

Quick Facts

Aquatic Invasive Species



Keep Alberta's waters
free of aquatic
invasive species.



**STOP AQUATIC
HITCHHIKERS!™**

What can you do to protect Alberta's waters from aquatic invasive species?

Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are non-native animals or plants that have been brought from other places into Alberta's waterways. If you are transferring a boat or equipment used in water (i.e. hip waders, life jackets, kayaks, construction equipment, etc.) between waterbodies, make sure to:

1 CLEAN

- Clean and inspect watercraft, trailer and gear.
- Remove all plants, animals and mud at the access area or dock.
- At home, soak your gear in a two per cent bleach solution for at least one minute (20 millilitres of bleach per litre of water).
- Rinse, scrub or pressure wash your boat away from storm drains, ditches or waterways.

2 DRAIN

- On land before leaving the waterbody, drain all water from: bait buckets, ballasts, bilges, coolers, internal compartments, livewells, etc.
- For paddle boats, drain by inverting or tilting the watercraft, opening compartments and removing seats if necessary.

3 DRY

- Dry the watercraft and gear completely between trips and allow the wet areas of your boat to air dry.
- Leave compartments open and sponge out standing water.

Eurasian watermilfoil



quagga mussel



zebra mussel

Protecting Alberta's Waters

The Government of Alberta has established an aquatic invasive species prevention program to protect Alberta's waterways from the harmful spread of aquatic invasives such as the quagga and zebra mussels and Eurasian watermilfoil.

Zebra and quagga mussels are virtually impossible to eradicate. They can cause millions of dollars in damage to water-operated infrastructure, disrupt natural food chains, create toxic algal blooms that can kill fish and birds, decrease property values and reduce recreational enjoyment of natural areas. They spread quickly – one female mussel can produce up to a million eggs in a year. Mussels are extremely resilient with the ability to live outside of water for up to 30 days. Invasive mussels are different from native mussels, because they can attach to structures in the water. Invasive aquatic plants, such as the Eurasian watermilfoil, can crowd out native plants, damaging ecosystems and hindering recreational activities.

As a part of the prevention program, boats and equipment will be examined for invasive plants and animals at roadside stations in key locations around the province. Those found to have zebra or quagga mussels attached will be decontaminated and the owner may be directed to keep the watercraft out of the water for up to 30 days. If Eurasian watermilfoil or other aquatic plants are found on the watercraft, it will be washed on site.

These boat inspections are part of a larger program safeguarding Alberta's waterways from non-native species. The initiative also includes a monitoring program for adult and juvenile mussels as part of Environment and Sustainable Resource Development's ongoing surface water quality monitoring program, the development of an education and outreach program and the strengthening of current invasive species regulations.

Be sure to **CLEAN**, **DRAIN** and **DRY** your boat and equipment before moving between waterbodies!

Report any mussels that are attached to your boat or equipment or get more information using the toll-free hotline.

1-855-336-BOAT (2628)

Visit www.mywildalberta.com for more information.