

## Mid Winter Safety Checks

Written by Ed Sherman

Friday, 03 February 2012 20:21 - Last Updated Friday, 03 February 2012 20:52

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Dexter, the service manager here at the Brewer Yard where my office is located, shot this photo my way yesterday illustrating a key point or two about basic boating safety. Good stuff to check this time of year. I mentioned a few weeks back the need to check the expiry dates on items in the first aid kit, checking fire extinguishers, and expiry dates on things like CO monitors are also key items. But let's not forget some of the basics here either. Check this one out:



Yup, that's someone's anchor chain and rode. About the only part of that mess that's worth saving might be the three strand rode, and I say that with some reservation; want to inspect the whole length before I make the final call on that count.

Remember, in many cases when you need an anchor, the situation might just be a marginal emergency. The last thing you want is for the whole thing to break away from the weight of your boat under extreme conditions. The anchor is much more than a mere convenience item. Make sure the entire assembly is in top notch condition on your boat. Oh, and make sure the bitter end of the rode is actually tied to the boat.

One of my most memorable mornings occurred quietly sitting on my boat one early morning sipping coffee in the cockpit and watching a young couple pulling into the anchorage next to us to set their anchor. After all the yelling and screaming was done between this young couple the lady finally deployed the anchor and the rode was let out, and out and out and out.....only to discover that it wasn't tied to the boat. I watched the whole incident and will never quite forget the look on the young lady's face as the tail of the rode slipped overboard and into the drink. Take two on the yelling and screaming began immediately. The good news? we were in only about 20 ft. of crystal clear caribbean water. Easy to find the whole thing. We got that pair squared away fairly easily.

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So, the lesson for today is check this stuff out and next spring run through a few practice drills with your boat mate(s) to get the whole anchoring thing down. All the yelling and screaming is just not appreciated in an otherwise peaceful anchorage.