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Ethanol fuel caution for boats

NSW Maritime advises all boat owners to check with a local dealer about the suitability of ethanol mix fuels for their marine petrol engine.

NSW Maritime General Manager Recreational Boating and Regional Services Brett Moore said there was growing concern among boat operators about using ethanol mix fuels in their boats.

A number of risks have been identified including:

- Ethanol can affect some fibreglass fuel tanks because of its potential to act as a solvent;
- Ethanol can affect older fuel lines, seals and gaskets; and
- The fuel can separate into the petrol and ethanol components if condensation forms in the tank or where the fuel is stored for extended periods.

“Use of an inappropriate fuel can result in damage to the engine and boat components that may require repair or replacement,” Mr Moore said.

“Fuels with ethanol can attack some fuel-system components, such as tanks and lines if they are not made from acceptable ethanol-acceptable materials.

“The ethanol can soften some fibreglass or rubber components or can leach resins from other materials from rubber components which can foul filters, carburettors or injectors.

“Whilst some boat owners have tried to do the right thing in their quest to reduce their carbon footprint by choosing the greener option, NSW Maritime advises boat owners to check with their engine and boat dealer about the appropriate fuel choice,” Mr Moore said.

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