



We All Get Heavier As We Age – Even Our Boats!

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We keep getting reminded that we are getting heavier as we get older. No matter where we turn, someone is telling us that we are getting fat and need to be thinner!

Guess what? So are our boats! Yes, as boats get older, they get heavier and that has a lot to do about being less “sea-kindly” and more “tender” as they get older (and our reflexes get slower – not a particularly good combination.) With fuel getting more expensive as the Mideast roils again, here are some examples of how the boat is getting heavier – and more expensive to drive...

New Stuff...

We add things to our boat that weren't there when we bought it. An ice chest may be added so we don't have to lug one from the car... We add an additional ice chest so we can bring more ice so we can stay out longer and catch more fish (hopefully!)... We pile up the cuddy cabin, a.k.a., the boat's attic, with safety and fishing equipment so we

don't have to lug them from the car...

And don't forget that new 4-stroke engine you added – so much quieter, so much more fuel efficient and so much heavier per “horse of power”... at least 20% heavier would be my guesstimate... that makes a 400 lb. 200hp 2-stroke weigh in at nearly 500 lbs. as a 4-stroke state-of-the-art power plant... and the same hull sits in front of it...

Boats Get “Wrinkles” too...

More insidiously, through tiny cracks in the gel coat, water seeps inside the hull and the boat gets 8 lbs. heavier per gallon... and it seeps, generally, aft where the boat is naturally heavier per square foot of hull due to the engine... making it harder to see over the bow when you gun the engine and start to “dig the hole” that getting up on plane gets you out of... and it is now harder to get on plane, i.e., you have to go faster, to get up on plane since the boat is heavier in the stern than when it was manufactured... an endless spiral.

Remedies

What to do about it? There are only two or three things that you can do. First, get rid of anything that isn't essential. There are ten weekends in a summer. You aren't going to boat on every one of those 20 days – unless you are between spouses and looking for one that wants to live on the boat with you! How much of a big deal is it to cart just the things you need – not everything you own all the time – from the car or the dock locker that you installed at the foot of your slip? Second, you may want to look into trim tabs – small “flaps” that are installed under your transom that will help you get up onto plane faster. What they save in fuel when “digging out of the hole” will quickly cover their costs. And don't underestimate the safety factor that you'll be able to see over the bow sooner. Third, you may need to change your prop! The engine may be plenty powerful enough to move your mini-warehouse, but it can't turn the propeller

any faster due to its pitch (angle that it cuts through the water.) Counter-intuitively, you need a smaller prop/tighter pitch, not a larger one, to enable the engine to rotate the shaft more rapidly. Think about the little tires on your trailer keeping pace with the big tires on your truck – they HAVE to move faster to keep pace. Talk to your dock master about who he or she uses when they re-engineer props for customers. Go see them and talk about your options. This is some art, some science and some superstition. Talk it through with people who make a living engineering propellers. It will make a difference.

If you don't think about these things, “you're gonna need a bigger boat...” (Yes, Virginia, it has been over 30 years...)

BTW, if you are interested in being part of USCG Forces, email me at JoinUSCGAux@aol.com or go direct to the D1SR Human Resources department, who are in charge of new members matters, at DSO-HR and we will help you “get in this thing...”



Janice Harkins Dog Talk

Dear Dog Talk,

I recently bought a dog and I have some concerns. Our family just got a 12 week old Lab; he is such a joy to us. Our new little one tries and will eat anything he can get a hold of. My concerns come from never having a dog of my own. Is his behavior normal? Are there things that are bad for him? I recently saw your article about puppy do's and don'ts and that really helped. Can you please give me some tips so I know things to watch out for?

Sincerely, First Time Dog Mom

Dear First time dog Mom,

I want to start by saying thank you for your letter! It is wonderful to hear that our previous articles have helped you. The following list is the more common things your dog might be able to get into. If you are ever not sure of something, please check online and, better yet, contact your veterinarian. If it is not during your vet's normal hours and you are not sure or see reason for concern, please contact a 24-hour emergency room. The following information was compiled from Dr. Foster, Dr. Smith, and the ASPCA.

Alcoholic Beverages: Any type of alcohol can be poisonous to your pet, and aside from intoxication, can cause a coma or even death.

Apple Seeds: Can have varied effects on pets.

Apricot Pits: Can cause respiratory difficulties such as breathing, coughing and sneezing.

Cherry Pits: Can cause respiratory difficulties such as breathing, coughing and sneezing.

Chocolate: Although pets should never have any type of chocolate, milk chocolate is not nearly as dangerous for animals as semi-sweet or unsweetened bakers chocolate. Chocolate poisoning can cause irregular heart rate and rhythm, restlessness, hyperactivity, diarrhea, vomiting, panting, muscle tremors, abdominal pain, bloody urine, increased body temperature, seizures, coma and possibly even death. Chocolate contains theobromine and theophylline, a compound that is a cardiac stimulant and a diuretic.

After their dog has eaten a large quantity of chocolate, many dog owners assume their pet is unaffected. However, the signs of sickness may not be seen for several hours, with death following with-

in twenty-four hours. A dog that has ingested a large quantity of chocolate will exhibit symptoms that include staggering, labored breathing, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, tremors, fever, heart rate increase, arrhythmia, seizures, coma or death.

Cocoa powder and cooking chocolate are the most toxic forms of chocolate to a dog. A 10-kilogram dog can be seriously affected if it eats a quarter of a 250gm packet of cocoa powder or half of a 250gm block of cooking chocolate. These forms of chocolate contain ten times more theobromine than milk chocolate. Thus, a chocolate mud cake could be a real health risk for a small dog. Even licking a substantial part of the chocolate icing from a cake can make a dog unwell.

Semi-sweet chocolate and dark chocolate are the next most dangerous forms, with milk chocolate being the least dangerous. A dog needs to eat more than a 250gm block of milk chocolate to be affected. Obviously, the smaller the dog, the less it needs to eat.

Coffee: Can result in increased breathing and heart rate, restlessness and affects the central nervous system. Coffee is similar to chocolate, a couple of sips of coffee might not harm your pooch, but ingesting coffee grounds, tea bags or energy drinks with high caffeine content can be deadly for them.

Grapes, Raisins, Xylitol: Large amounts of grapes can be poisonous to pets and can cause vomiting, diarrhea, lethargy, abdominal pain, lack of appetite and kidney damage. As few as a handful of raisins or grapes can make a dog ill; however, of the 10 cases reported to the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center (APCC), each dog ingested between nine ounces and two pounds of grapes or raisins. Symptoms include vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, and lethargy. If ingested, it can cause liver damage or kidney failure in dogs. We have all heard that chocolate is toxic to dogs, what some may not know is that xylitol, the sweetener used in many sugarless foods including gum and candy, is highly toxic. According to the vets at Pet Poison Helpline, “When ingested, even in small amounts, it can result in a life-threatening drop in blood sugar or even liver failure.” Also important to note, grapes and raisins are

among the most toxic foods to dogs and can cause kidney failure.

Hops: May cause panting, elevated temperature, increased heart rate, seizures and possibly death.

Macadamia Nuts: Can cause vomiting, lethargy, hyperthermia, abdominal pain, stiff joints, lameness and tremors. Macadamia nuts are another concern, along with most other kinds of nuts. Their high phosphorus content is said to possibly lead to bladder stones. Dogs develop a tremor of the skeletal muscles, and weakness or paralysis of the hindquarters. Affected dogs are often unable to rise and are distressed, usually panting. Some affected dogs have swollen limbs and show pain when the limbs are manipulated.

Moldy Foods: Can have varied effects on pets including vomiting and diarrhea.

Mushrooms: Different types of mushrooms can have varied effects on pets. Symptoms include abdominal pain, drooling, liver damage, kidney damage, vomiting, diarrhea, convulsions, coma, depression, nausea and vomiting, tearing, hallucinations, defecation, liver failure, seizures, urination, kidney failure, heart damage, hyperactivity and in some cases, death. Mushroom toxicity does occur in dogs and it can be fatal if certain species of mushrooms are eaten. Amanita phalloides is the most commonly reported severely toxic species of mushroom in the US, but other Amanita species are toxic.

The best way to prevent dog poisoning is to be diligent. Dog-proof your home in the same way you would baby-proof. Put medications in high cupboards that dogs cannot reach. Make sure the garbage has a tight lid, or better yet, is in a cabinet with a child lock on it so your pet cannot get into it while you are gone. If it is impossible to put something out of your dog's reach, do not leave your pet unaccompanied. Poison Control Hotline 888-232-8870 (TOLL FREE).

For anyone who may not know, the poison control number charges you \$35. This goes to pay the vet in case of a phone consult. If you ever have to call, make sure to have credit card ready.

Send questions to: sspress2000@aol.com, Attention: Dog Talk.