

NEWS From BoatUS

Boat Owners Association of The United States

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BoatUS Press Room at <http://www.BoatUS.com/pressroom>

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Photo Available at: <http://www.BoatUS.com/pressroom/preview/mg/hiRes/766.jpg>

Photo Caption: Is the work being done right? BoatUS has tips to ensure it does.

Boat Association: 10 Tips to Get Repairs Done Right

ALEXANDRIA, Va., March 14, 2012 -- Many boaters and anglers work on their own boats, but there are times when professional help may be needed. With 30 years of experience dealing with marine service industry, the [BoatUS Consumer Protection Bureau](#) knows that most marine professionals do the job right. Every year, however, a handful of boat owners wind up coming to the Bureau's Dispute Mediation program for help because of faulty repairs or disagreements with bills. Here are ten tips gleaned from mediating hundreds of cases over the years that will help ensure the job goes smoothly:

1. **A tight budget is OK:** In today's economy, a tight budget is expected - just make this clear before the job begins. The shop may be able to suggest ways to complete the project in stages. Always ask how much similar repairs have cost in the past and what kinds of problems are possible along the way.
2. **Write it up - or take your chances:** Get a written estimate before work begins, and remember that it is based on an approximation of how much the job will cost. With boats, it's not unusual to have unforeseen problems crop up later - so taking your frustrations out on your repairer won't help. You can always ask the shop to obtain your authorization before proceeding with unforeseen repairs or when work goes beyond the estimated price.
3. **Ask for evidence:** Ask to get back old or damaged parts.
4. **OK to second guess:** If you're not comfortable with the first estimate, get a second opinion from another mechanic or a marine surveyor.
5. **Follow a plan:** Once you approve the estimate, a work order should be drawn up. Ask for a target completion date and write this into the work order.
6. **Keep everyone in the loop:** Always be sure the actual mechanic working on your boat has a copy of your work order when the project begins.
7. **Get help with the big stuff:** For complex repairs, it's wise to consult with a marine surveyor and consider having the surveyor serve as a liaison with the repair shop. Ask around for a referral or check out the list of surveyors at www.BoatUS.com/surveyors.
8. **The payment plan:** Understand that when tackling large jobs, boat repair shops often require payments at various stages of completion. Be sure to verify that each stage has been completed before paying. If you cannot be on hand to check progress yourself, consider hiring a marine surveyor to make periodic checks.

9. **Don't be hasty:** If you are unhappy with the work, do not stop payment on your check after you pay your repair bill. This can be interpreted as intent to defraud the repair shop and put you in [deep kimchi](#).
10. **Know when to walk:** Understand that when asking for all of the things above, you may not get everything you want. On the other hand, walk away if you get the feeling a marine repairer isn't interested in helping you with most of these basic protections that get the job done right. Reputable shops know the importance of customer service.

About BoatUS:

BoatUS - Boat Owners Association of The United States - is the nation's leading advocate for recreational boaters providing over half a million members with government representation, programs and money-saving services. For membership information visit www.BoatUS.com or call 800-395-2628.

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