A & L RV Inspection
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How to care for your RV by doing scheduled maintenance.

As we do inspections on RVs, we do see in a lot of cases that the current or previous owner has neglected routine maintenance of the RV. It is easy to just plain forget to do maintenance on your RV, especially if you are a seasonal camper.

An easy way to remember to do your maintenance items is to put it in your cell phone as a monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or yearly appointment. If your calendar is set to alert you to appointments, you never should worry about forgetting to do a maintenance item. Doing these maintenance items will help minimize possible water leaks, motors not operating correctly and tire blowouts.

Life Safety Items

Fire Extinguishers in your RV have a chemical in them that settles to the bottom of the unit. Set a schedule to un-fasten the extinguisher from the holding bracket, turn it upside down and shake it a little. The goal is to keep the chemical "mixed" within the entire extinguisher.
Battery operated Smoke Detectors, Propane Detectors and Carbon Dioxide Detectors. Every spring and fall we charge our clocks. It is a good practice to change all of the batteries in all of the life safety devices in your RV.

Monthly

Check the fluid levels in your house/RV batteries. Since these are deep cell batteries, unlike your auto engine batteries, they need distilled water or battery acid added from time to time. If batteries run low on distilled water/battery acid, they will lose their charging ability, meaning that your batteries won't maintain a full charge. Purchase a "hydrometer" too to check the voltage in each cell of the batteries is a good idea. These can be purchased at any auto parts stores for under $10.00
Run your Generator under a load. If you have a generator, it must be excised regularly to keep internal parts lubricated. Running it under load means that idling is not sufficient enough. Maybe run an AC unit or cook in the Microwave. Anything that will cause the generator stress. Stress is good. No matter if Diesel, Gasoline or LP. Do this for 1-2 hrs. monthly.
Lubricate your slides. All slides have motors, gears and tracks that enable the slides to operate and these parts of a slide need lubricating. There are many products out there from lithium grease to dry powder lubricates. All will work but DO NOT use WD-40. WD40 is a great product but it doesn't dry and will cause dirt and contaminates to stick to the rails of your slides. While lubricating your slides, also look at the seals around your slides. If there is a gap in the seals, water and bugs can get into your RV possibly causing damage.
AC Filters – This is one of those things we see in almost all inspections we do. Like your home AC filter, RV filters need to be cleaned regularly. They are usually a foam filter on the intake side of an AC units. Pull down the grated cover, wash with warm water and soap.
Tire Pressure – This one is kind of tricky in the fact it all depends on how much you use your RV. If you travel regularly, maybe it should be daily. I take a tire bat and thump the tires before we hit the road. If a tire is low on air, you will be able to tell. If you use your RV every month or so, then you would absolutely check before to hit the road. If it sits for weeks on end, then for sure, check it before you hit the road. FYI – All RV tires on towables (5th wheels and travel trailers) have a short lifespan (3-5 years) no matter how tread is on the tires. Motorhome tires are usually auto type (class

B & C types) or big truck tires (on Class A type motorhomes) so they will last more years based on use. There is a service at Love's truck stops called "TirePass". They will check all the air in your tires and record it, so you can see a history of the air pressure. We had our motorhome tires checked for $5.00. That included them putting air in tires that we low.

Quarterly

AC units – The fins on the roof top AC get dirty and should be inspected at least quarterly. Flying insects will make it their home too. It is simple, just spray the cooling fins with water. Be careful as these fins are very sharp and will cut you. You don't want to cause the fins on an AC unit to collapse against each other. It will affect the efficiency of the AC unit.

All sealant areas of the roof– Let's face it. RVs are a house on wheels. All that creaking and twisting down the road will cause cracks in the roof top sealant. Inspect all the areas where sealant has been applied. You will be looking for cracks or separation of the sealant. To re-seal these cracks, use an exterior sealant like "Dicor". Can be purchased at numerous locations. If you notice during your inspection, that part of the rubber roof has maybe a pin hole from a falling branch, you can either seal with it with "Dicor" or use a sealant tape called "Eternabond"

All sealant areas around the exterior of your RV – As with the roof, the sealant on all exterior surfaces around a RV needs to be inspected. Check around the doors, cargo bay areas, around exterior lights and where all the caps (Front, Back, StreetSide and Curbside) meet. Re-seal with exterior silicone sealant.

Transfer Switch – If you have a generator in your RV, you have a transfer switch that detects if you are using "shore power" or "generator" to power your RV. With the bouncing down the road, the wires could come loose. Just take the cover off of the transfer switch (disconnect from shore power) and check to ensure all the wires are secured to the terminals.

Emergency Exit Windows – It is a good practice to open all of your emergency exit windows on a regular basis to inure if you ever need to use them, anyone including children, can open them in the event of an emergency. We encourage you to educate anyone staying in the RV overnight what to do in an emergency, especially children. You know your RV and how best to get out of it in an emergency but expect overnight guests to know how to. Also, show them where the fire extinguisher is as well.

Semi-Annual

Water Heater – If you have a traditional RV water heater or an Aqua Hot type) they need maintenance too. Depending if you have a Suburban (with Anode rod) or an Atwood, the water heater tank should be flushed out twice a year, depending on use. When doing the flush, examine the Anode Rod. If it has corroded, it's time to replace it. There are You Tube videos on how to do this. All "Aqua Hot" water heaters need the anti-freeze fluids tested and possibly replaced every year depending on usage.

Fresh Water Holding Tank – We always travel with maybe 15-20 gallons of water in our fresh water tank. A few reasons why. One might be if you stop and need a bathroom break, use your water pump and holding tank water to flush with. Maybe there is a water outage at the campground you are at. You can at least wash dishes and again flush the toilet until the water service is back on. This water that sits in the holding tank needs to be flushed out with bleach as it gets stagnant just sitting in the tank. Again, there are many You Tube videos on how to do this.

Yearly

Depending on often you use your RV, things like **wheel bearings** should be checked. **Oil changes** should be performed on the Engine and Generator motor if your RV has one. Have the **brakes** inspected. Have the **Tires i**nspected. Prevention is the key to minimal issues with RVs.

Season changes

Maybe you put your RV in storage during the off season. If so, you need to check the exhaust area of your water heater, furnaces and RV refrigerator. Mud daubers and spiders will make nest in there, causing your device to not work at all or not efficiently.

I cannot guarantee that if you do these maintenance items, based on the schedule above, that your Rving experiences will be "trouble free". It will however, hopefully minimize major issues. What was that saying, "you can pay me now or pay me later". It doesn't matter to me.

Happy trails! Hope to see you out there on the road somewhere. Safe Travels!

It is surprising how fast the Amps add up. Here is a list that may help you with understanding how much you can run on 30 Amp and 50 Amp. Below are typical, some may be less or more Amps.

Appliance or Electrical Equipment	Estimated Amps	Appliance or Accessory	Estimated Amps
Air Conditioner (x number of A/C)	12-16 Amps	Aisle Light	1 Amp
Blender	5-6 Amps	CO Detector	1 Amp
Coffee Maker	5-8 Amps	Fluorescent Light	1-2 Amps
CD Player	1 Amp	Furnace	10-12 Amps
Computer	2-3 Amps	LP Gas Detector	1 Amp
Converter	1-8 Amps	Overhead Light (per bulb)	1 Amp
Crock Pot	1-2 Amps	Porch Light	1 Amp
Curling Iron	<1 Amp	Power Roof Vent	1.5 Amp
Drill	2-6 Amps	Radio/Stereo	4 Amps
Electric Blanket	0.5 - 1.5 Amps	Range Hood (Fan & Light)	2-3 Amps
Electric Fan	1 Amp	Refrigerator (LP Gas Mode)	1.5-2 Amps
Electric Water Heater	9-13 Amps	Security System	1 Amp
Electric Skillet	6-12 Amps	Television (12 Volt)	4-5 Amps
Hair Dryer	5-12 Amps	TV Antenna Booster	<1 Amp
Iron	5-10 Amps	TV Antenna Booster 12 Volt Outlet	up to 8 Amps
Light (60w @ 120V)	<1 Amp	Variable Speed Fan	4 Amps
Microwave	8-13 Amps	VCR Player	2 Amps
Microwave/Convection Oven	13 Amps	Water Pump	4 Amps
Refrigerator in AC Mode	5-8 Amps		
Space Heater	8-13 Amps		
Television	1.5-4 Amps		
Toaster	7-10 Amps		
Vacuum	2-6 Amps		
VCR	1-2 Amps		
Washer/Dryer	14-16 Amps		