

## **Northport Marine Services**

Since the new owners took over Northport Marine Services two years ago, the customer base has shifted from probably 90 percent commercial to mostly leisure, but all the commercial capability is still there which is good news for the pleasure boatie. Just one example: one of the boat lifters can handle vessels up to 10.6m beam: there is not a sailing cat on the coast it can't lift.

There is only the slenderest chance that your boat cannot be lifted at Northport – the smaller lifter is likely to do the job with its 60T capacity, but the larger at 200T will surely cope with anything Perth's boat owners could even dream of. Anything that does turn out to be too much for the hard stand will certainly be accommodated in one of the wet berths that can cope with 300 footers.

Nor do busy owners have to find time to take their boats there; Northport's professional mariners will pick up and deliver. The service can be as complete or as partial as wanted: apart from placing the order for lifting and for the work to be done, there is actually no need for the owner to do anything at all. Although there are all the facilities there for him to do everything himself if he wishes.

Northport has hardstanding for 50 boats, each bay with water and power, and if you want to live on your boat while working on it that's fine: there are toilets and hot and cold showers laid on. You can do work yourself – provided you have any relevant licences Northport will hire you scissor lifts, forklift, scaffolding and any power tools and leads you need - or you can bring in outside contractors; unlike some yards Northport puts no surcharge on these contractors. The only work Northport must do is spray painting, and this is only because their insurers insist on it. Common sense also insists. Think about it: would you want a mug with a spray gun next to you on a windy day?

Most owners, though, find Northport's pricing for work is more than competitive and choose to have all or most of the work carried out by them; there is almost no marine trade not represented here. The painting team will organise the bottom clean, and has an enclosed painting area for two-pack work and antifouling. Extra services include soda blasting, Prop Speed applications and acid washing.

Allied to the painting service is detailing. These people handle the thoroughly tedious part of boat maintenance: bilge cleaning, internal and external washing and cleaning, hull polishing. And also the tricky jobs of applying graphics and waterline stickers.

Northport has a small army of tradesmen. Engineering is particularly well served by a full in-house division: fitters and turners, a CNC lathe, propeller shaft alignment and repairs, hydraulic servicing – everything; if you want a water maker or a bow thruster installed this is the place to come.

The allied mechanical trade offers an unusually complete service: not only does Northport cater for inboard diesel and petrol motors, sterndrives, water jets and gensets, but it has qualified technicians for all makes and models of outboards – a rare combination. Work carried out includes service, repairs and initial installation. Or secondary installation; this is the place for repowering. Northport can even source good used replacement motors.

Electricity is thoroughly covered as well: initial wiring, rewiring or installation of anything electrical or electronic. This includes conversion of lighting to LED and incorporation of solar panels into a boat's electrical system, and installation of the trendy underwater lights; and, of course, the repair of anything that uses electricity. Repairs to vessels, and structural alterations are catered for in timber, fibreglass, aluminium and steel. In fact anything can be created in the latter materials - and in stainless steel too: bow rails, hand rails, fuel tanks, water tanks and more.

Northport is not just for boats that need the use of the lifters – trailer boats are just as welcome, for work on their motors, for hull repairs, or for others of the on-site services such as trimming. Leather and vinyl upholstery, hull liner and front runner application, indoor and outdoor carpets, clears and canopies and covers – the trimming shop handles all these.

If time has passed since you last saw Northport there are surprises in store. To start with it looks a lot smarter: there is shade cloth around the perimeter, and it encloses a completely rehabilitated yard. There are new sheds for bigger boats, and staff with a customer focus. There is a whole new customer list too, and it includes customers who know quality and value when they see it: the Water Police, the Fisheries Department, a roll call of charter boats, Rottnest Express to drop just a few names.

Give Northport a visit; give its facilities a try. As general manager Michael Eldrid elegantly puts it feel the love there.

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