

# BOAT TALK WITH

# Alex Salomatoff



*If you have a question for Master Mechanic and Owner of Alex's Marine Plus in New Windsor, NY, simply call Alex at 845-565-9199 or e-mail, [AlexsMarine@aol.com](mailto:AlexsMarine@aol.com)*

## *If you own a boat with an outdrive boat sooner or later you're going to have a leak through the outdrive!*

**Question:** The other day I went down to the marina ad low and behold my boat was not floating in the slip, only oil sheen on the water and the Bimini sticking out of the water. The rest of the boat was being held up by the ropes tied to the cleats on both sides of the boat.

After they pulled the boat up I found out that the boot on the outdrive was the culprit. What can I do to prevent this from happening?

**Alex:** outdrive boots are the number one reason boats equipped with them sink. The smart thing to do is to write with an indelible pencil near the outdrive when the last time the boot was replaced. If it is a new boat write the date down as well.

## MerCruiser Alpha 1 outdrive kit

The boot or what is called the bellows should be replaced at first sign of them drying out or getting brittle. You should check them at least twice a year by getting your hand in there and squeezing them and feeling the texture for dryness. I've seen them changed every other year and I've seen them not needed for 10 years. I will say it will save you money if you do it when you should do other maintenance items like changing shift cables, having U-Joints and/or couplers replaced, and any other outdrive service. There could be as many as three different bellows or boots on your stern drive. Check them all carefully.

**Question:** I bought a new battery for my boat, went through the trouble in installing it and it still will not crank over.

**Answer:** Ha, the first thing we do when we have this problem brought to our attention is check the cranking power of the battery. Even though it is a fully charged new battery the system on your boat may require certain "cranking

amps". To little amps and the battery will not work because it is not specific to your boats electrical system. Look at the requirements of your boat and what the manufacturer recommends it is critical to an enjoyable, trouble free summer.

Cranking amps are the numbers of amperes a lead-acid battery at 32 degrees F (0 degrees C) can deliver for 30 seconds and maintain at least 1.2 volts per cell (7.2 volts for a 12 volt battery). In other words, CA/cranking amps determine how much power you have to start your car in most climates.



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