

WINTER FLY TACKLE CLEANUP

1. **CLEAN YOUR FLY LINES** - Put two inches of warm water in both sides of a stationary tub. Put a few drops of a mild dish detergent (Ivory, Dawn, etc) in one side and splash up some suds. Remove your leader and pull your fly line off you reel in larg loops into the sudsy water all the way down to the backing. Let the line soak a few minutes while you **CHECK YOUR BACKING** - fly line backing will last several years but you need to check it for rot once a year - **IF IN DOUBT, REPLACE IT**.

Starting with the "**back**" end of the fly line (the part the backing is attached to) pull it through a rough, soapy washcloth and into the other half of the stationary tub. Use a little pressure as you pull the line through. After three feet of line, check the cloth. You should have a dirty dark streak. If so, use another part of the washcloth for the next three feet of line. Repeat until the whole line has been pulled into the plain water side of the tubs.

Starting with the **front** end of the line, pull the line through a clean, damp rag to remove the last of the dirt and any soap scum. Lay the line out in large loops on a clean floor (preferably carpeted).

Starting with the **back** of the line, pull the line through a dry soft cloth to dry it. Lay the line out in large loops on the floor.

Starting with the **front** of the line pull the line through another soft cloth dampened with line conditioner. If you don't have a specific conditioner, use STP Son-of-a-Gun. Again, lay the conditioned line out on the clean floor in large loops. Let it air dry for 10 minutes. Rewind the line onto your reel pulling it through a clean dry soft cloth this polishes the line as it goes on the reel. When you get to the end, **PUT A NEW LEADER ON**. Then you're ready for your next trip. **This is a great time to put on a new loop end (whip finish loop or double-nail-knot to perfection).**

2. **CLEAN & WAX YOUR FLY RODS** - Clean them with a wet rag. Use a little dish soap if it is really dirty. Clean the guides using a foot long piece of ladies stocking or pantyhose. This can be pulled through the guides to get into the cracks at the edges of the guide feet. **IT WILL ALSO TELL YOU IF YOU NEED TO REPLACE A GUIDE** --- if the stocking frays, then you have a rough guide. If it's a chrome guide, just replace it. If it's stainless steel, you might be able to buff it out with emery paper. **WAX** the rod blank (not the handle) with car wax and buff it to high polish. You will be surprised at how this will help your casting. Clean line slides really slick on a clean, waxed rod.

Scrub the cork handle with a scrub brush and soap. Dry the rod and handle. Use a 3M "GREEN PAD" to buff the cork to a nice bright clean finish.

3. **TAKE YOUR REEL APART AND CLEAN OUT THE GRIT** - You might have to remove all of the grease that's on the gear wheels and other parts. **DO NOT USE CHEMICAL DISOLVERS** (alcohol, acetone, laquer/paint thinner, etc - they will melt your flyline and any plastic parts of your reel. Use WD40 (trying not to get it on your fly line). Wipe all moving parts clean. If you have to take them apart (**JUST REMEMBER THE SEQUENCE SO YOU CAN RE-ASSEMBLE IT**).

CHECK THE SPOOL FOR DINGS & ROUNDNESS. If it's a cheap reel you might want to buy a new spool. If it's out-of-round, see JIM SORRELL or another "reel" maintenance person to see if it can be fixed.

4. **WASH YOUR WADERS** - Check the manufacturers cleaning suggestions **FIRST**. In the washing machine on gentle cycle with **JUST A LITTLE BIT OF WOOLITE** (this goes for neoprene and breathables). Then turn them inside out and wash them again. Hand them to let the inside dry completely, then turn them right-side-out and hang them to dry completely on the outside.
5. **CHECK THE STITCHING AND THE FELT SOLES ON YOUR WADING BOOTS.** If a little of the stitching is coming undone, use a heavy needle and waxed nylon carpet thread to fix it. If a lot is coming undone either get new boots or let a shoe repair shop fix them. If the felt is worn, consider re-soleing the boots (or send them away and have them done (about \$35)). Your shoe-repair shop will hate you if you try to have new soles sewn on (the nylon felt breaks needles like mad).
6. **EMPTY YOUR FLY BOXES** - Check for any rusty hooks. Pitch them. Reorganize you fly boxes. Tie flies to re-supply yourself or hit the shops and catalogs.