Boat hook (back up boat hook)
- Dock lines, fenders
- Manual bilge pump
- Spare fuel filter (Racor), oil filter, oil, coolant, funnel, impeller kit, hose clamps (various sizes), belts
- Spare fuses, wire connectors (various), running light bulbs
- Spare engine/cabin keys, deck fill keys
- Spare deck fill cap
- Oil absorbent pads
- Tool kit (screwdrivers, socket kit, vice grips, pliers, wire cutter/crimper, hammer, combination wrench kit (SAE and metric), Hex key set (SAE and metric) etc.)
- Multi-meter (preferably one with a digital read-out and a non-contact/laser thermometer)
- Duct tape, electrical tape, masking tape, plastic cable ties (various sizes), bungee cords (various)
- WD-40
- Teather/harness, jack lines
- Toilet plunger
- Sham Wows
- Water hose, spray nozzle
- Bucket
- Spare line (various diameters/lengths)
- Through-hull plugs, rubber mallet
- Baseball bat (wood) to plug missing through-hull
- Spray foam expanding sealant to help slow leaks from cracks or holes
- Plastic grocery bags to help fill cracks
- Bug spray

**Give yourself time to get key systems fixed if necessary...** You certainly don't want to find out on your first night time travel of the trip that your running lights aren't working. Same with the manual, hand-pump bilge pump. Reefing system fully operational? When's the last time that the engine impeller was replaced? Not sure, replace it before you leave. All things I would rather deal with while in the slip rather than twelve miles off shore in a blow.



**THINK ABOUT IT...**

**It may not seem like a big deal now, but you're going to be extremely thankful that you brought a spare deck fill cap when your fuel fill cap takes a dive because the fuel spout busted the little chain that holds it to your boat.**

**You can fix almost anything with duct tape, vice grips, and cable ties.**



***You've had to have dealt with a stopped up, overflowing, crappy head to really appreciate the high value of a small toilet plunger and a bucket.***

**The following should be confirmed as working a few days before departure**

- Running lights (Red/Green bow and white stern), Steaming light, Anchor light
- Automatic and manual bilge pumps
- Anchor gear
- Running rigging
- Reefing system
- Engine not overheating, good raw water flow leaving boat
- Heads
- VHF
- Alternator/Battery charger
- All hose clamps tight



***Sham Wows?! Yes! As seen on TV!!! Trust me. They become invaluable when getting water out of tight spaces.***

