**Common Small Boat Problems & Suggested Solutions**

**Engine slows, seems under-powered, or quits:**

Is the gas can vented?
Is the gas can empty?
Engine overheated? (check cooling water flow, clear obstructions from water intake)
Propeller damaged? (check the prop and if damaged, contact BSO or maintenance. **After** consulting someone, if damage is minor and there are no signs of vibration or odd noise, **motor back to FHL SLOWLY** (just above idle).
Try switching to another gas can in case fuel is bad (this is rare).

**Engine will not start:**

Battery switch on? (Auklet, Bufflehead, Coot)
Shifter in neutral?
Flooded (do you smell or see gas on the water?)
  - Give the engine several minutes for excess gas to evaporate
  - Try disconnecting the gas line and cranking the starter
Not enough gas (no smell of fuel)
  - Pump rubber squeeze ball to ensure that it is firm.
Kill switch lanyard accidentally removed from the throttle housing?

**Alarms going off:**

Either overheating (see above) or low oil pressure (check reservoir and fill if necessary). If you are certain that oil is full and cooling water is strong, motor slowly back the dock and remove key from ignition and bring it to the office. **DO NOT OPERATE** a motor with cooling or oil problems. Call for help, or wave down a passing boat for a tow.

**Dead Battery:**

Switch to second battery (Auklet only)
Important Safety Considerations

Make sure all safety equipment is onboard (life jackets, flares, first aid kit, lights if out after sunset). Wear your life jacket at all times.

Have you been checked out for the boat you are using? (If not, contact the BSO, David Duggins, Pema Kitaeff, or Craig Staude.)

Is there an anchor onboard? If the engine quits and you are close to shore, deploy the anchor. All anchors should have floats attached to the end of the line. If you cannot retrieve your anchor, just throw the line and float overboard and we’ll retrieve it later. Always anchor by the bow (front) of the boat, NOT the stern.

Give way to all other boats in close passing situations. Do not assume others know (or care about) the Rules of the Road.

GO SLOW. Give the boat enough throttle to keep it “on plane” but no more. This will save gas and be a safer, more comfortable ride than running wide-open throttle.

Look ahead. Avoid patches of kelp, debris, and logs. When encountering a large boat wake: warn passengers, slow down, and approach nearly perpendicular to the wave front.

If unfamiliar with the area you're in, USE THE CHART included in the boat’s emergency bag to check for submerged rocks, reefs, and shoals. If you aren’t sure how to read a chart, check with the BSO or a Marine Tech before your trip.

Look astern occasionally to check for:
- a strong flow of cooling water from outboard motor (if cooling stream halts, STOP motor immediately).
- a ferry or another fast boat overtaking you. As the overtaken boat, you should maintain course and speed but prepare to be tossed by a wake.

Carry a cell phone and emergency phone numbers, or borrow a VHF radio from the office of David Duggins (in Fernald).