



Dead Wrong

Q The MerCruiser 5.0 MPI on my Maxum 24 is dead. The idle control valve, fuel pump, and other major accessories are unresponsive. It's a three-year-old engine with less than 300 hours. How did this happen?

Maxum 24 (via e-mail)

A Don't feel insulted, but I first have to ask: Is the emergency shutoff lanyard connected to the base of the controls and is the switch working properly? If so, check the main engine breaker next. It's a red button on a small bracket usually near the front of the motor. If that's not the culprit, inspect the battery connections, including the ground to the engine block. Follow the lead to the starter where there's a 90-amp fusible link. Finally, there's a fuse panel just like one you'd find in your car. Check there for a burnout.

LIGHT MAKES RIGHT



WE TEST

TIRED OF HOLDING A FLASHLIGHT BETWEEN MY TEETH, I WANTED to install some permanent illumination on the console of my Regulator 23. The light would constantly be exposed to weather and vibration and needed to be electrically thrifty, because the 12-volt system on all boats these days—particularly small fishing boats—is taxed to the max. Lumitec Lighting's new Rail Light looked promising. The Rail Light's low profile housing is sleek and unobtrusive when mounted, and because it's made from anodized aluminum, it blends with the T-top's pipework. The specs said that the 12 LED emitters would consume 400 milliamps, an insignificant amount of current. LEDs aren't subject to failure from vibration as incandescent or fluorescent lights are. I installed the unit by using tapping thread and fastened it with fine-thread, #6 machine screws. I wired it to a three-way switch—half the LEDs are white and half are red. When I hit the switch, I almost reached for my sunglasses. The light was super-bright, but it spread evenly. When I switched to red, it flooded the console and leaning post area in a crimson hue that won't harm night vision. And after four months of exposure to salt-water, I haven't seen a trace of corrosion. The foot-long version was overkill for my application; a 5" model is also available. Both can be surface-mounted as well as rail-mounted.

—KEVIN FALVEY

PRICE: \$100. CONTACT: 561/272-9840,
WWW.LUMITECLIGHTING.COM.



It's What's Inside

Q I read the January 2009 test of the Sea Ray 22 Pachanga and was particularly intrigued by how a small-block produced a higher top speed in a similar boat than the big-block in the older boats. My uneducated question about the small-block would be how its lifespan compares to that of the big-block.

Bob Baudendistel, Huntsville, AL

A Good question, Bob. Yes, the small-block can rev higher, but I'd opt for it because it lightens the boat aft—by as much as 250 pounds, depending on the drive and other equipment, which makes a difference in a 24' boat. Plus, the 496 MAG HO is a marinized truck engine, whereas the MX 6.2 MPI is built for marine applications to MerCruiser specs. It has the internal components, such as special pistons, to handle the long-term demands put on a boat engine.

Return to Sender

Q I have a Glastron 1990 Sport Cuddy with a MerCruiser 4.3L Alpha. Everything works fine, but there isn't a trim sender on the drive. There's a gauge with wires at the dash, but they don't connect to anything. I can't find an aftermarket trim sender, yet my manual indicates that there should be one.

jv.neal (via e-mail)

A MerCruiser has a kit that includes a replacement trim limiter and trim sender, and you should replace them as a pair. They mount on each side of the gimbal ring on what are called "dog ears" and are then wired to the harness that runs up to the dash. Wire the limiter to the trim switch on your control, and link the sender to your current gauge.