

## Boat

### STORE YOUR BOAT OUTSIDE WITH PROPER CARE

Like many Northwest boaters, you may store your boat and motor outside on the driveway, in a carport, or on a cement slab in the yard. And, in the back of your mind, you may have wondered, “Am I harming my boat by doing so?”

The answer depends not just on *where* you store the boat, but *how*.

Most manufacturers suggest that, if possible, boats should be stored out of water and under cover. Generally, though, painted fiberglass and aluminum boats suffer no damage when left outside when you follow these maintenance tips:

- Remove surface dirt with clear water. Remove grease, oil, and stubborn dirt with a brush and mild detergent. At least once a year, wax and polish the boat.
- To prevent fading, protect paint from prolonged exposure to sunlight. If it's already too late, light sanding and polishing can return paint to its original luster.
- Cover the boat with a *breathable* tarp, preferably canvas. Canvas tarps are a must if your boat has vinyl upholstery. Plastic tarps trap moisture and lead to mildew growth on vinyl. A covered and shaded location also will protect your vinyl upholstery from the ravages of the sun's ultraviolet rays. (Some vinyl is chemically treated to retard cracking and aging.)
- Store your outboard engine indoors during the off season, bringing it in with the battery every fall. If that's not possible, buy a tarp long enough to cover it.
- Fill – don't drain – your gas tank. Include a fuel conditioner to prevent condensation and gumming.
- Inboards and inboard/outboards require different care than outboards. Because they have internal water jackets (like cars) instead of an impeller for cooling, they must be flushed and filled with clean water and antifreeze every fall. Follow your engine manufacturer's recommendations for your specific engine.

