

## Trailing Your Boat: "Be Prepared" Checklist by Jim Alexander

### Along with your trailer, take...

- Spare
- Jack
- Lug wrench for locking nuts, if your trailer has them
- Couple of short pieces of 2 by 4 or 2 by 6 for soft dirt/ditch situations
- Warning triangle or flares
- Towel to lay on and clean up
- Owner's card/registration
- Blocks for trailer wheels
- Keys for trailer lock
- PVC or other boat guides to be mounted on your trailer
- Electrical adapter - flat four to round 7 plugs
- Fire extinguisher, flares, throw cushion, life preservers

### Before you go...

- Check bunks, bunk bolts or retainers before you load: any loose or moved?
- Look at the winch stand: is it straight/tight? Paint on trailer tongue will show if movement has occurred
- Look at the winch rope. If it's worn, replace it. Oil the winch.
- After loading make sure each bunk is in contact with the hull. If a paint stick fits between the boat hull and bunk, do some adjustment.
- Air up your tires & spare. Are your tires too old/aged?
- Check the fluid in your trailer brakes, if it has them
- Check trailer lights.
- Shut off gas line at tank to eliminate slosh induced gas spill.
- Anchor, tow line, boat tools, dock lines, oil.
- Boat key

### Things to remember...

- Load heavy things low in the boat to lower center of gravity.
- Tie/bungie loose things in the boat, especially if trailing without a boat cover.
- Cross safety chains to keep tongue off pavement if disconnect happens.
- Surge brake attaches to vehicle frame.
- Tongue weight: 8 - 10% of trailer's weight. Check with bathroom scale after the boat is loaded for towing. Gas filling enroute can significantly change tongue weight: 30 gallons of gas can weigh close to 250 pounds.
- Repack wheel bearings every 5 years
- Environmental considerations:
  1. Remove mud, plants, fish, etc.
  2. Eliminate water before leaving
  3. Clean trailer & boat before going to new or home lake

**MAKING A LIST AND CHECKING IT TWICE REALLY IS GOOD ADVICE!**